

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 8, 2006 – PT 2006.11

302.Appendix A – Substance Affected Families

a) Background

The *DASA/Child Welfare Integrated Services Program* was previously known as *Project Safe* and the *Division of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (DASA)/ Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Initiative*. The *DASA/Child Welfare Integrated Services Program* provides **enhanced outreach, case management, transportation, and child care services** as part of the client's treatment process. Persons served by DCFS receive priority admission to the program.

b) Eligibility Requirements for Referral to the DASA/Child Welfare Integrated Services Program

Persons eligible to receive services through the DASA/Child Welfare Integrated Services Program must be family members and persons who are significant to the family (i.e., ongoing members of the household) that have an open case with the Department, or the subjects of a child abuse or neglect investigation, or a child for whom the Department is legally responsible. There are no age limitations for persons eligible to receive services from the DASA/Child Welfare Integrated Services Program.

c) DASA/Child Welfare Integrated Services Providers

Regional directories of DASA treatment providers funded to serve DCFS/POS adult and youth referrals may be accessed through the "Resource Links" on the DCFS D-Net, and the "Features" tab on the DCFS web page, www.state.il.us/dcfs. Directories are also available from the DCFS Division of Service Intervention.

Note: If a DASA/Child Welfare Integrated Services Program provider is not available in your service area, contact the Division of Service Intervention for assistance in locating a DASA provider or to obtain other treatment options.

d) Adult Substance Abuse Screen (CFS 440-5)

The **CFS 440-5** is not a diagnostic tool. It is a tool developed for use by Investigation Specialists and follow-up workers to help identify *potential* alcohol and other drug abuse (AODA) problems to determine if an individual should be referred to a *licensed substance abuse treatment provider* for an AODA assessment. The **CFS 440-5** must be completed for all adults in the household or any adult acting as the child's caregiver that is relevant to a child abuse and neglect investigation. The **CFS 440-5** must also be completed any time there is an indication that substance abuse may be present or whenever the case file lacks documentation that a screen was completed. The completed **CFS 440-5** must be placed in the case file and the results of the screen entered in the SACWIS Adult Substance Abuse Screening Summary.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 8, 2006 – PT 2006.11

The **CFS 440-5** has eight sections. Section I, Observations of the Person Being Screened, lists physical signs that may be exhibited by persons abusing alcohol and/or drugs. A “no” response to any of the items in Section II, Facts, concerning drug or drug related criminal charges; non-drug related criminal charges and driving under the influence of alcohol (Section V) charges must be verified through LEADS information. A “no” response concerning a substance-exposed infant must be verified through a SACWIS/CANTS check. Response to items in Section IV, Family, should be asked of an adult member of the household, if available. When a family member is not available to respond to the items in Section IV, it should be noted on the form that the questions were asked of the client and not a family member. All sources providing information on the screening form should be noted for supervisory review and signature.

Note: When Law Enforcement Agencies Data System (LEADS) information indicates issues of drug or alcohol abuse, workers shall assess the underlying documents supporting the LEADS information.

DASA treatment providers will not admit clients with outstanding or unresolved arrest warrants. If the LEADS summary or underlying documents indicates the presence of an outstanding arrest warrant impacting the parent or other member of the substance affected family, the worker shall do the following to resolve the warrant prior to the individual entering AODA treatment.

- Notify the client’s attorney or public defender of the outstanding warrant.
- Instruct the client to surrender to law enforcement.
- Work with the court to quash the warrant based on the client’s willingness to enter AODA treatment.
- Notify law enforcement of the whereabouts of the client.

If the screen indicates a need for further assessment, the worker shall complete the referral information in Section VIII of the form, have the client sign a **CFS 440-7, Consent for Disclosure of Information**, and complete the SACWIS Adult Substance Abuse Screening Summary documenting the finding and referral activities.

Note: Concurrent with the completion of the **Adult Substance Abuse Screen** the Investigation Specialist must initiate the **Substance Affected Families Procedures Checklist, CFS 440-11**. Subsection (p) of this appendix contains detailed information concerning the **CFS 440-11**.

e) **CFS 440-7, Consent for Disclosure of Information – Substance Abuse Assessment and/or Treatment**

Records of the identity, diagnosis, prognosis or treatment of any patient maintained in connection with performance of any program or activity related to alcohol or other drug abuse or dependency education, early intervention, intervention, training, treatment or rehabilitation which is regulated, authorized, or directly or indirectly assisted by any state

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 8, 2006 – PT 2006.11

department or agency shall be confidential and only disclosed with consent. See **Procedures 431**, Subsection (e) for detailed information concerning substance abuse treatment records.

The **CFS 440-7** allows the sharing of information that is required for DCFS and the courts to evaluate the safety and risk to a child, and to support the client's success in both the child welfare system and AODA treatment. A parent or caretaker may seek treatment without signing the **CFS 440-7**, but his or her treatment assessments, attendance and/or progress cannot be recognized by DCFS unless the AODA treatment provider directly reports the information to DCFS.

In order to obtain the client's cooperation in signing the **CFS 440-7**, it is important that the worker fully explain the types of information that will be exchanged and with whom. It is also essential that the client understand that the exchange of this information is required to ensure that DCFS and the court receive accurate information regarding his or her progress, and that the information also allows both the Department of Human Services and DCFS to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the integrated services program.

*Clients cannot be referred for services under the DASA/Child Welfare Integrated Services Program if they refuse to sign the **CFS 440-7**.* In special circumstances, it is possible to obtain AODA treatment information on a non-consenting client. Consult your Regional Counsel if it is necessary to obtain this information through a court order.

f) **AODA Assessment Referral**

Workers shall refer clients to a DASA/Child Welfare Integrated Services Program provider for an AODA assessment when the results of the **CFS 440-5** indicates that the client may have a potential problem with alcohol or other drugs. The DASA provider is required to schedule an assessment for the client no later than the next working day. Call the provider in the presence of the client so that the client can confirm the appointment. Assist the client in keeping the appointment by making any necessary transportation or child care arrangements with the provider. If arrangements cannot be made with the provider, consult with your supervisor concerning the use of auxiliary services. Inform the client that he or she will be held responsible for follow through with the assessment and any recommended treatment.

Forward the completed **CFS 440-5**, **CFS 440-6**, **DCFS Referral For Adult Alcohol and Other Drug Treatment Services**, and **CFS 440-7** via facsimile with any relevant LEADS information to the provider in advance of the client's assessment appointment. Ensure that the client has the provider's name, contact person, address, and telephone number in writing.

The provider will notify the referring Department or POS worker no later than the next working day if the client fails to attend the assessment appointment. Follow-up with the client should occur within two working days for intact and split cases and within one

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 8, 2006 – PT 2006.11

week for placement cases. Workers must reinitiate the referral to the provider if the client is willing to proceed with the assessment.

When a DASA provider does not have the capacity to provide or refer to treatment services at the necessary level for the client, the provider must establish interim services for the client until appropriate treatment services become available. When a client is placed on a waiting list or a provider does not have AODA treatment capacity, workers or supervisors are required to notify the DCFS Division of Service Intervention of the situation. The Divisions of Service Intervention should also be notified when other problems or questions arise related to a DASA provider.

g) Juvenile Court Assessment Program - Cook County Placement Cases

The Juvenile Court Assessment Program (JCAP), which is located in the Cook County Juvenile Court Building (312/666-4688), provides alcohol and drug assessments to persons referred to the program that are no younger than 18 years of age. Assessments are conducted Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Appointments are not necessary. Investigation Specialists and caseworkers, DCFS assessment screeners and court personnel may refer persons to JCAP by submitting a completed JCAP Referral/Status Form to the JCAP Intake Specialist. The Intake Specialist will explain the assessment process to the client and have the client sign the **CFS 440-7** that has been completed by the client's worker.

The JCAP assessor will explain the results of the assessment and the rationale for any treatment recommendations to the client and caseworker upon completion of the assessment. The JCAP assessor will also provide a copy of the client's assessment and written narrative summarizing the client's history and outcome results to the court, Department or POS worker, DCFS assessment screener and DCFS legal staff.

If the client is eligible for the IV-E AODA, the Recovery Coach liaison will meet with the client immediately following the assessment to explain the services that are offered by the Recovery Coach.

The JCAP assessor will set an intake appointment with a DASA provider within 48 hours of the assessment. JCAP will also forward the client's **CFS 440-7**, **CFS 440-5** and assessment results to the provider. JCAP will follow-up with the provider for thirty days or until the client is admitted to the treatment program.

When a client is court-ordered to complete drug testing, the client's worker shall escort the client to the testing site. Results of the urinalysis are critical to the client's AODA assessment and must be provided to JCAP or DASA provider, whichever is appropriate.

h) Client Fails to Enter Treatment

Workers must coordinate a joint client visit with the DASA provider within one week after being notified that the client failed to attend an appointment to enter treatment. The

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 8, 2006 – PT 2006.11

visit may occur at the client's home, the DCFS office or the office of the POS or DASA provider. If the client's reason for failing to enter treatment appears reasonable, the worker must make alternative arrangements for the client to enter treatment.

Workers shall inform clients resistive to cooperating with an AODA assessment and/or treatment recommendations that the Department has the option to do the following:

- Terminate the client's safety plan and take appropriate actions to ensure the safety of the children (Safety plans are designed to provide short-term control of specific threats to the child's safety and not to serve as a long term solution to the problem.);
- Complete a new risk assessment to determine the effect of the client's continued use of alcohol or drugs on his or her ability to supervise, protect or care for the children and take appropriate actions to ensure the safety of the children;
- Seek court ordered intervention requiring the client to cooperate with the AODA assessment and treatment recommendations;
- Seek involuntary termination of parental rights if the parent fails to demonstrate reasonable progress in correcting the conditions that led to the removal of the child within the time frames required by the permanency goal of return home.

i) AODA Treatment

AODA treatment services must ensure the accountability on the part of the clients, the Department and other service providers.

- 1) Investigation Specialists, caseworkers, the client and family shall do the following when the client enters AODA treatment:
 - A) Ensure that the client receives the level of service from the AODA provider that is appropriate to the severity of his or her substance abuse problem.
 - B) Establish service plan outcomes that are appropriate to the client's presenting problems and needs.
 - C) Enroll all pre-school children in protective day care, early childhood development or Head Start that are part of an intact family case that do not attend the mother's treatment.
 - D) Monitor the client's progress through the Client Progress Reports and Observation of Parent Behavior Reports provided by the DASA provider every 30 days while the client is in treatment. Notify the DCFS Division

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 8, 2006 – PT 2006.11

of Service Intervention if the DASA provider fails to provide these reports.

- E) Document in the SACWIS risk assessment any alleged or observed drug or alcohol use by any member of the household that may seriously affect his or her ability to protect, supervise or care for the child. Risks associated with an adolescent's alleged or observed drug or alcohol use must be documented to support the adolescent's need of AODA services.
- F) Document the assessed need for AODA services in the family's integrated assessment as part of the comprehensive assessment of the family's overall functioning and needs.
- G) Document the AODA services provided to the family in their service plan.
- H) Ensure that appropriate actions are taken to ensure the safety of the children when child safety issues are identified in any verbal or written reports received from the DASA provider.
- I) Maintain weekly contact with the client during the first six weeks of the client's AODA treatment. Contact with the client after the first six weeks may be no less than monthly. Contacts with children in the home and school and/or day care personnel should be in accordance with **Procedures 302.388(f)(8)**.
- J) If it is clinically required, establish the service plan task that the client complete urine toxicology and Breathalyzer testing. The task should be placed under the appropriate problem/outcome statement and include the frequency of the testing. Coordinate urine toxicology and Breathalyzer testing either through DCFS funded drug testing contracts or through the DASA provider. Document all drug testing results in the client's file and AODA treatment file.

Note: Urine toxicology testing is performed in a two-step procedure, initial drug screen and confirmation results. When only the initial drug screen has been completed prior to a court hearing and determined to be positive, notify the court of the initial results. Provide the court with the confirmation results as soon as they are available. If there are delays in receiving the urine toxicology screening or the confirmation reports, notify the DCFS Divisions of Service Intervention.

- K) File all forms required for treatment, progress reports and correspondence with the DASA provider in the client's case file.
- L) Coordinate the delivery of AODA education services to the client and the client's family that include:

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 8, 2006 – PT 2006.11

- The impact of parental substance abuse on the children and family;
 - The children's understanding of the signs of substance abuse;
 - The children's understanding of what to do if they are unsafe;
 - The relative's and other caregiver's understanding of how to set boundaries for the substance abuser, how to avoid enabling and what to do if the children are unsafe; and
 - The signs and symptoms of relapse and the concept/use of a relapse prevention plan.
- M) Convene a family meeting within 45 days after case opening that incorporates the following elements:
- The parents or caregivers are the key participants in the meeting;
 - The parents or caregivers identify the supportive persons and family members that should be members of the team;
 - The presence of the children at the meeting should be determined by the issues discussed and the age of the children;
 - The AODA treatment provider and all other key service providers must attend or submit relevant documentation of the client's progress and services provided.

Note: Workers must convene an interagency staffing with the AODA provider within two weeks after the client enters AODA treatment to coordinate service planning and prepare for the family meeting. Whenever possible, workers should coordinate interagency staffings and family meetings for integrated assessment cases with the integrated assessment screeners. The staffings should include the service providers involved with the family being staffed and the parent's probation/parole officer if he or she has one. Interagency staffings must be ongoing and occur at least quarterly; prior to changes in the level of AODA services; prior to a initiation of unsupervised visits; prior to closure of an intact family case; prior to a change in child custody; prior to reunification, prior to the client's planned discharge from treatment; or whenever events occur that might affect child safety, permanency plans or AODA treatment needs.

Note: Family meetings can fulfill interagency staffing requirements as long as all persons required to attend the staffing are present at the family meeting.

Note: With the consent of the family, members of the family team may attend the family's administrative case review for the purpose of reviewing the client's progress towards achieving service plan goals.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 8, 2006 – PT 2006.11

- N) Ongoing family meetings shall be conducted in accordance with **Rules 315.120(c)**;
 - O) Monitor and revise the family's safety plan as needed;
 - P) Conduct background and LEADS checks on newly identified members of the household, fathers, potential caregivers and other adults who frequent the family's home;
 - Q) Verify the children's medical information with their medical provider (i.e., immunizations, well-child visits, and chronic or acute medical conditions);
 - R) Verify the children's school information with their school;
 - S) Ensure that the parents/caregivers receive parent training that also addresses the impact of alcohol and other drug abuse on parenting and families. This training can sometimes be provided as part of the client's AODA treatment;
 - T) Ensure that the parents are involved with and participate in any Illinois Department of Human Services 0-3 early intervention services if their permanency goal is return home.
 - U) Ensure that the parents are involved in their children's health care, school and/or day care activities. Document this information in the case file and report it to the court.
- 2) If the client is administratively discharged from treatment; leaves treatment against advice of the treatment provider; misses two consecutive treatment appointments; or tests positive for alcohol or other drugs, the client's worker shall do the following.
- A) Contact the client to determine the reason for the client's failure to comply with treatment.
 - B) Visit the client with the DASA provider within one week for placement cases and 48 working hours for intact and split cases. The visit may occur at the client's home, the worker's office or the DASA provider's office.
- 3) Investigation Specialists and caseworkers shall provide the DASA provider with the following information to ensure that the provider understands the client's child welfare obligations that may affect the outcome of the client's treatment:
- A) A copy of the client's integrated assessment and service plan within one week of the client's entering treatment;

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 8, 2006 – PT 2006.11

Note: Document the AODA services provided the client and family, and service tasks required of the client and the frequency the family will receive those services and there desired outcomes. Tasks requiring the client to complete urine toxicology and Breathalyzer testing must be included in the client's service plan if clinically required.

- B) If the client's comprehensive service plan and/or integrated assessment are not completed at the time the client enters treatment, the information must be provided to the DASA provider no later than one week after they are completed;
- C) Notification of when the client's case is transferred to another worker or when there are other significant case issues such as court hearings, administrative case reviews, removal or return of children to their home, and changes in service plan outcomes.

j) Substance Exposed Infants (SEI)

The Illinois Department of Public Health requires hospitals to report SEI births to the Adverse Pregnancy Outcome Reporting System (APORS). Reports are then forwarded to local health departments for follow-up by visiting nurses. The Investigation Specialist shall also notify the local health department of a pending report involving allegation #15/65, substance misuse, within 24 hours of receipt of the report at the State Central Register; and contact the hospital social worker and charge nurse responsible for the SEI case to obtain information concerning the child's condition and relevant information concerning the family's history and dynamics. The Investigation Specialist shall collaborate with the public health nurse or other health care professional on data collection, levels of intervention, child health care and case management programs.

- 1) Workers shall also do the following for SEI intact family cases:
 - A) Develop a back-up child care plan that will remain in effect until the substance-abusing parent is in AODA treatment and experiencing clean time;
 - B) Maintain ongoing contact with the public health department nurse, AODA provider and other service providers to coordinate services and monitor safety issues;
 - C) Maintain weekly face-to-face contact with the family (parents/caregivers and children) during the 45-day assessment period. Investigation Managers may waive weekly face-to-face contacts within the 45-day assessment period if the assessment has been completed. Contact with the family must occur twice per month following the 45-day assessment period unless a waiver has been obtained from the Investigation Manager.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 8, 2006 – PT 2006.11

- 2) Workers shall do the following for cases involving a second or subsequent SEI birth:
 - A) Screen the case with the State's Attorney for an order of protection requiring the mother to complete an AODA assessment and any follow-up treatment recommendations;
 - B) Continue to attempt to connect the mother with recommended treatment during the intervening period between the screening and court hearing. If the mother complies with treatment recommendations prior to the court hearing, the worker will present this information to the court and follow through with the order of protection, and continue to monitor the mother's progress in treatment. If the mother refuses to comply with treatment recommendations, the worker must present this information at the court hearing for the order of protection with an updated risk assessment.

k) Case Hand-Off/Transitional Visit

It is the responsibility of the investigative and child welfare services teams to ensure the continuity of intervention and oversight of services during the transfer process to ensure that children are not placed at risk. To avoid any lapse in services to the family, the worker transferring the case maintains the responsibility for delivery of services to the family as well as safety plan monitoring until the transitional visit occurs. The worker assigned to the case shall assume responsibility for service planning and delivery, as well as monitoring any existing safety plans, after the transitional visit with the family occurs.

The formal transition of a case shall take place in the presence of the family (caregiver, extended family and other living in the household) with the transferring and receiving workers and the AODA provider, if possible, no later than 48 hours following the hand-off conference. The following agenda shall be followed during the transitional visit:

- Introductions and purpose of the visit;
- Reasons for the Department's involvement with the family;
- Assessment of safety and risk issues;
- Review of initial services provided to the family;
- Full disclosure and review of client rights;
- Assessment of level of service provision: and
- Workers shall alert the DASA treatment provider completing the AODA assessment or providing treatment services to any parental literacy or communication barriers, which includes lack of access to a telephone, that may impact treatment participation or case progress.

Note: For detailed information concerning the case hand-off/transitional visit see **Procedures 302, Subsection 302.388 (d)**.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 8, 2006 – PT 2006.11

l) **Home Safety Checklist**

Workers shall utilize the **Home Safety Checklist** to identify potential fire hazards and to educate the parents/caregivers on measures that can be taken to reduce those risks.

Note: See Policy Guide 2005.04, Revised Home Safety Checklists, located directly behind **Procedures 300, Appendix G** or **Procedures 315, Appendix A** for detailed information concerning the use of the checklists.

m) **Assessment of Parental Recovery Progress and Readiness for Reunification**

Worker assessment of a parent's progress in recovery must be ongoing. These assessments must not be made solely on the basis of the parent's completion of fixed number of days in treatment. Parent's must also demonstrate through objective measurable behavior a willingness and readiness for increased visitation, return home of their children and reunification.

Workers shall complete the **Recovery Matrix – Placement Cases, CFS 440-9**, to measure and document parental progress in recovery and readiness for reunification. The matrix is administered prior to the completion of the 45 day service plan, at 90 days, prior to the first administrative case review or six months, at nine months, and prior to the second administrative case review or permanency hearing if there is a return home goal. Continue to use the 12-month matrix worksheet at three-month intervals as long as the goal remains return home. The **CFS 440-9** must be completed with the parent if the parent's location is known and the parent is willing to participate in the assessment.

Workers must use the parent's self report, monthly AODA treatment provider reports, urine toxicology testing reports, reports from other service providers, and information obtained from family members when completing the **CFS 440-9**. If the parent participated in the completion of the matrix, the parent and the worker must sign the form. The worker should submit the completed form to his or her supervisor for review and signature. The parent receives a copy of the completed form and the original is filed in the assessment section of the case file. Copies of the completed matrix are submitted to the court prior to any scheduled hearings and prior to an administrative case review.

Note: The **CFS 440-9** cannot be used for intact family cases. A separate matrix, **CFS 440-10**, has been developed for those cases.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 8, 2006 – PT 2006.11

n) Continuing Care (Aftercare), Recovery and Relapse Prevention

An individual's and family's recovery from alcohol and other drug abuse is a lifelong process. However, traditional residential, intensive outpatient and AODA outpatient treatment programs are designed as time limited intervention models. Relapse prevention is an ongoing process that involves the substance abuser, his or her family, significant others, extended family, friends, coworkers and the treatment team.

A client's discharge from treatment can be stressful and it is important that continuing care services begin when treatment has been successfully completed. These services provide the client an opportunity to develop new behaviors, practice drug free living and relapse prevention techniques. During the planning and delivery of these services caseworkers shall:

- Participate with the treatment provider in an interagency staffing two to four weeks prior to the client's discharge from the AODA treatment;
- Complete the risk assessment in accordance with the schedule identified in Department CERAP procedures or when necessary;
- Establish service plan outcomes that are appropriate to the client's presenting problems and needs;
- Assess and document the client's progress in achieving his or her service plan outcomes prior to each administrative case review ;
- Develop a continuing care plan for the client in consultation with the AODA provider and the client;
- Maintain primary casework responsibility for the family following the client's completion of AODA treatment;
- Maintain contact with the client to monitor his or her compliance with the continuing care plan and to assess the need for subsequent services;
- Maintain contact with continuing care providers.
- Engage the client if relapses occur; and
- Work with the client and his or her family on relapse prevention strategies.

o) Case Closing Requirements

When making a decision to close an intact or reunified substance affected family case, the worker and his or her supervisor shall staff the case using the following criteria.

1) Risk and Safety Assessments

Ongoing risk and safety assessments indicate the absence of any threats of harm or sufficiently demonstrate that any threats to harm are adequately addressed within the family and/or through extended family or community.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 8, 2006 – PT 2006.11

2) Service Plan Outcomes and Permanency Goal

The family has achieved service plan outcomes and permanency goal and there are no new stressors that significantly impact the stability of the family system and the safety of the children.

3) Family Functioning

Workers must consider the following guidelines when assessing the family's ability to meet their current and future needs.

- The children show evidence of improved care in the areas of health (i.e., immunizations and well-child examinations are current, chronic or acute medical conditions are being treated), supervision and responsiveness by the parent/caregiver. The risk assessment indicates that the children are safe and there have been no additional SCR reports within the previous six months. The parent/caregiver has had negative urinalysis reports for the past six months and a LEADS check is free of current drug related or violence charges.
- Children in the family have access to a specific adult or adults outside the home to which they can call for assistance in the event of inappropriate activities related to substance misuse, violence, inadequate supervision; and an adult or adults within the family or extended family have assumed the responsibility for reporting any alleged incidents of abuse or neglect to the SCR.
- The AODA provider confirms that the parent/caregiver has fully engaged in the recovery process for the past six months or that substance abuse issues have been addressed and no longer represent a risk to the children. If the parent/caregiver has not successfully completed a substance abuse treatment program, the worker has verified that the physical, emotional and well being needs of the children are being met and that the children are safe. And the conditions in paragraphs one and two above have been met.
- The parent has shown substantial progress in assuming parental responsibilities necessary for reunification as documented on the **Recovery Matrix**.

p) **Substance Affected Families (SAF) Procedures Checklist (Quality Assurance and Record Compliance)**

The **SAF Procedures Checklist, CFS 440-11**, is an inventory form used to document the completion of required screens, forms and tools for substance-affected families. Workers are only required to complete Section I of the form if the **CFS 440-5** or **CFS 440-8** do not

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 8, 2006 – PT 2006.11

result in the adult or adolescent being referred for an AODA assessment or treatment. Document the completion and case entry for the required form/screen/tool by entering the date in the column of the family member involved in the task. The form shall be reviewed and signed by the worker and his or her supervisor prior to each administrative case review and submitted with a copy of the client's **CFS 497** to the case reviewer. The original form shall be maintained in the case record.

q) **Services to Substance Affected Youth**

1) Eligibility Requirements for Referral to DASA Treatment Services

- The Department must be involved with the youth either through an open case or an abuse or neglect investigation.
- The youth must consent to and maintain consent for the exchange of necessary information between the DASA provider, DCFS and the court if the youth is 12 years of age or older. The youth's parent or guardian may consent to the exchange of information if the youth is less than 12 years of age.
- The youth receiving services may be part of an intact family case, relative or traditional foster home care, group home or residential program, pregnant and/or parenting teen, or in a transitional living or independent living program.

2) DASA/Child Welfare Integrated Services Providers

Regional directories of DASA treatment providers funded to serve DCFS/POS adult and youth referrals may be accessed through the "Resource Links" on the DCFS D-Net, and the "Features" tab on the DCFS web page, www.state.il.us/dcfs. Directories are also available from the DCFS Division of Service Intervention.

Note: If a DASA/Child Welfare Integrated Services Program provider is not available in your service area, contact the Division of Service Intervention for assistance in locating a DASA provider or to obtain other treatment options.

3) Identification of AODA Problems

Workers for youth that have not received an integrated assessment, or who have received an integrated assessment but whose circumstances have changed, must be screened for alcohol and other drug abuse using the **Adolescent AODA Indicator, CFS 440-8**, when any of the following circumstances exist.

- A) When the youth's worker, parent, caregiver, teacher, therapist, primary care physician, or other persons that have a significant relationship with

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 8, 2006 – PT 2006.11

the youth suspect or know that the youth is using alcohol, cannabis or other drugs.

- B) When the youth is administered the Ansell Casey Life Skills Assessment on his or her 14th and 16th birthdays.
- C) When the youth is referred to the Child and Youth Investment Teams (CAYIT) or other type of clinical staffing.
- D) When the quarterly residential monitoring review is conducted if the youth is known or suspected of having AODA issues.
- E) When a youth for whom the Department is legally responsible gives birth to a substance-effected infant.

Note: Document the results of the assessment in a SACWIS contact note and refer the youth for further assessment if required.

4) Referral for AODA Assessment

Workers shall refer youth to a DASA/Child Welfare Integrated Services Program provider for an AODA assessment when the results of the **CFS 440-8** indicate that the youth may have a potential problem with alcohol or other drugs. The DASA provider is required to schedule an assessment for the youth no later than the next working day. Call the provider in the presence of the youth so that the youth can confirm the appointment. Inform the youth that he or she will be held responsible for follow through with the assessment and any recommended treatment. Assist the youth in keeping the appointment by making any necessary transportation or child care arrangements.

Forward the completed **CFS 440-8** via facsimile with any relevant LEADS information to the provider in advance of the youth's assessment appointment. Ensure that the youth has the provider's name, contact person, address, and telephone number in writing.

The provider will notify the referring Department or POS worker no later than the next working day if the youth fails to attend the assessment appointment. Follow-up with the youth should occur within one week after the missed appointment. Workers must reinitiate the referral to the provider if the youth is willing to proceed with the assessment.

When a DASA provider does not have the capacity to provide or refer to treatment services at the necessary level for the youth, the provider must establish interim services for the youth until appropriate treatment services become available. When a youth is placed on a waiting list or a provider does not have AODA treatment capacity or problems with a DASA/Child Welfare Integrated

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 8, 2006 – PT 2006.11

Service provider occurs, workers are required to notify the DCFS Division of Service Intervention of the situation.

Note: Refer Cook County pregnant and/or parenting youth for a court benchmark hearing and notify the youth's guardian ad litem of the referral.

- 5) AODA Treatment
 - A) When a youth receives an AODA assessment and is referred for treatment but fails to enter treatment, the youth's worker shall do the following.
 - i) Contact the youth to determine the reason or reasons why the youth failed to enter treatment. If the youth is willing to enter treatment, contact AODA provider to reinitiate the treatment referral.
 - ii) If the youth is unwilling to enter treatment, coordinate a meeting with the youth and the DASA provider within one week after the youth failed to enter treatment.
 - iii) If the youth continues to resist entering treatment, initiate a staffing or family team meeting to discuss the options for engaging the youth in accepting treatment.
 - iv) If the youth is in placement, consider filing a supplemental petition requesting a dispositional order requiring the youth to enter AODA treatment or filing a petition under the provisions of the Illinois Addicted Minor Act (705 ILCS 405/4-1).
 - v) Advise pregnant and/or parenting youth of the options available to the Department if they fail to comply with treatment recommendations. Options available to the Department are listed in subsection (f).
 - B) When a youth enters AODA treatment, the youth's worker shall provide the DASA provider the following information to ensure that the provider understands the youth's child welfare issues that may affect the outcome of the youth's treatment:
 - i) A copy of the youth's portion of the integrated assessment and service plan within one week of the youth's entering treatment;
 - ii) If the youth's integrated assessment and service plan are not been completed at the time the youth enters treatment, the information must be provided no later than one week after they are completed;

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 8, 2006 – PT 2006.11

- iii) Notification when the youth's case is transferred to another worker or when there are other significant case issues such as court hearings, administrative case reviews, removal or return of children to their home, and changes in service plan outcomes.
 - iv) Notification of the youth's parenting status, the Department's legal relationship with the youth's children, and the current living arrangements for the children.
- C) The youth's DCFS or POS workers shall also do the following while the youth is in treatment.
- i) Maintain weekly contact with the AODA provider either in-person or by telephone during the first six weeks of the youth's treatment. Contact with the provider may be no less than monthly after the first six weeks.
 - ii) Maintain weekly contact with the youth during the first six weeks of his or her AODA treatment. Contact with the youth after the first six weeks may be no less than monthly.
 - iii) Monitor the youth's progress through progress and behavior reports provided by the DASA provider every 30 days while the youth is in treatment. Notify the DCFS Division of Service Intervention if DASA provider fails to provide these reports.
 - iv) Workers must convene interagency staffings with the AODA provider which shall occur at least quarterly; prior to changes in the level of AODA services; prior to a change in child custody; prior to the youth's planned discharge from treatment; or whenever events occur that might affect child safety, permanency plans or AODA treatment needs.
- Family meetings can fulfill interagency staffing requirements as long as all persons required to attend the staffing are present at the family meeting.
- v) Ensure that parenting youth receive parent training that also addresses the impact of alcohol and other drug abuse on parenting and families. This training can sometimes be provided as part of the client's AODA treatment.
- D) Continuing Care (Aftercare), Recovery and Relapse Prevention

An individual's and family's recovery from alcohol and other drug abuse is a lifelong process. However, traditional residential, intensive outpatient

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September 8, 2006 – PT 2006.11

and AODA outpatient treatment programs are designed as time limited intervention models. Relapse prevention is an ongoing process that involves the substance abuser, his or her family, significant others, extended family, friends, and the treatment team.

A youth's discharge from treatment can be stressful and it is important that continuing care services begin when treatment has been successfully completed. These services provide the youth an opportunity to develop new behaviors, practice drug free living and relapse prevention techniques. During the planning and delivery of these services caseworkers shall:

- Participate with the treatment provider in an interagency staffing two to four weeks prior to the youth's discharge from the AODA treatment;
- Complete the risk assessment in accordance with the schedule identified in Department CERAP procedures or when necessary;
- Develop a continuing care plan for the youth in consultation with the AODA provider and the youth;
- Maintain primary casework responsibility for the family following the client's completion of AODA treatment;
- Maintain contact with the youth to monitor his or her compliance with the continuing care plan and to assess the need for subsequent services;
- Maintain contact with continuing care providers;
- Engage the youth if relapses occur; and
- Work with the youth and his or her family on relapse prevention strategies.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

November 5, 2014 – PT 2014.19

302.APPENDIX B – SERVICES FOR OLDER CAREGIVERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

a) Purpose

These procedures provide DCFS and POS staff with direction and information that will support the safety and stability of children and youth living with older caregivers (**age 65 and older**). The following procedures ensure that older caregivers and the children for whom they care have access to services provided by the Department of Children and Family Services and the Illinois Department on Aging (IDoA).

The Illinois Department on Aging (IDoA) was created by the state Legislature in 1973 to improve the quality of life for Illinois' senior citizens by coordinating programs and services enabling older persons to preserve their independence as long as possible. It is the State agency in Illinois authorized to receive and dispense Federal Older Americans Act funds, as well as specific State funds, through Area Agencies on Aging and community-based Service providers.

The State of Illinois is divided into thirteen (13) Planning and Service Areas (PSAs). There is one Area Agency on Aging designated by the Department on Aging located within each PSA. In Illinois, twelve (12) not-for-profit agencies and one unit of local government (city of Chicago) serve as Area Agencies on Aging. Each Area Agency on Aging is responsible for planning, coordinating, and advocating for the development of a comprehensive and coordinated system of services for senior citizens within the boundaries of the individual PSA.

These procedures describe the circumstances for collaboration with the IDoA, and its contracted partners, to support older caregiver families and describe the "lifespan approach" that must be followed when the Department is:

- Placing children with older caregivers as the result of a safety plan or at the request of the biological parent with no safety plan in place;
- Providing Intact Family Services;
- Placing children in a foster care placement;
- Moving towards achieving Permanency;
- Contacted for Post Adoption/Adoption Stabilization services; or
- Providing Extended Family Support Services (EFSP).

Early supervisory consultation improves the coordination of services for youth and their older caregivers and can anticipate age related challenges to prevent unnecessary disruptions. Ongoing training and education regarding issues affecting older caregivers and the resources available to older caregiver families through collaboration between the DCFS and IDoA will be provided for all child protection and child welfare staff and is available through the DCFS Office of Training and Professional Development.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

November 5, 2014 – PT 2014.19

b) **Background: Illinois Caregiving Communities**

One in four Illinois households takes on the role of providing care to an older family member or friend, and over 100,000 Illinois grandparents are caring for their grandchildren. The Illinois Department on Aging Family Caregiver Support Program offers services targeted to both of these caregiver populations. Whether caring for an older family member or a grandchild, the caregiving role often evolves over time.

What may be a stable and secure placement at the onset of the placement or permanency can unexpectedly and rapidly change in an older adult population. A sudden illness can turn an independent person into someone who needs assistance on a daily basis. As an individual ages, their alertness, vigor, physical and cognitive well-being changes. Likewise, the needs of developing children change over time.

Understanding issues of aging and what is “normal” often changes over time and can be confusing. It is imperative that workers evaluate older caregiver families utilizing a Lifespan approach and work to assess the on-going viability of the placement in terms of safety and stability for both the children and the older caregiver.

A lifespan approach looks at the developmental stages of children and pairs knowledge of what a particular child can or cannot do at each stage of their development with the ongoing capability of the older caregiver to meet the child’s needs until the child reaches the age of eighteen.

c) **Definitions**

“The Aging Network” means the network of State agencies, Area Agencies on Aging, Title VI grantees, and the Administration; organizations that are providers of direct services to older individuals; or are institutions of higher education; and receive funding under the Older Americans Act.

“Back-up Caregiver Plan” means a supplemental plan through which a parent or guardian plans and arranges for a second person to become responsible for a child’s legal, economic, educational and personal safety and well being when the caregiver is no longer able to care for the child. If conceived and executed properly, the back-up plan allows for the child to remain within the family or extended family circle which contributes to the stability of the placement and the well-being of the child. The back-up plan can also allow the child to be placed with a person who is not a family member but who will, with the aid of legal, social, mental health and community services, provide a long-term and nurturing placement. Please refer to **Rule 302.40 (d)(2), Department Service Goals**.

“Capacity” means an individual's ability to make an informed decision such as capacity to make a will, marry, enter into a contract, vote, drive a car, stand trial in a criminal prosecution, etc.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

November 5, 2014 – PT 2014.19

“Competence” refers to the degree of mental soundness necessary to make decisions about a specific issue or to carry out a specific act. All adults are presumed to be competent unless adjudicated otherwise by a court.

Legal Competence vs. Capacity

Although decision-making capacity and competence both describe a person’s ability to make decisions, they are not synonymous. Whereas competence is determined by a court of law, decision-making capacity is a clinical assessment. Competence is a legal term – to say a person is incompetent indicates that a court has ruled the person unable to make valid decisions and has appointed a guardian to make decisions for the person.

In contrast to legal competence, decision-making capacity is assessed by clinicians as an everyday part of clinical care. Decision-making capacity is defined as the ability to understand and appreciate the nature and consequences of decisions.

It is important to respect and understand the older caregiver’s right to self-determination. This includes the older adult’s right to make decisions that may not be in their own best interest. However, if these decisions affect the long-term safety and stability of the child, the Department must be involved. It is the responsibility of the Department to make placement decisions and/or changes based on the best interests of the child regardless of the older caregiver’s right to self determination.

“Determination of Need” or “DON” is an assessment tool used in the Community Care Program (CCP) and as a pre-admission screening tool to nursing homes to determine if a person needs enough help with their activities of daily living (ADLs) to qualify for assistance or placement.

“Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG)” means a program through which the Illinois Department on Aging provides assistance to grandparents and other relatives (regardless of their age) who are raising related children. The program assists relatives who are seeking resources and referrals to support their efforts to provide safe, stable and loving homes for children. The program establishes and funds support groups, legal services, respite, outreach, counseling, and gap filling funds.

“Lifespan Approach” means the perspective which must be considered when placing children with older caregivers. This perspective considers changes occurring throughout people’s lifetimes. In most people’s lives, such things as alertness, vigor, and physical and mental well-being change as aging occurs. Plans made at one point in a family’s life may no longer be viable years down the line. A lifespan approach recognizes that older caregivers will experience physical or cognitive changes as they age and that some of these changes may affect older caregivers’ abilities to provide a healthy and safe environment not only for themselves but also for the children in their care. Further, use of a lifespan approach looks at the developmental stages of children and pairs knowledge of what a particular child can or cannot do at each stage with the

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

November 5, 2014 – PT 2014.19

on-going capability of the older caregiver to meet the child's needs until the child reaches the age of majority (18).

“Minor Requiring Authoritative Intervention (MRAI)” means any minor under 18 years of age who:

- is absent from home without the consent of a parent, guardian or custodian;
- is beyond the control of his or her parent, guardian or custodian, or circumstances which constitute a substantial or immediate danger to the minor's physical safety;
- after being taken into limited custody (21 days for the first instance and five for the second, third, fourth) and offered interim crisis intervention services, where available, refuses to return home after the minor and his or her parent, guardian or custodian, and cannot agree to an arrangement for an alternative voluntary residential placement or to the continuation of such placement.

“Dependency” or “Dependent Child” means a *child who is without proper medical or other remedial care recognized under State law or other care necessary for his or her well being through no fault, neglect or lack of concern by his parents, guardian or custodian, provided that no order may be made terminating parental rights, nor may a minor removed from the custody of his or her parents for longer than 6 months, pursuant to an adjudication as a dependent minor under this subdivision (c), unless it is found to be in his or her best interest by the court automatically closes as provided under section 2-31 of this Act. 705 ILCS 405/2-4(1)*

“Older Individual” as used in these procedures means, an individual who is **65 years of age or older**.

Note: *The Older Americans Act* allows for delivery of services to older caregivers **55 and older** who are “Grandparent or Older Individual Who Is a Relative Caregiver,” defined as a grandparent or step grandparent of a child, or a relative of a child by blood, marriage or adoption, who **is 55 years of age or older** and;

- lives with the child; and
- is the primary caregiver of the child

“Service Providers” means community based-providers, representing a key segment of the Aging Network in Illinois because they provide the programs and direct services to older persons. The success that the Aging Network has had in linking older persons with needed services is one tangible result of cooperation and coordination between the Department on Aging, the Area Agencies on Aging and local service providers. Care Coordination Units (CCUs), created in 1983, function as gatekeepers to the State long-term care system by coordinating and integrating community-based long-term care services available throughout the entire aging network for and on behalf of older persons.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

November 5, 2014 – PT 2014.19

d) DCFS – IDoA Intergovernmental Agreement

With the agreement, IDoA and DCFS delineate their respective roles, responsibilities, and resources associated with ensuring that the parties collaborate to ensure that older caregivers are provided the appropriate needs assessments, services and referrals in order to provide stability for both the caregiver and any child(ren) living in the home. Information shall be shared between the parties in order to ensure stability for children living in the home of an older caregiver and to ensure appropriate services are provided to the older caregiver family.

The Agreement facilitates a joint effort between DCFS and IDoA to obtain services for older caregiver families. Pursuant to the Illinois Children and Family Services Act, 20 ILCS 505/1 *et seq.*, DCFS is the entity authorized to provide social services to children and their families, to operate children's institutions, and to provide certain other rehabilitative and residential services. IDoA provides a comprehensive and coordinated service system for the State's aging population.

As the Agreement applies to older adults who are caregivers to minor children for whom DCFS has, or may have, responsibility for, DCFS is required to do the following:

- 1) Assure the safety and well-being of the child;
- 2) Maintain effective communications between DCFS/POS staff and IDoA/Aging Network;
- 3) Support and offer services to older caregivers when there are concerns about the caregiver's ability to safely care for the child in their home over time (lifespan approach);
- 4) Notify older caregivers of the concerns noted and any referrals made to the Aging Network;
- 5) Train direct service staff and supervisors on all of the policies and procedures relevant to the Agreement;
- 6) Implement and maintain a record-keeping system; and
- 7) Review compliance by Department service providers.

e) Reporting Requirements

It is the duty of DCFS and IDoA to serve and protect society's most vulnerable children, disabled, and elderly. To this end, staff (full time or contractual) of both agencies are required to report to the appropriate hotline whenever incidents of abuse, neglect or exploitation of children, the disabled, or the elderly are suspected.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

November 5, 2014 – PT 2014.19

Suspected incidents abuse, neglect or exploitation to the above populations shall be reported as follows;

- Suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect shall be reported to DCFS by calling the **Child Abuse Hotline at (800) 252-2873** (24/7 statewide).
- Suspected incidents of abuse, financial exploitation or neglect of an older person, or persons with disabilities aged 18-59 shall be reported to IDoA by calling the **Adult Protective Services Hotline at (866) 800-1409** (24/7 statewide).

f) Meeting Service Needs:

Upon the initial placement, or as early as possible in the life of the case, if a caregiver is **age 65 or older** and the use of the lifespan approach suggests that given the age of the child and the age of the caregiver it is not likely that the caregiver will be able to care for the child until the age of 18, the placing or Permanency worker shall conduct a diligent search in accordance with **Administrative Procedures #22, Diligent Search** to identify and locate viable relatives to care for the child to the age of 18. The diligent search shall include but not be limited to: non-custodial parents, maternal and paternal relatives, child-centered collaterals (children 4 years and older, if developmentally appropriate, should be asked to help identify their collaterals), and other adults the child may have a relationship with in their family, school, church, synagogue, mosque, and neighborhood. These efforts shall be documented as required per **Administrative Procedures #22**.

The Integrated Assessment (IA) Clinical Screener, in partnership with the Permanency worker, within the first 45 days of the case will assess the needs and strengths of all parents/guardians and substitute caregivers. For any parent/guardian or substitute caregiver **age 65 or older**, the Clinical Screener will assess the caregiver's ability to meet the child/youth's needs of safety, permanency, and well-being using a lifespan approach. IA recommendations will be based on the child/youth's need for placement and stability. Linkage to IDoA resources will also be recommended as needed.

When the Permanency worker or Clinical Screener identify concerns about the older caregiver's capacity to safely care for the child and/or him or herself in the home, the worker shall notify her/his supervisor and contact the IDoA **Senior HelpLine (1-800-252-8966)** to request assistance for the older caregiver. Assistance may be limited to provision of supports and services available to the older relative caregiver or may involve a comprehensive assessment of the older caregiver by a Care Coordination Unit, an agency contracted with IDoA for a specific geographic area.

The Permanency worker can refer the older caregiver for an assessment or for adult protective services by calling the **Senior HelpLine (1-800-252-8966)**, provide information and resources for the older caregiver, and participate in staffings regarding the older caregiver's family. With a completed and signed **CFS 600-3 Consent for the Release of Information**, the Permanency worker and supervisor are permitted to share information about the older caregiver's overall functional capacities in their case

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

November 5, 2014 – PT 2014.19

planning, including but not limited to, the information gathered for the caregiver section on the CANS and the IA. A signed and completed **CFS 600-3** is **NOT required** when calling Adult Protective Services to report suspected abuse, financial exploitation or neglect of an older person or persons with disabilities. Assistance for older caregivers may be requested by calling the following numbers:

- **Senior HelpLine:** (8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m., Monday through Friday)
1-800-252-8966
1-888-206-1327 (TTY)
aging.ilsenior@illinois.gov

Or as mentioned above, to report suspected abuse, financial exploitation or neglect of an older person or persons with disabilities aged 18-59:

- **Adult Protective Services Hotline:** (Calls 24/7 statewide)
1-866-800-1409
1-888-206-1327 (TTY).

g) **Requirements of DCFS / POS Child Protection Specialists and Permanency Workers**

1) **DCFS and POS**

A) **Initial Contact**

Department and POS staff who place children and/or work with older caregiver families shall ensure that the placement is in the best interest of the child and the placement is identified as an older caregiver placement. The Child Protection Specialist or Permanency worker must obtain from the older caregiver a completed and signed **CFS 600-3 Consent for the Release of Information** in order to facilitate the exchange of information between DCFS, IDoA, and potential service providers. The DCFS or POS worker shall also give to the older caregivers the **CFS 1050-86, Grandparents and Other Relatives Raising Children** pamphlet, which provides information on how to contact the Aging Network for assistance for themselves or those in the home for whom they provide care (e.g. spouse, parent, sibling, or disabled adult children), including the children placed by DCFS/POS. Each DCFS Regional Office shall maintain a list of resources and provide DCFS and POS workers with instructions regarding how to access them.

DCFS and POS workers shall document in a contact note when they provided older caregiver information regarding services for older caregivers and their families and explain any circumstances under which this information was not provided.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

November 5, 2014 – PT 2014.19

B) Placement Considerations for Children

When selecting a placement for children, DCFS and POS Child Protection Specialists and Permanency workers must be guided by the caregiver's capacity to meet the unique and diverse needs of each child to be placed and the placement must be in accordance to **Procedures 301.60, Placement Selection Criteria**. As stated above, all placements are to be made consistent with the best interests of the children. The Department will make diligent efforts to place children in a home that can maintain sibling groups together and meet their long-term needs.

When a child is placed in the care of an older caregiver as defined in these procedures, it is critical that the placement be in a safe environment and be able to meet the child's future needs, including achieving the child's permanency goal. The child's worker may need to refer to IDoA for resources for the older caregiver to help them maintain a safe and healthy placement and permanency for the child.

Services for the older caregiver obtained through a referral to IDoA, or a change in placement, may be required when an older caregiver experiences age-related impairments or challenges that impact their ability to safely care for the child and/or themselves. Age related impairments or challenges include but are not limited to:

- i) Cognitive impairments due to Alzheimer's or other dementing diseases;
- ii) Deteriorating physical health;
- iii) Sudden onset of significant health problems; or
- iv) The need to become a caregiver to another family member such as a spouse, sibling or parent.

C) Meeting Service Needs of Older Caregivers and Children in their Care

As stated above, if at any time following the initial placement of a child/ren with an older caregiver, concerns about the placement arise related to the ongoing ability of the older adult to safely care for the child/ren in the home, the worker shall notify her/his supervisor to determine whether immediate action is needed on behalf of the child and shall contact the IDoA **Senior HelpLine (1-800-252-8966)** to request assistance for the older caregiver. Assistance may be limited to provision of supports and services available to the older caregiver or may involve a comprehensive assessment of the older caregiver by a Care Coordination Unit, an agency contracted for a specific geographic area with IDoA. The worker can refer the older caregiver for a comprehensive assessment that may trigger an array of services for older adults.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

November 5, 2014 – PT 2014.19

This comprehensive assessment, referred to as a Determination of Need (DON), utilizes normed and standardized tools to assess older adults across multiple domains including functional and cognitive capabilities, finances and assets. Services are matched to meet the needs determined by the assessment. Identified services are designed to help senior citizens remain living independently in their own homes.

The worker and supervisor are responsible for including information about the older caregiver's overall functional capacities in their case planning including, but not limited to, the information gathered for the Caregiver sections on the CANS and Integrated Assessment.

2) Referrals from the Aging Network

When the State Central Registry (SCR) is called regarding concerns about the older caregiver's continuing capacity to care for the child, it typically results in a referral to the Extended Family Support Program (EFSP); however, a call *may* result in a child abuse or neglect investigation, information related to a pending investigation, to an open service case, **or** a Child Welfare Services Referral. Callers may also report if the child is out of the control of the older caregiver or "MRAI," or if the child is a "dependent child" as defined in these procedures.

EFSP provides short-term services to a child residing in the care of a relative for which short-term interventions will stabilize the relative household and allow for continued care of the child in the home. A child served by this program may not have a legal relationship with the Department and must be referred for EFSP services through the State Central Register (SCR), Child Protection, Intact Family Worker, the Post Adoption Unit, or an Aging Network/IDoA caseworker calling SCR to complete a referral in the presence of the older caregiver. However, if SCR is not available and needs to return the call to the Aging Network/IDoA caseworker at a time when the older caregiver is no longer available to be on the call, the SCR call floor worker may take an EFSP referral with the information that the IDoA representative provides when such a referral is appropriate.

A) Extended Family Support Program Services

Casework interventions provided by the EFSP provider for the child may include the following:

- i) Crisis intervention and other short-term interventions to address issues within the family that threaten to destabilize the relative household and allow for continued care of the child in that household;

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

November 5, 2014 – PT 2014.19

- ii) Enable the relative to obtain guardianship of the child through probate court. Facilitation may include assistance obtaining required documents and, when necessary, payment of fees with EFSP emergency cash assistance;
- iii) Assistance in obtaining pro-bono legal services. (When pro-bono legal services are not available, legal fees may be paid with EFSP emergency cash assistance allocated to the family.);
- iv) Assist the relative caregiver with registering the child in the local school;
- v) Advocacy to assist the family in obtaining benefits which may include Medicaid, food stamps, SSI housing supplements, day care, and other benefits for which the family may be eligible;
- vi) Referral and brokerage of needed services that may include employment, housing, budgeting, mental health and medical services, parenting training, counseling, and therapy;
- vii) Cash assistance provided through the Extended Family Support Program Emergency Cash Assistance as specified below;
- viii) Referrals to the Illinois Department on Aging (IDoA).

B) Extended Family Support Program Emergency Cash Assistance

Families must have an open EFSP case before the family can access EFSP emergency cash assistance funds. Emergency cash assistance may be used to purchase goods and services that the family requires in order to obtain guardianship or to support stabilization of the child's living arrangement. Goods (hard services) purchased with emergency cash assistance may include beds, dressers, other furniture as required, appliances, and food in emergency situations. Emergency cash may also be used for security deposits and legal services. (Emergency cash assistance amounts will vary depending on the individual needs of each case; however, it is limited to an average of \$500.00 per case per agency.)

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

November 5, 2014 – PT 2014.19

h) Resources

Additional resources and information on available programs to assist families with older caregivers can be found on the internet by clicking on the links below, and on the D-net or the DCFS Website under the “older caregiver” tab found under “resources.”

Illinois Department on Aging

<http://www.state.il.us/aging/1intergen/grg.htm>

Administration for Community Living/Administration on Aging

<http://www.acl.gov/>

USA.gov

<http://www.usa.gov/Topics/Grandparents.shtml>

Administration for Children and Families: Child Welfare Information Gateway

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/supporting/resources/grandparents.cfm>

Womenshealth.gov

<https://www.womenshealth.gov/aging/caregiving/raising-children-again.html>

Brookdale Foundation

<http://www.brookdalefoundation.org/RAPP/rapp.html>

Generations United

<http://www.gu.org/>

Metropolitan Family Services (Elder Abuse (312) 986-4332; Cook only)

<http://www.metrofamily.org/>

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT
November 5, 2014 – PT 2014.19

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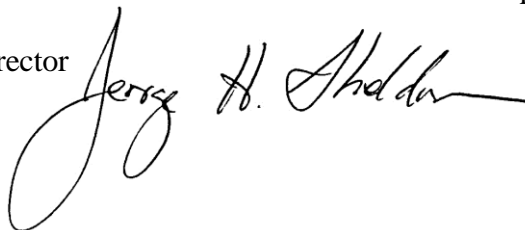
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

POLICY GUIDE 2016.10

Replaces PG 2014.20

**Procedures 300 Reports of Child Abuse and Neglect
Procedures 302 Services Provided by the Department
Procedures 315 Permanency Planning**

DATE: August 26, 2016
TO: All Child Protection and DCFS/POS Child Welfare Staff and Supervisors
FROM: George H. Sheldon, Director
EFFECTIVE: Immediately



I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy Guide is to provide Child Protection and Child Welfare staff for with revised and updated Safety Plan Rights and Responsibilities for Parents and Guardians, Safety Plan Rights and Responsibilities for Adult Caregivers and Safety Plan Participants and Safety Plan Rights and Responsibilities for Investigators and Caseworkers. The updated forms provide additional information for parents and caregivers, adult caregivers and safety plan participants and investigators and caseworkers regarding the formulation of the safety plan, the information that needs to be detailed in the safety plan document, the process for modification of safety plans and the process for continual review of safety plans.

The instructions in this Policy Guide will be incorporated into **Procedures 302.250 Paramour Involved Families; 302.260 Domestic Violence; 302.388, Intact Family Services, 302 Appendix A Substance Affected Families; 302 Appendix B Older Caregivers; Procedures 315.110 Worker Contacts and Interventions; Procedures 315 Appendix A CERAP and Procedures 300 Appendix G CERAP.**

This Policy Guide is effective immediately.

II. PRIMARY USERS

Primary users are all Child Protection Specialists and Supervisors and all DCFS/POS Child Welfare Workers and Supervisors.



III. BACKGROUND

Procedures 300 Appendix G CERAP/Procedures 315 Appendix A CERAP (Current)

Safety Plans

Safety plans are voluntary, temporary and short term measures designed to control serious and immediate threats to children's safety. They must be adequate to ensure the child's safety and be as **minimally disruptive** to the child and family as is reasonably possible. Additionally, families can request that a safety plan be modified or terminated at any time. The safety plan will indicate which safety threat or threats have led to the need for a safety plan according to the completion of the CERAP. The safety plan will require a written description of what will be done or what actions will be taken to protect children, who will be responsible for implementing the components of the safety plan and how/who will monitor it. It is important that safety plans be developed with the family to control specific threats and that the family understands the mechanism for ending each safety plan. **Under no circumstance is a safety plan to serve as the solution to a long-term problem. A family may request at any time to modify or terminate the safety plan.**

When a safety plan is implemented, it should be documented on a **CFS 1441-A, Safety Plan** when it is likely that a child could be moderately or severely harmed now or in the very near future. The safety plan must be developed whenever there are protective efforts that would reasonably ensure child safety and permit the child to remain in their caregiver's custody. After the safety plan has been developed, it must be immediately implemented to ensure that all of the designated tasks are completed effectively. The safety plan should contain timeframes for implementation and continued monitoring.

IV. OVERVIEW

Public Act 98-0830 amended Section 21 (f) of the Children and Family Services Act [20 ILCS 505/21] and required the Department or POS caseworker to provide information to each parent, guardian and adult caregiver participating in a safety plan explaining their rights and responsibilities. These updated forms add additional information to the Safety Plan Rights and Responsibilities forms with the following information:

- The investigator and caseworker shall implement a safety plan only when DCFS has a basis to take protective custody of a child(ren) and the safety plan is an alternative to protective custody;
- The investigator and caseworker shall explain to the parent(s)/guardian(s) the safety plan alternatives and that the parent(s)/guardian(s) have a voluntary choice to enter into the safety plan as an alternative to protective custody and to choose the individual(s) responsible for supervising or monitoring the safety plan if such person(s) is/are determined to be qualified by DCFS;
- The investigator and caseworker shall modify the safety plan if the family's circumstances change or if the participants request modifications, including a change in the person(s) preferred by the parent(s)/guardian(s) to supervise or monitor the safety plan or serve as a temporary caregiver;

- Terminate the safety plan as soon as the investigator and/or supervisor determine there is no longer a legal basis to take protective custody and provide the parent(s)/guardian(s) with the Safety Plan Termination form; and
- The Department or POS representative shall ensure that the safety plan is reviewed and approved by their respective supervisor.

V. INSTRUCTIONS

Effective immediately:

- Child Protection and Child Welfare staff shall provide the parent, guardian and adult caregiver participating in a safety plan with a copy of the **CFS 1441-A, Safety Plan** that has been signed by all adult participants and the DCFS/POS representative;

Note: Department and POS staff must use only the **CFS 1441-A, Safety Plan (Rev 12/2014)** that has been revised to meet the requirements of PA 98-0830.

- The Department or POS representative shall provide each parent/guardian, adult caregiver and safety plan participant with information explaining their rights and responsibilities including, but not limited to: information for how to obtain medical care for the child, emergency contact information for participants including phone numbers and information on how to notify schools and day care providers of safety plan requirements. The rights and responsibilities of each parent/guardian, adult caregiver, safety plan participant and child protection/child welfare staff are listed in new forms **CFS 1441-D, Safety Plans Rights and Responsibilities for Parents and Guardians; CFS 1441-E, Safety Plan Rights and Responsibilities for Responsible Adult caregivers and Safety Plan Participants; CFS 1441-F, Safety Plan Responsibilities for Child Protection Specialists and Child Welfare Caseworkers**. All **CFS 1441** forms are available in central stores, templates, and the website; and
- After receiving verbal supervisory approval of the safety plan prior to leaving the family home, the Department or POS representative shall submit the signed **CFS 1441-A** to their respective supervisor for review and approval.

VI. ATTACHMENTS

CFS 1441-D, Safety Plans Rights and Responsibilities for Parents and Guardians (Revised 08/2016);

CFS 1441-E, Safety Plan Rights and Responsibilities for Responsible Adult caregivers and Safety Plan Participants (Revised 08/2016); and

CFS 1441-F, Safety Plan Responsibilities for Child Protection Specialists and Child Welfare Caseworkers (Revised 08/2016).

Please note that the **CFS 1441-A** is printed on a 6 Part form and available from Central Stores. The **CFS 1441-D – F** are printed on regular paper and available from Central Stores, DCFS Website and T drive. All forms will be available in Spanish.

VII. QUESTIONS

Questions regarding this Policy Guide may be directed to the Office of Child and Family Policy at 217-524-1983 or via Outlook at OCFP – Mailbox. Non Outlook users may e-mail questions to cfpolicy@idcfs.state.il.us.

VIII. FILING INSTRUCTIONS

Remove and replace Policy Guide 2014.20 with this Policy Guide immediately after **Procedures 302.250 Paramour Involved Families; Procedures 302.260 Domestic Violence; Procedures 302.388 Intact Family Services; Procedures 302 Appendix B Older Caregivers; Procedures 315.110 Worker Contacts and Interventions; Procedures 315 Appendix A CERAP and Procedures 300 Appendix G CERAP.**

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 17, 2017 – P.T. 2017.02

APPENDIX C – HUMAN TRAFFICKING

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section

- I. Purpose**
- II. Definitions**
- III. Identification of Human Trafficking**
- IV. Prevention of Human Trafficking**
- V. Reporting Requirements for Caregivers, Workers and Supervisors**
 - a) Reporting Requirements for Caregivers
 - b) Reporting Requirements for Workers
 - c) Requirements for Supervisors
- VI. The Role of the Child Intake and Recovery Unit**
- VII. Assessment and Safety**
 - a) Risk Factors
 - b) The Human Trafficking Supervision Plan
 - c) Termination of the Human Trafficking Supervision Plan
- VIII. Placement Considerations**
- IX. Medical Assessment**
- X. Mental Health Assessment and Services**
- XI. Involvement of Law Enforcement**

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 17, 2017 – P.T. 2017.02

I. Purpose

The purpose of these procedures is to establish requirements and provide instructions for Department and Purchase of Service (POS) staff when children for whom the Department is legally responsible are believed to be the victims of human trafficking. The level of Department involvement will be individualized and in correlation to the assessed safety and risks of the child.

The Illinois Safe Children Act (2010) eradicates the pejorative term “juvenile prostitute” from Illinois statutes and requires that minors engaged in commercial sexual activities be treated as victims of human trafficking and not as juvenile offenders. The Illinois Safe Children Act also mandates that children be identified and served through IDCFS as minor victims of trafficking with access to all the services and support provided through federal and state laws.

Children who are victims of human trafficking often do not perceive the inherent risks or see themselves as victims. This is especially true for children who are identified as “high risk.” Because of the potential dangers to the child, if the child’s worker has reason to believe the child is a victim of human trafficking, the worker is to consider the event as requiring intensive intervention.

II. Definitions

“Coercion” means threats of serious harm to, or physical restraint of, any person; any scheme, plan or pattern intended to cause a person to believe that failure to perform an act would result in serious harm to, or physical restraint against, any person; or the abuse or threatened abuse of the legal process.

“Commercial Sex Act” means any sex act on account of which anything of value is given to or received by any person. [U.S.C. §7102(8)]

“Commercial sexual exploitation of a child” (CSEC) means the use of any person under the age of 18 for sexual purposes in exchange for cash or in-kind favors; it can occur between a child and a customer, the pimp/trafficker of others (including family members) who profit from children for these purposes.

“Force” means the use of any form of physical force, including rape, beatings and confinement to control victims.

“Forced labor” means the obtaining of labor or services of another person through any one of the following prohibited means: (a) force, threats of force, physical restraint, or threats of physical restraint; (b) serious harm or threats of serious harm; (c) abuse or threatened abuse of the law or legal process; or (d) a scheme, plan, or pattern intended to cause or to believe that, if the person did not perform such labor and services, that the person would suffer serious harm or physical restraint.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 17, 2017 – P.T. 2017.02

“Fraud” means false offers that induce people into trafficking situations.

“Harboring” means to receive or hold a person in a place without legal authority.

“High Risk Child” means that the child’s safety is severely compromised for one or more of the following reasons:

- The child is pregnant and/or parenting;
- The child has severe emotional problems that if not treated will place the child at severe risk;
- The child has a developmental disability that impairs the child’s ability to care for her or himself; or
- The child has a serious alcohol and/or substance problem.

“Involuntary servitude” means a condition of servitude induced by means of any scheme, plan, or pattern intended to cause a person to believe that, if the person did not enter into or continue in such condition, that a person or another person would suffer serious harm or physical restraint; or, the abuse or threatened abuse of the legal process.

“Labor” means work of economic or financial value.

“Recruitment” means the process of enlisting or convincing a person to join with another person for a stated purpose.

“Services” means a relationship between a victim and an individual in which the victim performs activities under the supervision of or for the benefit of the individual. Commercial sexual activity and sexually –explicit performances are forms of service under this definition.

“Servitude” means slavery; the condition where a person is forced to perform labor or services, against his or her will, by another person.

“Sexually-explicit performance” means a live, recorded, broadcast (including Internet) or public act or show intended to arouse or satisfy the sexual desires or appeal to the prurient interests of patrons.

“Sex Trafficking” means the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 17, 2017 – P.T. 2017.02

III. Identification of Human Trafficking

Federal law defines trafficking in persons as: sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age; or the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, obtaining, patronizing or soliciting of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage or slavery. [22 U.S.C. §7102(10)]

Note: For the purpose of these procedures, victims of human trafficking include all youth for whom the Department is legally responsible, including those between the ages of 18-21.

Sex trafficking of minors occurs when minors are involved in commercial acts, including prostitution, sexually explicit performance or production of pornography. Sex trafficking cases involving minors do not require force, fraud, or coercion as they do for adults over 18 years. Therefore, any person under 18 years of age engaged in any type of commercial sexual activity is deemed a victim of human trafficking under Illinois and Federal laws.

Trafficking victims do not need to be in fact “locked up” by their trafficker, and sometimes attend school and participate in other normal activities. It is important to note that although the word “trafficking” implies movement, a victim of trafficking may never cross international or state lines.

Workers shall utilize the following list of indicators to identify possible human trafficking. It is important to note that not every child who exhibits one of these indicators is a victim of human trafficking. Although an indicator may warrant concern, none of these indicators stand alone or exist without context.

- History of running away or current status as a runaway;
- The child makes references to travel to other cities while on run;
- The child makes reference to being coerced into performing illegal activities;
- The child makes reference to having a pimp or “daddy”;
- The child has current signs of physical abuse and/or sexually transmitted diseases;
- The child seems submissive or fearful;
- Inexplicable appearance of expensive gifts, clothing, manicures, pedicures or other costly items;
- Presence of an older boyfriend/girlfriend;
- Withdrawal or lack of interest in previous activities;
- Tattoos or branding (could be pimp/trafficker’s name);
- Possession of a cell phone;
- Postings on social networking sites;
- Child was located in a hotel/motel;
- The child has been isolated from sources of support and protection;

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 17, 2017 – P.T. 2017.02

- The child makes reference to sexual situations that are beyond age-specific norms;
- The child engages in sexually provocative behaviors, is promiscuous and/or has unprotected sex with multiple partners; or
- The child makes references to terminology of the commercial sex industry.

IV. Prevention of Human Trafficking

Youth for which the Department is legally responsible are extremely vulnerable to, and are actively targeted by traffickers. Prevention is the key to building the protective factors and resiliencies of the youth living within the child welfare system and to deter the recruitment methods of individuals wanting to exploit them. Proper identification of possible trafficking is critical to ensuring the safety of youth in care. A comprehensive response to possible trafficking will increase the success of removing youth from dangerous and often life threatening situations before actual trafficking occurs.

Caseworkers should refer to Section III of these procedures, particularly for youth placed in residential facilities or group homes, to identify possible risk factors for human trafficking.

If a caseworker suspects a youth is vulnerable to human trafficking, he/she shall engage the youth with a discussion regarding the risks and realities of human trafficking. The caseworker must also discuss possible risk with the youth's caregiver and document the discussions with the youth and caregiver in a **Contact note**.

After consultation with supervisor, the consultation, discussions and known risk factors regarding human trafficking must be documented in a **Supervisory note**. The note will include a description of known risk factors and actions needed to deter the youth from possible human trafficking.

Additional information regarding prevention of human trafficking can be obtained via D-Net, under the "Human Trafficking" link or by contacting **the Statewide Human Trafficking Coordinator via "DCFS Human Trafficking" mailbox on Outlook**.

V. Reporting Requirements for Caregivers, Workers and Supervisors

a) Reporting Requirements for Caregivers

Caregivers, including foster parents, relative caregivers, and staff of residential facilities, shall immediately report alleged human trafficking to:

- 1) the child's case manager/worker; and
- 2) the DCFS Child Abuse Hotline (1-800-25-ABUSE) also known as the State Central Register (SCR) in accordance with Department **Rules 300, Appendix B, The Allegation System**.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 17, 2017 – P.T. 2017.02

b) Reporting Requirements for Workers

When a worker learns that a youth for whom the Department is legally responsible is a victim of human trafficking, the worker shall immediately:

- 1) Notify the DCFS Guardian and the child's Guardian ad Litem;
- 2) Notify the child's counselor, therapist or mental health professional if applicable;
- 3) Report the alleged trafficking to SCR in accordance with Department **Rules 300, Appendix B** (if not already done by caregiver);

Note: If a report of child abuse/neglect is not accepted by SCR (or the child is 18 or over), the worker will have in-person contact with the child to engage the child, ascertain information and reduce the possibility of the child leaving care. Collateral contacts must also be made with individuals who may be able to provide information regarding the alleged human trafficking (e.g., residential/group home staff or foster family, peers, school personnel, family members, etc);

- 4) Document in SACWIS via human trafficking indicator in the child's record (required for the initial report of human trafficking only);
- 5) Complete the **CFS 119 Unusual Incident Report (UIR)**, using code L13 (Human Trafficking of a DCFS Ward) on Part 2 of the **CFS 119**, to report human trafficking in accordance with Department **Procedures 331, Unusual Incidents Involving Department Clients, Employees, and Facilities**;
- 6) If the youth is missing from care, refer to **Procedures 329, Locating and Returning Missing, Runaway and Abducted Children**, and select the "Human Trafficking/Prostitution" risk factor on the **CFS 1014, Missing Children Recovery Report** form, if applicable.

The worker shall document all known or suspected information regarding the alleged human trafficking in a case note including but not limited to:

- i. When and where the alleged trafficking occurred;
- ii. Name(s), including all "AKAs," and date(s) of birth or age(s) of alleged trafficker(s);
- iii. Describe the relationship of the trafficker to the youth/how did they come in contact with one another;
- iv. Methods of contact between the trafficker and the child (internet (specific: email, social networking sites, chat rooms, etc), cell phone, in-person, peers, family members, etc);
- v. Alias names or dates of birth for the youth used.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 17, 2017 – P.T. 2017.02

c) Requirements for Supervisors

- 1) Upon notification by the worker of a child's involvement in human trafficking, the supervisor will immediately confirm the worker has completed all of the required reports and contacts as described in Section IV of these procedures;
- 2) The supervisor will confirm that the human trafficking indicator in SACWIS has been selected;
- 3) The supervisor will review the case note(s) completed by the worker to ensure the required information regarding the trafficking has been documented;
- 4) The supervisor will assist the worker in developing and implementing a plan to provide an appropriate change of placement if needed, and services for the child. A summary of the discussion and plan shall be documented in a **Supervisory note**.

VI. The Role of the Child Intake and Recovery Unit (CIRU)

Youth involved in human trafficking are almost always missing from placement when trafficking occurs, therefore including the DCFS Child Intake and Recovery Unit (CIRU) is crucial to the process of identification and recovery.

- a) CIRU will forward any information regarding a missing youth and human trafficking via **"DCFS Human Trafficking" mailbox on Outlook to the Statewide Human Trafficking Coordinator**, and also to the worker;
- b) CIRU will document the information in the missing child section in SACWIS to aid in current or future incidents of the child missing from care;
- c) When appropriate and necessary, CIRU will share information with law enforcement and shelter staff, to ensure the child's safety.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 17, 2017 – P.T. 2017.02

VII. Assessment and Safety

Workers, in consultation with their supervisors, are responsible for determining the immediate actions to be taken when a youth is involved in human trafficking. The supervisor and worker shall assess any immediate safety concerns, identifying the actions that are necessary to minimize any risks and ensure those actions are taken as expeditiously as possible.

A trafficked child can be either abducted by his/her trafficker(s) or lured to meet them. Consideration should be given to moving the child to a new placement to ensure the child's safety when necessary. If the child is moved to a new placement, strict confidentiality (only those with an absolute need to know the location of the new placement should be informed) is necessary to avoid the trafficker(s) from obtaining information on the child's whereabouts. Consideration should be given to the role of those in contact with the youth and the specific reason why he/she would need to be made aware of the youth's new placement location. Additionally, the trafficked youth and other youth at the facility or placement should not be informed of where the trafficked youth is being moved. Every measure possible should be taken to protect the privacy and identity of child victims in order to ensure their safety and security.

On rare occasions it may be necessary to move a youth quickly and confidentially to avoid possible abduction and/or harm. On those occasions the Statewide Human Trafficking Coordinator will work directly with the Chief of the Bureau of Operations or his/her designee and the assigned caseworker and supervisor to facilitate such a rapid and confidential placement. Once the confidential placement has been accomplished the worker can proceed with development of the Human Trafficking Supervision Plan as described in Section VII (b) below.

Note: When trafficked victims are moved, other youth in the placement known to traffickers remain at risk. Measures should be taken to secure the facility or placement by notifying law enforcement and informing all facility staff or caregivers of any possible threat.

a) Risk Factors

Workers shall refer to the list below to determine any current or future human trafficking safety threat to the child or another child in care. Any of the following factors may contribute to increased risks and must be addressed when assessing safety and minimizing risks.

These factors include:

- 1) The child is in contact with an alleged trafficker;
- 2) The alleged trafficker knows the location of the child's placement;
- 3) The alleged trafficker has threatened to harm the child or others close to the child (including other foster children in the same placement);

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 17, 2017 – P.T. 2017.02

- 4) The child is in contact with other people involved in human trafficking;
- 5) The child has a history of running from placement;
- 6) The child states intent to engage in trafficking in the future;
- 7) The child expresses a fear for his/her safety;
- 8) The child has previously recruited or may attempt to recruit another child to become involved in human trafficking.

b) The Human Trafficking Supervision Plan

If based on factors outlined above in Section VII(a), the child is determined to be at a high risk of harm from a trafficker or subsequent commercial sexual exploitation, the worker shall convene a Child and Family Team meeting (CFTM), to develop a **Human Trafficking Supervision Plan**, to ensure the child has appropriate supervision in all areas of daily life. The Child and Family Team must include, among others: the youth, if age 12 or older, the primary caregiver, the caseworker and his/her supervisor, the youth's therapist or other treatment provider who is familiar with the youth's history, behavior and living arrangements, and other adults responsible for the youth's supervision.

Describe in detail (including phone and internet access) how an effective level of supervision will be provided to the youth during the following routine activities:

When planned supervision is required in the placement, the caseworker shall discuss the required supervision with the caregiver/facility staff and document the details of the planned supervision in a **contact note**.

When planned supervision is required in the school setting, the caseworker shall discuss the required supervision with school personnel and document the details of the planned supervision in a **contact note**. The caseworker will obtain all the required signatures on the **CFS 600-3, Consent for Release of Information** form regarding the youth who requires planned supervision.

When planned supervision is required for the youth to participate in recreational or community activities, the caseworker shall discuss the required supervision with the person or staff responsible for the supervision and document the details of the planned supervision in a **contact note**. The caseworker will obtain all the required signatures on the **CFS 600-3**, regarding the youth who requires planned supervision.

The caseworker will have a discussion with the youth regarding the Human Trafficking Supervision Plan and the safety measures the child will take if he/she has any contact whatsoever with the trafficker or with another person acting on behalf of the trafficker. Any specific tasks for the child regarding his/her safety shall be included in the child's **Service Plan**. The discussion with the youth will be documented in a **contact note**.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 17, 2017 – P.T. 2017.02

The caseworker and supervisor will monitor the plan weekly via phone or email and monthly in-person with the caregiver/facility staff and any other staff/personnel currently providing supervision to the youth, to revise and/or terminate the plan as needed. The caseworker's review of the Human Trafficking Supervision Plan will be documented in **case note**.

c) Termination of the Human Trafficking Supervision Plan

Termination of the Human Trafficking Supervision Plan will be determined at a CFTM, which must include, among others: the youth, if age 12 or older, the primary caregiver, the caseworker and his/her supervisor, and the youth's therapist or other treatment provider, and other adults responsible for the youth's supervision. CFTM participants must consider the following factors when considering the need for an ongoing Human Trafficking Supervision Plan:

- 1) The youth's current behaviors and behavioral changes, including the youth's ability to effectively monitor and manage his/her behavior and his/her safety;
- 2) The youth's support network;
- 3) Amount and type of contact if any, the youth has with the trafficker or another person acting on behalf of the trafficker.

VIII. Placement Considerations

To ensure appropriate care and intervention for victims of human trafficking, caregiver(s) (including residential and group home staff) should have a firm grasp and understanding of trafficking including the characteristics of trafficking, effects on victims (psychological, emotional and physical) and the implications for service delivery.

Caregivers must be mindful that the crime of trafficking causes a severe breakdown of confidence and trust for victims and that to rebuild trust and a normal relationship for trafficking victims requires patience, awareness and skill. Caregivers should be empathetic and non-judgmental in their approach to victims.

- a) When human trafficking of a youth is alleged, suspected or known, a discussion concerning trafficking shall occur between the worker and the youth's caregiver to ensure the placement is appropriate and the caregiver continues to be able to meet the needs of the youth. A summary of the discussion shall be documented in a **contact note**.
- b) When human trafficking of a youth is alleged, suspected or known, the worker will convene a CFTM and/or a Clinical Intervention Placement Preservation (CIPP) meeting to evaluate the appropriateness of the child's current placement and/or to identify the need for a new placement, if necessary.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 17, 2017 – P.T. 2017.02

- c) If a child is missing from care and is known or suspected to be involved in human trafficking, an appropriate placement plan must be determined for when the child is recovered. Every effort should be made to avoid emergency shelter placement of a trafficked youth.
- d) If a child who is a suspected or known victim of trafficking indicates that he or she will not accept the placement selected by the Department, every effort must be made to engage the child in identifying a placement the child is willing to accept in accordance with **Procedures 329.60, Placement Considerations**.

IX. Medical Examinations

Medical examinations of suspected or known trafficking victims shall be completed and include physical, sexual, and substance use assessments and/or screens. If a particular evaluation is refused, sustained efforts need to be made to engage the youth, and a plan developed with the youth to have the evaluation done at a later date.

- a) Medical Examinations must include but may not be limited to:

- Routine physical assessment;
- Assess for signs of physical abuse;
- Assess for signs of medical neglect, nutritional status;
- Check for tattoos or other markings or branding.

- b) Sexual Screens must include but may not be limited to:

- Pregnancy test (when appropriate);
- STD testing (when appropriate);
- Assess for signs of sexual abuse.

- c) Substance Use screens must include but may not be limited to:

- Query about substance use history;
- Assess for signs of substance use;
- Test for recent substance use; and
- Assess for withdrawal symptoms.

X. Mental Health Assessment and Services

Victims of human trafficking require trauma-informed care which recognizes the impact of traumatic experiences (specifically violence and abuse) on an individual's life, behavior, and self-perception. "Do no harm" is the first principle of ethics in service delivery to trafficking victims given the extreme risks associated with trafficking, the fragile state of many of its victims, and the potential for increased trauma.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 17, 2017 – P.T. 2017.02

Mental health effects that victims of human trafficking may present include:

- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder;
- Depression;
- Disconnection from feelings and/or a flat affect;
- Anxiety Disorders;
- Self-blame;
- Suicidal ideation and gestures;
- Paranoia;
- Stockholm Syndrome;
- Fatalism and rage;
- Dual diagnosis;
- Self-care issues;
- Sleeping issues;
- Dissociative Disorder;
- Feelings of hopelessness, helplessness;
- Nightmares;
- Anger and anger management issues.

a) **Mental Health and Trauma Assessment**

General mental health and trauma screening assessments shall be completed on all youth who are suspected or known victims of trafficking. If an initial screening is completed in an emergency room or by SASS, a thorough assessment should also be completed following placement. When a youth has an existing therapist and/or medication provider, the therapist or provider should be utilized for assessments whenever possible. The assessor will discuss with the youth any fears or concerns the youth has regarding his/her own safety. These assessments should be scheduled within (2) two weeks of identification as a trafficking victim.

b) **Clinical Consultation**

Per **Policy Guide 2012.03**, a clinical consultation can be requested to provide support to investigative and casework personnel in planning and obtaining clinical services for youth that are beyond the ability of the existing array of services. A consultation is a supportive clinical activity where a youth's case is reviewed and analyzed to provide guidance and insight. This may include the consideration of various practice alternatives that will enhance the determination of a course of action.

The worker and supervisor should discuss the need for a clinical consultation prior to completing the **CFS 399-1, Clinical Referral** form and emailing it to the Outlook mailbox "clinicalref" or calling 855-814-8421 or 312-328-2075.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 17, 2017 – P.T. 2017.02

c) Mental Health Services

According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Handbook on Direct Assistance for Victims of Trafficking, individual counseling for human trafficking victims should consist of brief interventions focused on practical problem solving and behavior. The objective of individual counseling is to help the trafficking victim learn or develop skills to cope with, and adjust to, the immediate circumstances with a view to a full recovery. Interventions are aimed to assist trafficking victims to cope with specific life situations and the immediate next steps of the process towards recovery. Problem-solving strategies and coping mechanisms in relation to issues of immediate concern, such as restoration of emotional and physical stability, personal safety, cooperation with law enforcement in legal proceedings should be included in the therapeutic process.

The IOM Handbook on Direct Assistance for Victims of Trafficking may be downloaded and saved by clicking on the following link:

http://publications.iom.int/bookstore/index.php?main_page=product_info&products_id=116

If the youth is placed in a residential facility, the youth's needs and interventions addressing human trafficking will be included in the youth's treatment plan. Otherwise, the youth's needs and interventions addressing human trafficking will be included in the youth's treatment plan with the therapist/counselor.

XI. Involvement of Law Enforcement

The Illinois Safe Children Act ensures innocent youth under the age of 18 who are lured or coerced into prostitution are immune from criminal prosecution. Although immune from prosecution for a prostitution offense, youth can be taken into protective custody and detained by law enforcement for investigative purposes. When this occurs, the officer is required to report an allegation of human trafficking to SCR, which shall take a report for the Department to initiate an investigation of child abuse or neglect within 24 hours.

Encounters with law enforcement are stressful in many ways for trafficking victims. Youth may fear they are under suspicion or may be arrested, that they will not be believed or may suffer from anxiety related to the intrusive and intense nature of an investigation. Trafficked youth may have a pre-existing fear and suspicion of law enforcement officials, often due to the influence of his/her trafficker.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 17, 2017 – P.T. 2017.02

In order to minimize any anxiety that may be felt by the youth, and to coordinate involvement with law enforcement:

- a) The Statewide Human Trafficking Coordinator will act as the Department liaison to law enforcement when youth in care have been trafficked and will refer information to the appropriate authorities.
- b) If law enforcement personnel request an interview with a youth (under the age of 18) regarding human trafficking, the Office of the DCFS Guardian (312-814-8600) must be notified and grant approval for the interview.
- c) The assigned worker shall have a discussion with the youth prior to the interview with law enforcement to explain the reason for the interview and to ensure the youth understands **he/she will be interviewed as a victim**. A summary of the discussion will be documented in a **contact note**.
- d) Sometimes, the youth will be arrested on allegations of committing other crimes, even though the initial encounter with law enforcement was based upon allegations of human trafficking. If the DCFS youth is subject to other criminal charges, the youth's worker shall contact the Office of the DCFS Guardian at 312-814-8600 to request legal representation for the youth.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

July 1, 1984

SUBPART C: DEPARTMENT CHILD WELFARE SERVICES

APPENDIX D – SERVICES TO UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

I. Purpose

The following outlines the necessary procedures to follow in providing services to unaccompanied minors.

II. Definition

According to the Department of Health and Human Services, "A refugee unaccompanied minor or a Cuban/Haitian Entrant unaccompanied minor is defined as a person who: 1) has not yet reached eighteen years of age or such higher age as may be established by the State of placement according to its child welfare plan under Title IV-B of the Social Security Act for the availability of such services for any other children in the State; 2) entered the Country unaccompanied by a parent or an immediate adult relative, ie., grandparent, aunt, uncle, or adult sibling who is willing and able as determined by a Court to care for the child, or any adult who arrived having documentable evidence of legal custody of the minor; 3) has no parent(s) in the United States." The vast majority of unaccompanied minors are from Indo-China. However, a small number of children can also be anticipated to arrive from other regions; i.e., Middle East, Eastern Europe, Africa and Central America.

III. Means of Entry Into Country

Most unaccompanied minors arrive in the United States through the efforts of national voluntary agencies which operate resettlement reception and placement services under contract with the Department of State. Others arrive as non-relative members of a family group from the same camp. These children do not arrive on a planned basis and the adults with whom they live do not have guardianship. Some also arrive after having falsified their birthdates.

IV. Responsibility for Service

Department of Health and Human Services policy states that "the State public child welfare agency should assume legal responsibility for unaccompanied minors within its geographic jurisdiction." Federal policy further states that "the purpose of establishing legal responsibility is to ensure that unaccompanied minors receive the full range of assistance, care and services to which a child in the State is entitled and to designate a legal authority to act in place of the child's unavailable parent(s)."

V. Procedures to Follow in Providing Service

When unaccompanied minors are identified by the voluntary agencies in Illinois which serve refugees and Cuban/Haitian entrants, the agencies will contact Ralph Hanebutt (217) 785-2687 in Central Office. Mr.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

July 1, 1984

Hanebutt will refer the case to the appropriate Region for follow-up. The first step will usually require the Field Office caseworker and the voluntary agency representative who is knowledgeable about the child to contact the State's Attorney's Office in the County where the child resides. The voluntary agency representative will provide the Court with the necessary information to substantiate a dependency petition.

Simultaneous with planning the Court process, the Department caseworker and the voluntary agency representative should arrive at a decision regarding the ongoing case handling. Some of the voluntary resettlement agencies also operate foster care divisions. In serving referrals from such agencies, the Department must decide whether to refer the child for purchase of care, or to provide the service directly. If the voluntary resettlement agency does not have a foster care division, the Department caseworker will decide whether to refer the child to a voluntary agency which has a foster care contract with the Department, or to plan for the child directly.

The majority of unaccompanied minors have been residing with refugee families. In those instances an assessment must be made of the child's adjustment in the home and the family's willingness and ability to be licensed as a foster home.

VI. Payment for Services

All of the Department's expenses involved in providing the necessary room and board, medical care, social services and administrative cost are 100% reimbursable by the Federal Government. When the Department has been awarded guardianship of an unaccompanied minor, the caseworker shall complete the following steps in order to assure that the cost of care will be charged to the appropriate account:

- A. Open a service case, but do not make an entry in the payment section of the Module.
- B. Call Pete Pirrera in the Office of Financial Management (217/785-3091) to secure a child's I.D. number. Unaccompanied Minors I.D. numbers carry a V prefix.
- C. Submit all vouchers for services provided to Pete Pirrera who will arrange for their payment from the Refugee Assistance Fund.

If it is decided that service will be provided by a private agency with whom the Department has an approved contract for regular foster care, that contract will need to be amended to provide for service to either Refugee Unaccompanied Minor or Cuban/Haitian Entrant Unaccompanied Minors.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

July 1, 1984

VII. Payment for Administrative Costs

Federal Regulations and the Inter-Agency Agreement provide for the reimbursement of all administrative expenditures incurred in the process of serving Unaccompanied Minors. The following procedures shall be followed in the recovery of expenditures for specific line items:

A. Personal Services

1. An employee whose job description reflects full-time service to Unaccompanied Minors shall be paid from Fund 684.
2. An employee whose job description reflects some service to Unaccompanied Minors shall keep a daily log of time to the nearest one-half hour that is devoted to this client population. The log shall be turned in to the office timekeeper at the end of each month. At the end of each quarter, timekeepers shall forward the logs and a statement of the number of hours the employee worked during the quarter to Ralph Hanebutt in the Division of Program Operations. Employees will be transferred to the Fund 684 payroll for the equivalent number of full pay periods earned during the previous quarter. Any time not compensated in one quarter shall be carried over and added to the hours worked in the next quarter.

B. Retirement and Social Security

Employees who are compensated from Fund 684 shall also have their Retirement and Social Security charged to that fund during the same pay period.

C. Group Insurance

Group insurance for employees paid from Fund 684 shall also be charged to that fund during the same period.

D. Travel

Any travel expenses incurred in conjunction with services to Unaccompanied Minors shall be charged to Fund 684. The Appropriation Account Code number is 684-41817-1900-00-99.

E. Telecommunications

Employees who frequently need to place long distance calls in conjunction with services to Unaccompanied Minors shall be provided with telephone credit cards. Payment for credit card calls shall be vouchered separately and charged to Fund 684.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

July 1, 1984

F. Contractual - Commodities - Printing

Any verifiable expenditure which has a direct relationship to serving Unaccompanied Minors shall be charged to Fund 684.

G. Staff Development

Department staff who work directly or indirectly with Unaccompanied Minors may attend conferences, meetings, or courses which serve to enhance their understanding of the needs of this client population. Expenses for travel, meals, lodging and miscellaneous expenses shall be paid in accordance with State Travel Regulations. Registration fees may be paid upon submission of a paid receipt. Out-of-State Travel Regulations shall apply to any Out-of-State travel.

VIII. Payment Approval and Payment Processing

The Regional Administrator or his designee shall sign as Receiving Officer for the expenditure of all funds for direct service, purchase of service, and Regional administrative expenses consistent with Department Procedures. All required vouchers shall be typed in the Region and submitted to the Office of Financial Management for scheduling and payment processing.

IX. Program and Budgetary Planning and Monitoring

The Division of Program Operations shall be responsible for program and Procedures development and compliance monitoring. Likewise, this Division shall be responsible for budgetary planning and liaison activities with the Department of Public Aid and the HHS Office of Refugee Resettlement. Any questions regarding these procedures shall be directed to Ralph Hanebutt.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 28, 2006 - PT 2006.06

302.APPENDIX F - Employment Incentive Program

a) Purpose

The purpose of the Employment Incentive Program (EIP) is to provide financial and supplemental services to support adolescent youth learning marketable job skills either through on the job work experience or job training programs. Youth that complete the EIP will have acquired the work skills and ethics necessary for the successful transition to independence.

b) Program Eligibility Requirements

- 1) The youth must be 17 years of age but not yet 21.
- 2) The Department must have court-ordered legal responsibility for the youth.
- 3) The youth must have received independent living skills training and adhere to the life skills assessment and training requirements of Appendix M. If an adaptive skills assessment is appropriate for assessing the youth's skill level, program readiness will be determined on an individual basis. The assessment must be current within six months of the youth applying for the EIP.
- 4) The youth must have a high school or General Educational Development (GED) certificate.
- 5) The youth must be receiving job training through a certified job skills-training program (e.g., Job Corps, apprenticeship, internship), or the youth must be employed for a period of at least one month prior to applying for the EIP and working a minimum of 20 hours per week.

c) Benefits

1) Monthly Grant

Youth approved for the EIP will receive a grant of \$150.00 per month for a maximum of 12 months. The youth may receive the monthly grant in consecutive or non-consecutive payments depending on the youth's sustained or intermittent participation in the program. Monthly grant payments cease when a youth turns 21 years of age regardless of whether the youth completed 12 months in the EIP.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 28, 2006 - PT 2006.06

Caseworkers must provide youth with an explanation of the financial and security benefits of having their grant checks directly deposit and assist youth in completing the C-95, Authorization for Deposit of Recurring Payments. Youth that do not choose direct deposit will have their grant checks mailed directly to them.

2) Living Arrangement

Youth may live in a Department funded placement while in the EIP.

3) Start Up Funding

Start up funding is need based, work related (e.g., tools, work clothing, etc.) and limited to a one-time disbursement of up to \$200.00. Documentation for this funding is required, and receipts or an itemized list of work required items should be attached to the EIP application forwarded to the regional Transition Coordinator.

4) Medical Services

Medical services are available to youth in the EIP through the Department of Healthcare and Family Services Medical Assistance Program via the DCFS issued medical card. Youth are eligible for a medical card up to the age of 21 or case closure, whichever occurs first. The medical card may be used for:

- Preventative health care (i.e., physical, dental, hearing and vision exams and immunizations); and
- Specialty medical care, acute medical care and prescriptions.
- Medical case management services are provided to pregnant/parenting youth and their children, birth through five years of age, through the Department of Human Services.

Questions concerning the medical card may be directed to the Medical Card Hotline during normal business hours at 800/228-6533.

The youth's caseworker shall assist the youth in identifying Medicaid-enrolled providers for his or her ongoing health care services. The youth's caseworker shall also assist the youth to identify community-based health care services that are provided on a sliding fee scale or free if the youth will not have health insurance after case closure. The KidCare Hotline (800/226-0768) and the DCFS Office of Health Services (217/557-2689) can provide assistance in identifying Medicaid enrolled providers.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 28, 2006 - PT 2006.06

d) Referral Information Requirements

Referrals for the EIP shall include the following:

- 1) A completed **Employment Incentive Program Application, CFS 449-2**;

Note: All sections of the application must be completed. The youth's budget, Part D, must include the youth's plan to meet his or her daily financial obligations if there is a loss of income or financial emergency. Part F, EIP Service Agreement, must be signed by the youth and caseworker.

- 2) The youth's current **CFS 497, Client Service Plan**;
- 3) Documentation of enrollment in a job training program; or
- 4) Verification (i.e., pay stub, written statement from employer) that the youth has been employed for at least one month and working a minimum of 20 hours per week; and
- 5) If the youth chooses to have his or her monthly grant directly deposited in their checking or saving account, a completed C-95, Authorization for Deposit of Recurring Payments.

e) Approval Process

- 1) Caseworkers

The youth's caseworker shall ensure that the EIP referral is complete and that it is in the best interest of the youth to participate in the program before forwarding the referral to the Office of Education and Transition Services (OETS) Transition Coordinator.

Cook North Transition Coordinator

Department of Children and Family Services
Division of Service Intervention
Office of Education and Transition Services
100 West Randolph, 6th Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60601

Cook Central Transition Coordinator

Department of Children and Family Services
Division of Service Intervention
Office of Education and Transition Services
100 West Randolph, 6th Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60601

Cook South Transition Coordinator

Department of Children and Family Services
Division of Service Intervention
Office of Education and Transition Services
100 West Randolph, 6th Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60601

Northern Region Transition Coordinator

Department of Children and Family Services
Division of Service Intervention
Office of Education and Transition Services
5415 N. University, Room 103
Peoria, Illinois 61615

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 28, 2006 - PT 2006.06

Central and Southern Regions Transition Coordinator

Illinois Department of Children and Family Services

Division of Service Intervention

Office of Education and Transition Services

406 E. Monroe, Station #22

Springfield, Illinois 62701

2) Transition Coordinators

Transition Coordinators shall review referral documents for completeness and to determine if it is in the best interest of the youth to participate in the EIP. If the coordinator approves the referral, he or she shall sign the EIP Service Agreement and forward the referral documents to the Employment Incentive Program Coordinator for Cook County or downstate.

3) Employment Incentive Program Coordinator

The Employment Incentive Program Coordinator shall complete the final review of each referral and forward accepted referrals to the OETS Business Office for payment processing.

4) Office of Education and Transition Services

The Office of Education and Transition Services will send a letter to the youth and the youth's caseworker notifying them that the referral has been accepted and that the initial monthly grant payment has been processed.

f) Transitional Services Contract Planning

In accordance with Department client service planning procedures a separate service plan is developed for each youth no longer considered part of his or her parents' family. The youth's caseworker shall actively involve the youth in the development of his or her service plan and shall review the plan with the youth prior to each administrative case review. The **Client Service Plan** completed for EIP youth shall include:

- The youth's EIP projected start and completion dates;
- An employment objective;
- The youth's level of functioning and employment skills or job training skills needs;
- A defined time frame for the youth to achieve the employment objective;

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 28, 2006 - PT 2006.06

- Clearly defined and measurable tasks (e.g., youth will remain employed for a minimum of 20 hours per week for six months, youth will become employed full-time; youth will successfully complete the job training program; youth will develop the job seeking and maintenance skills) the youth will need to complete to achieve the employment objective; and
- A schedule of in-person caseworker/youth contacts that should be established with input from the youth. In-person contacts may occur weekly, monthly or every other month if the youth is in a placement over 50 miles from the worker's headquarters.

g) Monitoring

1) Verification of Continued Eligibility

The youth must provide his or her caseworker monthly verification (i.e., check stubs or certified job-training program progress reports) of continued eligibility for the EIP, which the caseworker will forward to the Employment Incentive Program Coordinator.

Employment Incentive Program Coordinator – Cook County
Illinois Department of Children and Family Services
Division of Service Intervention
100 W. Randolph
Chicago, Illinois 60601
Phone: 312/814-5509
Fax: 312/814-2656

Employment Incentive Program Coordinator – Downstate
Illinois Department of Children and Family Services
Division of Service Intervention
406 E. Monroe Street, Station #22
Springfield, Illinois 62701
Phone: 217/524-2425
Fax: 217/782-5076

Failure to submit the documentation monthly will result in the youth being discharged from the EIP. Youth that become unemployed must contact the Employment Incentive Program Coordinator for employment assistance within 30 days of becoming unemployed.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 28, 2006 - PT 2006.06

2) Schedule of In-Person Caseworker/Youth Contacts

Caseworkers are required to maintain the established schedule of in-person contacts with the youth that is documented in the youth's service plan. Supplemental contacts with the youth via the telephone and mail may be appropriate.

3) Evaluation of Youth's Progress

The youth's progress shall be evaluated every six months in accordance with **Procedures 305.60(b)**. The caseworker will communicate with the Transition Coordinator regarding any issues that may occur concerning the youth's participation in the EIP. The caseworker shall also obtain a copy of the youth's annual employment evaluation and provide a copy of the evaluation to the OETS Business Office.

4) Client Satisfaction Survey

Youth that have finished 12 months in the EIP shall be provided a client satisfaction survey to complete.

h) Suspension or Discharge From the Employment Incentive Program

Youth may be suspended or discharged from the EIP for any of the following reasons. Youth that are suspended or discharged from the EIP for reasons three through five have the option of appealing the Department's decision in accordance with **Rules 337, Service Appeal Process**.

- 1) The youth becomes 21 years of age; or
- 2) The youth completes 12 months in the EIP; or
- 3) The youth has been unemployed for thirty consecutive days and has not contacted the Employment Incentive Program Coordinator and/or has not submitted job search documentation; or
- 4) The youth has failed to complete service plan tasks within established time frames; or
- 5) The youth has failed to provide monthly verification of continued eligibility (i.e., current check stub or certified job-training program progress report).

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 28, 2006 - PT 2006.06

i) Living Arrangements

Youth may remain in a Department funded living arrangement while they are in the EIP. The placement type must be appropriate to the needs of the youth and may include foster care, supervised independent living, group home or institutional placements.

j) Reinstatement in the Employment Incentive Program

Youth that have completed 12 months in the program or reached age 21 are not eligible to apply for reinstatement. Youth approaching the age of 21 must apply for reinstatement a minimum of six months prior to their 21st birthday.

To apply for reinstatement, the youth's caseworker must submit an updated referral package to the regional Transition Coordinator. Youth reinstated in the EIP will be eligible to participate in the program for those months he or she has not used. The youth's eligibility will cease at age 21 regardless of whether he or she has used the allotted 12 months.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT
April 28, 2006 - PT 2006.06

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SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

March 26, 2015 – PT 2015.05

302.Appendix G - Youth in College/Vocational Training Program

[Moved to Procedures 314.75, Post High School Education Programs]

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT
March 26, 2015 – PT 2015.05

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SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 6, 2009 – P.T. 2009.07

302.APPENDIX H SUPERVISED INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM

a. Description and Purpose

The Supervised Independent Living Program (SILP) provides supportive services and living maintenance to adolescent youth for whom the Department is legally responsible. The purpose of SILP is to assist youth who have demonstrated the minimum requirements for living independently to progress toward their goal of independence. SILP is a totally purchased service from licensed child welfare agencies having contracts with DCFS to provide SILP.

b. Eligibility Requirements

Adolescents considered for entrance into SILP must meet the following criteria:

1. Youth must be sixteen (16) years of age but not yet 21 of age and
2. The Department must have court ordered legal responsibility for the adolescent or must have transferred legal responsibility to a successor guardian in accordance with 89 Ill. Adm. Code 302 (Section 302.400) and
3. The permanency goal for the youth must be independence and the time limit for goal achievement shall be established upon date of entry into the program and
4. The youth must have some money management skills and
5. The youth must be able to live in the community without continuous adult supervision and
6. The youth must be willing and able to cooperate with the supervising agency to further develop independent living skills and
7. The youth must have the ability and motivation to complete a training or educational program designed to assist financial independence and
8. The youth must have the ability to manage day-to-day living skills in an apartment or board and room living arrangement such as meal preparation, maintaining proper nutrition, purchasing and caring for appropriate clothing and maintaining a reasonable degree of cleanliness and
9. The youth must be reasonably expected to attain total independence within one year, progress into another youth development program, or continue in SILP for an additional year with prior approval by the Regional Administrator/Cook County designee.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 6, 2009 – P.T. 2009.07

c. Approval

Prior to acceptance into the program, the youth's worker shall submit the following materials to the Regional Administrator/Cook County designee:

1. Documentation of the youth's abilities as they relate to the eligibility requirements including observations from the worker and past caretaker(s) and current medical and dental examination results.
2. Current CFS 497 series which demonstrates the permanency planning goal of independence which identifies the specific planned SILP services and discharge date.

The Regional Administrator/Cook County designee shall determine the appropriateness of the referral and the availability of slots in SILP. The worker shall be notified of the decision within two (2) weeks of receipt of the material by the Regional Administrator/Cook County designee. When the request is denied, the basis for denial, as well as alternatives, are to be provided by the Regional Administrator/Cook County designee. When the request is approved the worker shall:

1. Initiate a referral to an agency with whom DCFS has a SILP contract, and
2. Upon acceptance by the agency and placement in SILP ensure that the agency completes a CFS 906-1 to reflect SILP (Service Code 0204) at the negotiated payment rate.

d. Service Planning

Upon initial entry into SILP a service plan (CFS 497) will be developed for the youth by the DCFS and supervising agency worker. The CFS 497 will be reviewed at six (6) month intervals in accordance with procedures 305, Client Service Planning. The CFS 497 shall include:

1. statement of a permanency goal of independent living and planned goal achievement date.
2. Specifications of services to be provided which include monthly living maintenance for the youth provided by the agency and individual or group counseling. Services which may additionally be included are: assistance in locating appropriate educational or vocational programs; assistance in improving competence in daily life skills; and employment related services (e.g., developing job interview skills, job finding).
3. A schedule of a minimum of twice monthly meetings between the youth and service provider; at least one meeting per month shall be in the youth's residence.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 6, 2009 – P.T. 2009.07

e. Medication Administration Transitional (TLP) and Independent (ILO) Living Arrangements

1. Definitions

“Licensed prescriber” means a physician, dentist, podiatrist, or optometrist. Licensed prescriber also means a physician assistant licensed in accordance with the Physician Assistant Practice Act of 1997, and an advanced practice nurse in accordance with a written collaborative agreement required under the Nursing Practice Act.

“Medication” means any substance placed on or into the body for therapeutic purposes.

“Psychotropic medication” means medication whose use for antipsychotic, antidepressant, anti-manic, antianxiety, behavioral modification or behavioral management purposes is listed in American Medical Association Drug Evaluations, latest edition, or Physician’s Desk Reference, latest edition, or which are administered for any of these purposes. [405 ILCS 5/1-121.1] Consent of a parent or legal guardian is required for administration of psychotropic medication to a youth under age 18.

“Sharps container” means a sturdy plastic bottle or jar with a closeable lid that is used for disposal of used syringe needles and other sharp objects used in the medication administration process. The container should be heavy enough so that it will not puncture when thrown away (e.g., an empty laundry detergent container). The container should be clearly labeled (e.g., “Sharps Disposal”) and stored out of the reach of children.

2. Introduction and Prerequisites

This policy establishes minimum standards for staff that help youth become more independent in administering their medication. The policy requirements take into account the different program levels in transitional (TLP) and independent (ILO) living arrangements. Those applicable to TLP House Models are the most prescriptive. Those applicable to TLP Apartment Models and ILOs are progressively less stringent. TLP and ILO programs may implement additional policies that are more restrictive than this policy; however, under no circumstances shall their policies be less restrictive.

The term “TLP House Model” includes the following: dormitory-style TLPs; all house model TLPs regardless of resident youths’ program levels; and any TLP model for youth who are developmentally disabled or youth who are mentally ill, have an adult sustainable diagnosis and can be managed in the community without support. “TLP Apartment Model” refers to all other TLP living arrangements.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 6, 2009 – P.T. 2009.07

Youth entering TLP and ILO programs should be able to self-administer their medications. If a youth entering TLP is unable to self-administer his/her medications, the TLP staff shall determine whether it is appropriate to support and train the youth to do so, or to deny placement. If a youth entering ILO is unable to self-administer his/her medications, the intake worker shall deny admission.

Youth moving to TLP or ILO should be able to:

- purchase prescription and over-the-counter medications from a pharmacy;
- recognize and distinguish his/her medications;
- know the reason for taking the medications;
- understand the potential adverse reactions and side effects of each medication;
- know how much and when to take the medications;
- know how to properly store medications;
- know how to check for each medication's expiration date and properly dispose of expired or unused medications;
- when medication administration requires more than the ability to swallow a pill, the youth shall be required to demonstrate the ability to self-administer that medication; and
- demonstrate to TLP/ILO staff upon placement the ability to take his/her medication properly. A parenting youth may be asked to demonstrate how to properly medicate his/her child and explain the reason the child is taking each medication.

Each youth age 18 and over entering TLP or ILO shall be asked to sign a consent authorizing TLP staff to obtain information from the youth's medical and psychiatric providers. In addition to the guardian's consent, youth under age 18 shall be asked to sign a consent authorizing TLP staff to obtain information from the youth's psychiatric provider. If a youth refuses or is reluctant to sign a consent, the caseworker shall be contacted. The caseworker shall explain to the youth that TLP/ILO staff need this information to help the youth learn to meet his/her medical and mental health needs. If a youth under age 18 still refuses to sign a consent, the caseworker shall contact the Department's Division of Guardian and Advocacy for assistance.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 6, 2009 – P.T. 2009.07

3. Medication Policy

TLP and ILO programs shall have written policies for medications and medication management. These policies shall be approved by the program's governing body and medical director or a consulting licensed physician.

A. **TLP House Model.** At a minimum, the policy shall require the following:

Each youth must purchase and obtain his/her own prescription medication (or his/her child's medications) from a pharmacy and give the medication and pharmacy information sheet to a staff person authorized to handle medications. (This includes any medication samples obtained from the physician's office.) Authorized staff shall keep all prescribed medications, including refrigerated medications, in locked storage.

Advance authorization from the legal guardian or authorized agent is required for psychotropic medication for all youth under age 18.

When a youth (or the youth's child) is taking HIV/AIDS medications, the youth shall be allowed to store these medications in his/her living quarters. Each youth is responsible for taking these medications (or giving medications to his/her child) as instructed by his/her physician.

A youth who requires an emergency/rescue medication may carry that medication with them at all times. Staff shall review with the youth how to safely carry emergency/rescue medications, such as insulin syringes or Epi-pens, before and after use, and to return used syringes or needles for disposal in the program's sharps container. If a youth requires but does not have a syringe "travel bag", the program will assist the youth in getting one.

Each youth must purchase his/her own over-the-counter medications for general use. The youth shall be responsible for storing his/her own (or his/her child's) over-the-counter medications.

Staff shall remind each youth of the importance of storing medications so that it cannot be accessed by children or visitors. The program shall provide a locked drawer/cabinet or a lockbox in the youth's private living quarters for this purpose.

When receiving medications and pharmacy information sheets from a youth or handing a youth his/her medications, the staff shall:

- verify that the youth is the intended recipient of the medication. Prescription medications shall not be shared;

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 6, 2009 – P.T. 2009.07

- verify that a medication appears stable from a visual inspection for deterioration, discoloration and expiration date;
- store the pharmacy information sheet in a notebook or in a way that is immediately accessible to staff;
- verify that there is no known contraindication for administering the medication, identified from information provided by the pharmacy (e.g., known allergies, medical condition, apparent intoxication);
- make medication available to each youth at the proper time in the prescribed dose;
- document that a youth takes his/her medication at the proper time in the prescribed dose;
- monitor the youth's self-administration of medication in a manner that is considerate of the sensibilities of the youth. As a general rule, prescribed oral medications shall be taken in the presence of staff;
- provide on-going training for parenting youth regarding administering medication to their children. This includes understanding why the child needs an over-the-counter or prescribed medication and the importance of following the doctor's orders completely. Staff should also encourage the youth to carry the child's medical card at all times;
- account for and control all controlled substances, syringes and needles. All needles and syringes shall be disposable and may not be reused;
- ensure that used needles and syringes are placed in a sharps container that is maintained in locked storage accessible only by authorized staff. The policy shall include instructions for disposal of sharps containers;
- account for, control and dispose of unused, returned, discontinued or expired medications. The policy shall include instructions for disposal of unused medications, the prevention of diversion of medication, and documentation that medication is destroyed; and
- thoroughly wash their hands before handling medication containers. Gloves may be used in addition to hand washing.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 6, 2009 – P.T. 2009.07

The program shall post the following information in such a way that protects the confidentiality of the youth but allows ready access by staff:

- the names of all staff who have successfully completed the training described in Section VII below;
- the names of youth who have known allergies, anaphylaxis and asthma action plans, and the prescribed remedy. All staff shall be trained to recognize the symptoms of allergies and asthmatic reactions, and shall receive training on Policy Guide 2002.01, Case Management Guidelines for Children's Asthma Management;
- the names of all youth with life-threatening conditions or allergies. If a youth requires but does not have a medical ID bracelet or necklace, the program will assist the youth in getting one; and
- emergency phone numbers.

A separate medication log shall be maintained for each youth listing all medications prescribed for that youth (and his/her child). The medication log shall be approved by the governing body and the medical director or a consulting licensed physician. Staff shall record all medications taken, missed or refused by the youth. Staff shall sign the medication log. If the youth is cooperative, he/she shall also sign the medication log.

Staff shall strongly encourage youth who store HIV/AIDS medications or who carry emergency/rescue medications for themselves or their children to maintain a medication log for those medications. Staff shall offer the youth the CFS 534, Medication Administration Log, for this purpose and/or describe other methods for documenting daily medication.

The policy shall require documentation of all medication errors and adverse reactions, and shall address, at minimum, the following situations:

- the wrong medication was given to/taken by a youth;
- the wrong dosage was given to/taken by a youth;
- a medication was given to/taken by a youth at the wrong time;
- a medication was not given at all;
- any amount of a controlled substance, syringe or needle is missing; or
- any medication delivery problem not specified above that has the potential to negatively affect the youth.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 6, 2009 – P.T. 2009.07

The policy shall specify who staff shall call if a trained staff person is not available to determine whether a medical error or adverse reaction may jeopardize the youth's health or well-being. In the event of a significant adverse reaction, staff shall immediately call 911 for emergency assistance.

Staff shall document on the medication log when a youth refuses to take a medication (or medicate his/her child) and the reason given. Staff shall sign the medication log. If the youth is cooperative, he/she shall also sign the medication log. Staff must also complete a **CFS 119, Unusual Incident Report Form** when required by Rule and Procedures 331, Unusual Incidents. (Note: Staff may request that the Department waive the requirement to submit a UIR when the incidents are a repetitive behavior of a specific youth, and that behavior is not potentially harmful. Waiver of the reporting requirement requires the express approval of the Department. See Procedures 331-Appendix C, Request to Waive Reporting Unusual Incidents.)

TLP staff shall ask the youth why he/she is refusing the medication (or refusing to medicate his/her child) and discuss the reason for taking that medication. Staff shall contact the youth's caseworker to discuss the youth's refusal to take medication, refusal to medicate his/her child, or other unresolved significant concerns about medication involving the youth.

Visitation, Work, School and Off-Ground Activities

To the extent possible, the youth shall take his/her medication at the program before or after an off-site activity.

When it is necessary for a youth to take medication while off-site, the youth may carry that medication.

The youth and the staff person will determine the best way for the youth to carry his/her medications while away from the program. In school settings with medication guidelines, the youth and staff will develop a system for carrying medication that meets those guidelines. The youth shall complete the medication log for medications taken while away, and shall return any unused medication upon return to the program.

Runaways

If, despite counseling by staff, a youth indicates that he/she is going to run away, staff on duty shall encourage him/her to come back to the residence, contact the licensed prescriber or go to an emergency room to obtain his/her prescription medication.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 6, 2009 – P.T. 2009.07

The program shall have a written policy approved by the governing body and the medical director or a consulting physician addressing the circumstances, if any, in which staff may give prescription medication to youth who have indicated their intention to run away.

Staff shall indicate on the medication log that the youth has run away. If medication was given to the youth, staff shall note the name and amount of medication given, and the date and time.

Staff shall immediately notify local law enforcement, the caseworker, and the Helpline for the Child Location and Support Unit for Missing Children, as required in Procedures 329, Locating and Returning Missing, Runaway and Abducted Children. At the time of notification, staff shall share information about any urgent medical issues. The caseworker shall be told of any medication changes since the last contact.

The program shall dispose of medications for runaways after 30 days.

Monthly Review of Medication Logs and Medication Errors

The program's written policy shall require a monthly review of all medication logs and medication errors to ensure that all medications are being given as prescribed, and to find and correct underlying causes of medication errors. This review shall be conducted by a program director or site director who has successfully completed the training described in Section VII below.

B. TLP Apartment Model and ILO

Youth living in apartments are expected to be able to assume greater responsibility for storing and taking their medications as directed. At a minimum, the policy shall require the following:

For youth in a TLP apartment, staff shall do an initial assessment of the youth's skill level regarding management of his/her medications. Staff shall assess a parenting youth's ability to manage and administer his/her child's medication. When needed, staff may accompany youth to a medical appointment to help the youth explain symptoms, ask questions or obtain information from the provider. Staff may also assist youth in obtaining medication from a pharmacy.

ILO staff shall require documentation of an assessment of the youth's skill level regarding management of his/her medications. The caseworker/site manager shall assess a parenting youth's ability to manage and administer his/her child's medication. A parent who cannot reliably give medication to his/her child shall not be placed or remain in ILO.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 6, 2009 – P.T. 2009.07

Staff shall:

- follow up on the youth's management/self-administration of medications if a youth entering TLP or ILO is unable to manage or self-administer his/her medications (or his/her child's medications) until the youth demonstrates proficiency. Staff shall either train the youth to manage and administer those medications or contact DCFS to have the youth moved to a more structured setting;
- educate youth about safe storage of prescription and over-the-counter medications within their apartments, including storage and disposal of discontinued or expired medication, and needles and sharps, and the importance of storing pharmacy information sheets in a place that is easily accessible;
- ensure that youth know how to locate and purchase prescribed medications from a pharmacy, and ask the pharmacist questions regarding prescribed medication. They should be encouraged to read medication information sheets provided by the pharmacy to learn about side effects and adverse reactions;
- emphasize the need to plan ahead to obtain prescription refills so that the youth does not miss taking any prescribed medications. This is especially important for youth who are prescribed psychotropic drugs, insulin and emergency/rescue medications;
- advise or direct youth to call the licensed prescriber if they suffer any adverse reactions to prescribed medication. At the youth's request, staff may assist the youth in doing so;
- ensure that youth know how and where to purchase over-the-counter medications;
- encourage youth to always carry his/her medical card (a parenting youth should also carry his/her child's card);
- encourage youth to carry medications with them, including emergency/rescue medications, when they must take medication while away from their apartments;
- review with the youth how to safely carry insulin syringes before and after use, and to return used syringes for disposal in a sharps container. Staff shall verify that the youth is using a sharps container properly at least quarterly;

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 6, 2009 – P.T. 2009.07

- if a youth requires but does not have a syringe “travel bag”, the program will assist the youth in getting one;
- provide on-going oversight of youth with chronic diseases (e.g., diabetes, asthma) and those taking psychotropic medications;
- strongly encourage each youth to keep a daily medication log using the CFS 534, Medication Administration Log, or another method or checklist for documenting daily medication;
- prohibit youth from sharing prescription medication with other youth; and
- document their conversations with youth regarding medication management. TLP program staff shall share concerns regarding a youth’s medication management with the youth’s caseworker in a timely manner.

The TLP program shall post the following information in such a way that protects the confidentiality of the youth but allows ready access by staff.

- the names of all staff who have successfully completed the training described in Section VII below;
- the names of youth who have known allergies and asthma action plans, and the prescribed remedy. All staff shall be trained to recognize the symptoms of allergies, anaphylaxis and asthmatic reactions, and shall receive training on Policy Guide 2002.01, Case Management Guidelines for Children's Asthma Management;
- the names of all youth with life-threatening conditions or allergies. If a youth requires but does not have a medical ID bracelet or necklace, the program will assist the youth in getting one; and
- emergency phone numbers.

ILO caseworkers must include the following information in the each youth’s case record: known allergies or life-threatening conditions, asthma action plan/emergency action plan and prescribed remedy. If a youth requires but does not have a medical ID bracelet or necklace, the ILO program will assist the youth in getting one.

The policy shall address handling a youth’s refusal to take a prescribed medication, or to give a prescribed medication to his/her child. The TLP/ILO caseworker must complete a **CFS 119, Unusual Incident Report Form** when required by Rule and Procedures 331, Unusual Incidents. (Note: Staff

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 6, 2009 – P.T. 2009.07

may request that the Department waive the requirement to submit a UIR when the incidents are a repetitive behavior of a specific youth, and that behavior is not potentially harmful. Waiver of the reporting requirement requires the express approval of the Department. See Procedures 331-Appendix C, Request to Waive Reporting Unusual Incidents.)

The caseworker shall discuss refusal to take medication, administer medication to his/her child and/or other unresolved significant concerns about medication with the youth, and, when necessary, the primary care physician (or the licensed prescriber, if different). TLP staff also contact the youth's caseworker.

4. Hospitalization, Detention, Residential Substance Abuse Programs, etc.

When a youth is temporarily hospitalized or placed in a detention center, residential substance abuse program, or other temporary residential program, the caseworker shall contact the hospital, detention center, or program to determine whether it will accept the youth's prescription medication or will provide medication.

If medication is accepted, the caseworker shall give the hospital, detention center or program the medications for that youth in the original containers. The hospital, detention center or program shall be asked to return any unused medications to the youth at discharge, if the youth will still be taking that medication.

When medication is not accepted, the caseworker shall a list of the youth's prescription medications and the licensed prescriber, a list of the youth's over-the-counter medications, if known, and the reason each medication is taken by the youth, if known.

The caseworker or other appropriate program representative shall notify the Department's Division of Guardian and Advocacy when a hospital, detention center or program does not administer all prescribed medications. The Division of Guardian and Advocacy shall facilitate a discussion between the prescribing physician and the facility's physician to discuss the medical basis for giving or withholding those medications.

Upon return to the program, the caseworker shall instruct the youth to contact the licensed prescriber or his/her primary care physician to discuss any written discharge instructions and whether there are any contraindications for taking his/her prescribed medications.

TLP House and Apartment Models: The caseworker shall contact program staff to discuss the discharge instructions and any medication changes.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 6, 2009 – P.T. 2009.07

TLP House Model: The program's medication log shall note that the youth is absent at these times.

5. Change of Placement

- A. **TLP House Model:** When a youth moves to a new placement, the program shall give the youth his/her medications in the original containers, unless the new placement requires hand-off of medications to staff or provides other written instructions.

Staff shall also provide copies of written authorizations for administration of psychotropic medications for youth under age 18 and copies of all medication logs for the youth.

- B. **TLP Apartment Model and ILO:** When a youth moves to a new placement, the youth shall be responsible for taking his/her medications to the new placement, unless the new placement requires hand-off of medications by staff or provides other written instructions.

6. Preparations to Transition from TLP or for Emancipation to Adulthood

A youth preparing to transition out of TLP into a less restrictive and independent living arrangement, or preparing to emancipate to adulthood shall be proficient in following skills:

- purchasing prescription medications from a pharmacy, and obtaining refills in a timely manner;
- taking his/her medication as required;
- understanding the reason for taking each medication;
- understanding the potential adverse reactions and side effects;
- proper storage of medications (and when appropriate, needles and sharps);
- checking for each medication's expiration date and proper disposal of expired or unused medications. (When appropriate, know how to safely dispose of used needles and sharps);
- (for a parenting youth) demonstrating that he/she can properly medicate his/her child and understanding the reason for giving medication to the child;
- carrying a copy of his/her medical card at all times. A parenting youth also carries a copy of his/her child's medical card.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 6, 2009 – P.T. 2009.07

If a youth cannot proficiently demonstrate these skills when transition planning begins, TLP/ILO staff shall convene a staffing to address the youth's deficiencies in managing his/her medications. A DCFS representative shall be invited to attend the staffing. TLP/ILO staff shall document in the record all the efforts, resources and referrals that will be provided to the youth to manage these issues in preparation for emancipation.

7. Training for Staff – TLP and ILO

Each program shall develop a written training plan for staff that includes, at a minimum, the requirements of this subsection. The training plan shall be approved by the program's governing body and the medical director or a consulting licensed physician.

The program shall keep a log of all staff that have successfully completed this training, and shall also note the completion of this training in each staff person's personnel file.

Staff shall receive additional training specific to youth with chronic illnesses (e.g., diabetes, asthma, HIV/AIDS, kidney disease that requires dialysis, etc.).

A. Reporting and Observation Skills

All staff should be trained in observing and reporting changes in physical appearance, emotional adjustment and behavioral activity, and trained to recognize common reactions to medications. Staff should understand and be able to recognize through observation skills, the desired, unwanted (both expected and unexpected), or absence of desired effects of medications including potential medication interactions.

TLP House and Apartment Models: Staff shall report significant changes to the youth's caseworker within the appropriate time frames as set out in policy.

B. Staff Responsibilities in the Medication Process

Staff shall be trained to support and assist the youth in self-administration of medications. Staff should help the youth learn the name and reason for taking medications. Staff should know how to teach youth to self-administer medication if the youth comes to the program without that skill or receives a new medication after entering the program, how to locate and purchase a prescription from a pharmacy, and how to safely store medications.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 6, 2009 – P.T. 2009.07

Staff shall know the program policy specific to the medication administration process. They should understand the difference between controlled and non-controlled medicines. They should be trained to recognize side effects and reactions to medications.

When asked, staff should help a youth contact his/her doctor (or child's doctor), and should know how to work with doctors and hospitals with regard to medications.

Staff should know how to use and safely carry emergency/rescue medications and safely dispose of sharps and sharps containers and unused, returned, discontinued and expired medications.

Staff shall be able to determine when a medication error has occurred and what action should be taken.

TLP House Model: Although youth are required to self-administer medication, staff should be able to recognize and distinguish a youth's medication. They should know how to monitor that the youth is taking the proper dosage of medicine at the proper time. They should know when to contact the licensed prescriber with questions regarding the administration of medications.

C. Handling Emergency and Health-Threatening Situations

All staff should know how to handle both emergency and non-emergency conditions, and they should teach youth how to handle these conditions. They need to know how to access immediate and direct care in an emergency situation (e.g., call 911). They also need to know how to access medical support in a non-emergency situation.

f. Monitoring

The service provider shall submit reports as required by the contract.

g. Financial Provision

1. **Payment to the Youth.** The supervising agency will provide the adolescent with a monthly allowance in accordance with contractual stipulations. The amount shall not exceed \$200 monthly.
2. **Start-up Expenses.** Initial expenses related to setting up a household may be partially subsidized by DCFS. The adolescent will present an itemized list to the private agency who will request DCFS payment. An amount up to \$100 may be authorized.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 6, 2009 – P.T. 2009.07

3. Medical and Dental Payments. Youth in SILP are eligible to receive a Medicaid card for medical and dental needs.

h. Discharge from SILP

The service provider shall terminate the youth from SILP:

1. Upon demonstration by the adolescent that he is able to live independently without supervision.
2. When circumstances indicate that the adolescent could better be served in another youth development program.
3. When the adolescent, over the age of 18, fails to complete the tasks as agreed upon and identified on the CFS 497.
4. No later than 24 months after entry into SILP. The Regional Administrator/Cook County designee must give prior written approval to continue an adolescent in SILP beyond 12 months.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 1, 2020 – P.T. 2020.03

Appendix J: Rights, Standards and Best Practices for Pregnant and Parenting Youth

Table of Contents:

- a) Purpose
- b) Rights and Responsibilities of Class Members as outlined by the Hill-Erickson Consent Decree
- c) Identification of a Pregnant or Parenting Youth in Care and Entry into the Teen Parenting Service Network (TPSN)
- d) Rights of and Best Practices for Serving Pregnant and Parenting Youth in Care
 - 1) Right: To receive sexual health services and be free of discrimination based on their status as being pregnant or a parent.
 - 2) Right: To be placed in a stable and safe place to live with their child unless a separate placement is necessary for safety or treatment reasons.
 - 3) Right: To continue education, obtain a high school diploma or GED and begin post-secondary education, vocational skills/training and/or employment and receive the appropriate support services necessary to help achieve these goals.
 - 4) Right: To receive the necessary transportation to and from school and to and from child care while they attend school and/or employment.
 - 5) Right: To receive necessary ongoing prenatal, medical or dental care.
 - 6) Right: To receive financial assistance and a medical card through DCFS.
 - 7) Right: To have the support in learning to be the best parent possible.
 - 8) Right: To receive necessary child care for their children.
 - 9) Right: To receive services for needs that may impact a youth's ability to parent.
 - 10) Right: To be connected to ongoing parenting supports and community resources.
 - 11) Right: To actively participate in the care and support of their children by having appropriate regular visitation and contact when they do not have physical custody.
 - 12) Right: To receive services that promotes self-sufficiency as a family unit as long as they remain in DCFS legal custody.

Attachment 1: Resource Links

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 1, 2020 – P.T. 2020.03

a) Purpose

Pregnant and Parenting Programing provides supportive services and placements for pregnant or parenting youth in DCFS custody or guardianship (“youth in care”). Parents of all genders are eligible for services offered through this programing. Pregnant and Parenting Programing is available to custodial and noncustodial parenting youth, and youth whose children are in the custody or guardianship of the Department.

These Procedures describe the services provided by Pregnant and Parenting Programing for pregnant and parenting youth in care and their children. Services include, but are not limited to:

- prenatal and health care;
- placements and services to support parents;
- educational support;
- employment support;
- day care support;
- counseling and mental health services; and
- discharge planning focused on the family.

DCFS acknowledges that early and sustained involvement with young families can result in improved outcomes for both parent and child by enhancing parent-child interactions, providing stronger parental social support and linkages, increasing educational achievement and employment options for parenting youth, and improving school readiness and healthy development for the child. With appropriate and available services and supports, parenting youth are capable of succeeding as they transition to adulthood and as parents.

When consent of a pregnant or parenting youth is required for a service or service referral for themselves or their child, the Permanency Worker shall use the **CFS 600-3, Consent for Release of Information** to ensure that the elements of informed consent are addressed with the youth (i.e., the information being requested and the reason for requesting that information; the consequences to be imposed by the Department, private agency or contractor if the youth refuses to consent; a statement that the consent will expire in one year (unless an earlier date is specified); the required signatures; and how the consent may be revoked.)

Basic Assumptions of the Pregnant and/ Parenting Programing. Research supports that pregnancy during adolescence should be delayed in an effort to achieve important developmental milestones.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 1, 2020 – P.T. 2020.03

Pregnant and Parenting Programing supports the following assumptions:

- A comprehensive array of preventive and family planning services must be made available to all youth in care of child-bearing age.
- Case management and service delivery must be adapted to the developmental stage, abilities and particular needs of each youth.
- Pregnant and parenting youth in care have the right to receive services without regard to race, religion, ethnicity, economic status, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or plans regarding the resolution of pregnancy. Services must be delivered in the context of the youth's community, and cultural and ethnic background.
- All youth in care must be fully informed in an unbiased manner about all options for outcomes of a pregnancy.
- The families and fictive kin of pregnant and parenting youth in care are often the youth's main source of support. Pregnant and parenting youth should be encouraged to develop and maintain these relationships, so long as the relationships are safe and appropriate.

Consistent with these assumptions, Pregnant and Parenting Programing shall serve pregnant and parenting youth in care in accordance with the policies set out below.

Specialty Training for Permanency Workers. All Permanency Workers serving pregnant and parenting youth are required to attend and complete the UCAN/TPSN Specialty Training Series. This training includes both on-line and in person training modules. The in-person modules are offered biannually (Springfield and Chicago). The goal of this Specialty Training Series is to provide Permanency Workers with the necessary knowledge, skills and resources to serve pregnant and parenting youth in care and their children. (To register for the UCAN/TPSN Specialty Training Series, contact the TPSN Training Coordinator at **773-429-0300**.)

Non-Discrimination. Pregnant and parenting youth in care shall not be retaliated against, discriminated against or penalized because they are pregnant or parenting, have had previous or subsequent pregnancies, or because of any choice they make (or made) regarding a pregnancy or parenting outcome.

Consultation with Legal Counsel. DCFS and POS staff and substitute caregivers should not intentionally interfere or impede the ability of a pregnant or parenting youth in care to communicate with their legal counsel. In addition, a pregnant or parenting youth should not be questioned about their conversations with legal counsel nor be threatened or punished for asserting their legal rights through counsel.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 1, 2020 – P.T. 2020.03

Use of Coercion Prohibited. DCFS and POS staff and substitute caregivers shall use non-directive language to inform, educate and train a pregnant and parenting youth on issues concerning pregnancy resolution and the care of their child. A pregnant or parenting youth shall not be threatened with discharge from DCFS custody or guardianship, termination of their parental rights or unwarranted reports of abuse or neglect of their child in order to coerce the youth into cooperating with the substitute caregiver or service plan. DCFS and POS staff and caregivers shall not punish a youth for voicing concerns about the quality of their placement or services.

Psychiatric Hospitalization. All admissions and discharge planning for psychiatric hospitalization of a pregnant or parenting youth shall comply with **Procedures 301.110, Psychiatric Hospitalization.** The timelines in Procedures 301.110 are mandatory and must be strictly followed.

b) Rights and Responsibilities of Class Members as outlined by the Hill-Erickson Consent Decree

In 1991, DCFS entered the Hill-Erickson Consent Decree which requires DCFS to provide specialty services and placements to pregnant and parenting youth. A key focus of the consent decree is to provide support to pregnant and parenting youth in their role as parents, including in the development of skills to maintain their family while in DCFS care and upon leaving DCFS care and prevent retaliatory and discriminatory practices against youth in care due to decisions relating to pregnancy and parenting decisions.

Pregnant and parenting youth in care have the following rights:

- To be placed in a stable and safe place to live with their child unless a separate placement is necessary for safety or treatment reasons;
- To continue their education by obtaining a high school diploma or GED, and continuing their education (e.g., college or vocational training);
- To receive the necessary transportation to attend any education program, including school, in which they are participating;
- To receive the necessary transportation to and from their child's day care facility while they attend school- and/or employment-related activity;
- To receive appropriate services necessary to help them succeed in school;
- To receive comprehensive and unbiased family planning information and services to delay pregnancy or make decisions about pregnancy and parenting;
- To receive necessary ongoing prenatal, medical and dental care. Youth in care have the right to make their own decisions with respect to sexual and reproductive health and consent to receive those services;

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 1, 2020 – P.T. 2020.03

- To actively participate in the care and support of their child by having appropriate regular visitation when they do not have physical custody;
- To receive appropriate services for substance abuse, domestic violence, past traumatic experiences and/or mental health;
- To receive assistance to enhance parenting skills and self-sufficiency;
- To receive help budgeting and obtaining benefits for the adequate care of their child;
- To be free of discrimination based on their status as being pregnant or a parent, or because of a choice they made regarding a pregnancy or parenting outcome;
- To continue to receive appropriate services as long as they are in DCFS care, which may continue until the age of 21 when appropriate;
- To leave a mental health facility after staff of that facility states they no longer need mental health hospitalization; and
- To sign or refuse to sign consents to allow information to be shared to receive services for themselves and their child.
- If their child enters substitute care, to receive information and support regarding the reunification process and appropriate referrals for services.

c) Identification of a Pregnant or Parenting Youth in Care and Entry into the Teen Parenting Service Network (TPSN)

The Permanency Worker shall immediately contact TPSN Intake (phone: **773-429-0300**) when a youth self-reports or a medical exam confirms a pregnancy. The Permanency Worker must notify TPSN of any of the following pregnancy or parenting events:

- Pregnant youth in care;
- Parenting youth in care;
- Partner pregnancy (a youth in care believes their partner is pregnant or is the parent of a child already born);
- Delivery;
- Miscarriage; or
- Stillbirth.

The Permanency Worker must also record any of these events in a Significant Event Report. (See **Procedures 331, Significant Event Reports.**)

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 1, 2020 – P.T. 2020.03

d) **Rights of and Best Practices for Serving Pregnant and Parenting Youth in Care**

The focus of the rights, best practices and casework interventions in this subsection are to assist pregnant and parenting youth in developing as individuals and as parents through positive, strength-based interventions and planning. Permanency Workers and Supervisors shall comply with these procedures when providing services to these youth.

1) **Right: To receive sexual health and family planning services and options counseling, and be free of discrimination based on their status as being pregnant or a parent.**

Permanency Workers and Supervisors shall provide youth in care with accurate and unbiased information and services related to sexuality, reproduction, methods of contraception and parenthood.

Youth in DCFS custody or guardianship of child bearing age have the right to receive accurate and unbiased information in the areas of sexual health and family planning. Family planning services include the provision of information concerning medical care, contraceptive methods and devices, and when other resources are unavailable, payment for services. This also includes information concerning the proper use of condoms and their availability to youth through health care providers, local public health clinics and community service agencies. Youth have the right to accept or reject family planning services.

Youth of child bearing age shall be informed about and have access to contraception.

Identity and Health Support and Guidance. Gender identity and sexual orientation is protected by the Illinois Human Rights Act and the diversity of all youth in care must be respected and protected from discrimination. Permanency Workers and Supervisors shall provide youth with access to on-going support and guidance to explore and affirm their identity and their decisions in the areas of behavioral, physical and sexual health.

Permanency Workers and Supervisors seeking information to assist youth self identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, or intersex should request a consultation with the DCFS Division of Clinical Practice. The Division of Clinical Practice will help the Permanency Worker locate appropriate, non-discriminatory service providers for youth who may request or need services. (More information is available in **Procedures 302.Appendix K, Support and Well-Being of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning (LGBTQ) Youth.**)

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 1, 2020 – P.T. 2020.03

Options Counseling (for Pregnancy Outcomes). Youth in care have the right to receive non-directive and non-judgmental information to help them make informed decisions regarding their options and choices in the event that the youth (or the youth's partner) becomes pregnant. The Permanency Worker and Supervisor must ensure a youth receives accurate and unbiased Options Counseling that includes information about parenting, adoption, transfer of guardianship, and abortion/termination of the pregnancy. After receiving this counseling, a youth may want some time to decide what to do. Options counseling must address the legal timeframes that apply in the different circumstances (e.g., access to abortion services, when a surrender for adoption may be given, etc.) as these may affect the amount of time the youth has to make a decision.

If the youth wants to talk with their partner, or consult with a family member, friend or counselor about pregnancy options, the Permanency Worker should encourage that. However, the Permanency Worker remains responsible for ensuring the youth receives accurate and unbiased information.

- 2) **Right: To be placed in a stable and safe place to live with their child unless a separate placement is necessary for safety or treatment reasons.**

Placement and Infant/Child Equipment. A parenting youth in care should always reside with their child unless a separate placement is necessary for safety or treatment reasons or the child lives with the other parent. The placing agency is responsible to provide or secure appropriate infant/child sleeping equipment (e.g., bassinet, crib or toddler bed) for each child and for any visiting resources or alternative caregiver.

Note: A Pack and Play is not a permanent sleeping arrangement. It is designed to provide a temporary safe sleep option. It is ideal for visiting resources, short-term care or respite situations.

Additional safety items that must be available for the child include an age appropriate car seat, weather appropriate clothing, a bath tub and water thermometer, and first aid kit. The Permanency Worker must observe sleeping environments during each home visit and document observations, discussions, information shared and interventions with parenting youth in this area in a contact note.

Breast pumps may be obtained by prescription from a youth's primary care physician, through the WIC program, or by submitting a TPSN wrap plan.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 1, 2020 – P.T. 2020.03

Home Safety Checklist. The Permanency Worker shall use the Home Safety Checklist when assessing potential environmental hazards and risks that the pregnant or parenting youth may encounter both in placement and in alternative arrangements for the youth and the child. The Home Safety Checklist must be modified, as appropriate, when the environment or circumstances change (e.g., birth of a child, change in placement).

The milestones for completing or reviewing the **CFS 2025, Home Safety Checklist for Intact Family and Permanency Workers** include:

- Within 30 days of case assignment;
- Within 30 days of the youth giving birth;
- As the baby's mobility increases, and starts walking, the **CFS 2025** should be completed or reviewed as it relates to the safety in the home;
- Any time a pregnant or parenting youth changes placement;
- Any time there is a new member of the youth's household, or there is a change in family composition;
- Within 30 days of case closure. This review must take place in the youth's final living arrangement.

The Permanency Worker shall ensure that a current **CFS 2025** is completed and reviewed with every pregnant and parenting youth in care and a copy of the **CFS 2026, Home Safety Checklist for Parents and Caregivers** is given to and reviewed with the youth. The Permanency Worker shall also assist the youth in correcting any risk identified by the Home Safety Checklist.

Note: For additional information about the Home Safety Checklist, see **Administrative Procedures #25, Home Safety Checklist**.

When possible, the Permanency Worker shall also review the Home Safety Checklist with the youth's visiting resource, alternative caregiver and other significant persons in the youth's life.

When the Child of a Youth in Care is Found to be Dependent. When a court finds that a child of a parenting youth is a dependent minor and the child is placed in the custody of DCFS, the Permanency Worker, with court approval, must ensure that the youth and child are placed together unless the Permanency Supervisor makes a **Critical Decision** that joint placement is contraindicated for safety or treatment reasons.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 1, 2020 – P.T. 2020.03

When a Permanency Worker is considering separate placements for a parenting youth and child, the Permanency Worker must request a DCFS Clinical Staffing using the **CFS 399-1, Division of Clinical Practice Referral Form**. The completed CFS 399-1 shall be sent via DCFS Outlook e-mailbox to the “DCFS.ClinicalRef” emailbox. The Permanency Worker must invite TPSN staff to attend this staffing. Whenever possible, this staffing must occur before a Critical Decision is made to place the youth and child apart.

When there is a finding of abuse or neglect against the parenting youth and the court removes the child from the parenting youth’s care, the placing agency must assign separate Permanency Workers for the parenting youth and the child.

Respite, Emergency and Short-term Guardianship Arrangements. Respite, emergency, and short-term guardianship arrangements can be additional resources for a parenting youth who needs assistance in caring for their child. With the consent of the parenting youth in care, Permanency Worker shall assist the youth in assessing the arrangements with the identified caregiver for appropriateness and safety. This assessment should include an in-person visit, request to run background checks on the caregiver and members of the household, a walk-through of the caregiver’s home and general sharing of information regarding the caregiver’s ability to meet the identified needs of the child. Upon receiving the parenting youth’s and caregiver’s written consent, the Permanency Worker shall:

- ensure that the caregiver has the necessary items to care for the child (e.g., medical card, financial resources for food and supplies, WIC coupons if age eligible, age appropriate sleeping and travel equipment and day care if the caregiver is employed;
- complete a **CFS 2026 Home Safety Checklist for Parents and Caregivers** to assess whether the caregiver’s home is safe in accordance with the child’s age and developmental stage. The Permanency Worker shall provide necessary safety items if needed (e.g., fire extinguisher, smoke detector).
- complete a Person Search for prior child abuse/neglect history and LEADS searches on the caregiver and all persons 13 years of age and older residing in the caregiver’s home. For out-of-state emergency, respite or short-term guardianship arrangements, the background check will be processed through the Office of the DCFS Inspector General.
- create a Visitation and Contact Plan with the parenting youth and caregiver to ensure the parent and child remain connected during the separation period.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 1, 2020 – P.T. 2020.03

- create a visiting plan with the caregiver and Permanency Worker to ensure ongoing access to the caregiver's home and the child to assess the safety and well-being of the child and support for the caregiver. The Permanency Worker shall request a minimum of monthly in-person, in-home contact with the caregiver and child; however, this must be agreed upon by the caregiver and parenting youth. For out-of-state emergency, respite or short-term guardianship arrangements, the Permanency Worker shall request a minimum of quarterly in-person home visits with the caregiver and child.

Note: For out-of-state emergency, respite and short-term guardianship arrangements, the Permanency Worker shall consult with TPSN to create and finalize a plan with parenting youth in care and their service team.

- if the parenting youth and caregiver do not consent to in-person home visits with the child, the Permanency Worker shall request child well-care documents, such as pediatric health records, immunization records, daycare/school reports and WIC enrollment for children who are age eligible, to demonstrate the child's safety, health and well-being.

The Permanency Worker shall document all efforts to engage the parenting youth and caregiver in a contact note within 48 hours.

If the Permanency Worker has reason to believe that a child is being abused and/or neglected while in a respite, emergency or short-term guardianship arrangement (or if the parenting youth reports such beliefs to the Permanency Worker), the Permanency Worker shall:

- make a report to the State Central Register (phone: **800-252-2873**). If the child is out-of-state, make a report to the state-specific child abuse hotline;
- contact local law enforcement and request a well-being check; and/or
- create a child/youth incident report in SACWIS if SCR does not take a report (See **Procedures 331.70, Significant Event Reports – A llegal Child and Youth Incidents and Contributing Circumstances**).

(See the **CFS 444-2, Appointment of Short-Term Guardian**)

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 1, 2020 – P.T. 2020.03

- 3) **Right: To continue education, obtain a high school diploma or GED and begin post-secondary education, vocational skills/training and/or employment and receive the appropriate support services necessary to help achieve these goals.**

All pregnant and parenting youth have the right to complete their secondary education and begin post-secondary education, vocational skills/training and/or employment regardless of their parenting status.

Pregnant and parenting youth currently enrolled in high school must be supported to remain in high school to earn their diploma.

Pregnant and parenting youth who did not graduate from high school, and have been out of school for an extended period of time, must be provided with information about and assisted in enrolling in an alternative educational program in order to obtain a high school diploma or GED. (See **Procedures 314, Educational Services** for complete requirements related to educational services.)

The Permanency Worker must work collaboratively with the pregnant or parenting youth's educational/vocational institution. Discussions should include rights and expectations of pregnant youth, who must be allowed to take time off from school, without academic consequences, for doctor's visits, birth, or other health reasons related to pregnancy. Discussions regarding parenting youth should include the necessity to allow flexibility for their child's medical visits, child care, and school transportation.

Each public school in Illinois is required to provide a room, other than a bathroom, with an electrical outlet for nursing parents. Students must also have access to a refrigerator to store their milk and cannot be penalized for time away from academics because they were pumping their breast milk. The Permanency Worker must help a parenting youth advocate for these rights in school and access breastfeeding resources, if needed.

Homebound Schooling. A pregnant youth's school attendance may be interrupted when the youth is hospitalized or too sick to attend school on a regular basis. Homebound services are available for youth who are currently enrolled in high school. Homebound services focus on keeping students in academic and instructional contact with the attendance school, thus facilitating seamless reintegration back to school. This service allows students to maintain academic progress, and recover and earn credits.

Homebound services can begin prenatally if the pregnancy is documented as high-risk by a licensed physician. Homebound services typically last through the 6-week post-partum period. The Permanency Worker shall assist the pregnant youth with accessing homebound services.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 1, 2020 – P.T. 2020.03

In Chicago Public Schools (CPS), the Home and Hospital Instruction Program provides access to continuous instruction, by a certified teacher, to all students whose academic programs are interrupted for 10 or more consecutive or intermittent school days due to a medical or psychiatric condition. Initial eligibility and the need for ongoing services must be documented by a licensed physician. The CPS Home and Hospital Instruction Program can be reached at **773-553-1800** or by email at homeandhospital@cps.edu. (Additional information can be obtained at the CPS website using the following link: cps.edu/Programs/Pathways_to_success/SpecialEducationandSupports/Pages/HomeHospitalServices.aspx)

For students who are not enrolled in CPS, but are enrolled in an Illinois high school, home and hospital instruction is accessed through a request to the local school district. The Permanency Worker shall ensure the youth's medical provider completes the **ISBE 34-58, Medical Certification for Home/Hospital Instruction** form and submits the completed form to the administrative office for the local school district. The **ISBE 34-58** can be downloaded from the ISBE Website (www.isbe.net) or using the following link: www.isbe.net/Documents/34-58-home-hospital-inst.pdf#search=isbe%2034%2D58.

Changing High Schools after Change of Placement. Consistent with **Procedures 314, Educational Services**, pregnant or parenting youth should remain in their school of origin whenever possible. However, when a pregnant or parenting youth transitions into a new substitute care placement and must change schools, the Permanency Worker shall introduce himself/herself to school staff within the first 10 days of placement and ask to be notified via email, phone or an available educational notification portal system of any absences. The Permanency Worker must arrange access to the high school's education notification system portal for absences or truancy. When notified that a pregnant or parenting youth has two unexcused absences from school, the Permanency Worker must make in-person contact with youth and school personnel within 2 school days. The TPSN Education Support Department (phone: **773-429-0300**) or NIU DCFS Education Advisors (ccwe.niu.edu/ccwe/eap/advisors/index.shtml) must be consulted when an educational concern is identified (e.g., truancy, attendance, failing grades, special education issues).

Preparing for GED Exam. Preparation is key for pregnant and parenting youth who opt to take the GED exam. The Permanency Worker must help youth research and select a GED preparation program that meets their needs. The Permanency Worker must also ensure that child care support is available to allow parenting youth to study and complete on-line practice exercises and exams while not in class.

A GED or college entrance exam is a critical appointment requiring the Permanency Worker to transport the youth with the youth's consent.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 1, 2020 – P.T. 2020.03

Note: The GED may not be an appropriate education plan for youth whose cognitive functioning puts them in the range of developmental disability. These youth should be referred to the NIU DCFS Education Advisors (ccwe.niu.edu/ccwe/eap/advisors/index.shtml) for consultation.

TABE-Testing. The Permanency Worker shall refer a youth for TABE-testing (Test of Adult Basic Education) when there are concerns regarding educational attainment/completion. TABE-testing is used to determine skill level in reading, math, language and spelling in order to select an appropriate education program. This testing is available through literacy programs in the community.

Financial Aid and Planning for College. When pregnant or parenting youth are nearing their junior year of high school, the Permanency Worker should assist them in beginning the application process for grants and federal aid, and explore the availability of family housing on or near campus.

All college-bound youth should complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) application online at fafsa.gov. Here are a few important tips for completing the FAFSA:

- Parenting youth should mark YES to the question that asks if they were in foster care after the age of 13. This automatically gives them independent status.
- The FAFSA asks if the applicant has or will have children who will receive more than half of their support from the applicant during the specific time period the application covers. Parenting youth should NOT indicate they have children, unless they can easily provide the documentation that they provided over half of their support, as the school financial aid office will require this documentation. In most cases, these youth are not providing over half of the financial support, as the Department is contributing significantly to the financial support of the children.
- The Permanency Worker and pregnant/parenting youth should research the living arrangements available at schools the youth is interested in to determine if family housing is an option. Day care availability also needs to be researched, as many schools offer on-site day care facilities for students.

When a youth is accepted to a college or university, the Permanency Worker shall convene a Child and Family Team Meeting for post-secondary planning that includes housing, course registration, transportation, budgeting and information regarding the DCFS Education Training voucher and Youth In College grant.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 1, 2020 – P.T. 2020.03

The TPSN Education Department (phone: **773-429-0300**) is also available to assist youth with the post-secondary application process, including financial aid, scholarship information and coordination of other services related to post-secondary education planning.

Securing and maintaining part-time or full-time employment is another milestone for a pregnant or parenting youth that requires preparation. The Permanency Worker and youth must review the youth's job readiness plan routinely (e.g., child care plans, transportation, adjusting travel time due to drop off/pick-up from child care, uniform/clothing preparation and who to contact in the event that the youth will be late or cannot attend work due to a child care issue).

4) Right: To receive the necessary transportation to and from school and to and from child care while they attend school and/or employment.

Pregnant and parenting youth have added transportation needs due to the addition of prenatal and parenting responsibilities. The youth's Permanency Worker and placing agency shall ensure transportation funds are available to the youth for necessary transportation to and from: health care and health related services; school; child care while they attend school or employment; and employment activities such as job readiness and job training programs.

The Permanency Worker shall ensure the youth understands how to use public transportation to get to work, school, day care and other critical appointments. The Permanency Worker should consider providing funds for taxi and ride-share services when the safety and/or well-being of youth and/or their children prevent use of public transportation. Factors such as the time of day, weather, safety of the community, health conditions of the youth and/or the youth's children should all be considered when making such a determination.

Although a youth may be proficient in using public transportation, there are some instances when the Permanency Worker must accompany the youth. For example, with the youth's consent, the Permanency Worker shall accompany and transport the youth to an initial appointment to a new medical provider (e.g., obstetrician, pediatrician, psychologist, and psychiatrist), WIC office, day care/early learning facility, taking the GED exam, enrollment in school, and the Risk Reduction for Pregnant and Young Parent Training. The Permanency Worker should also consider the youth's cognitive, emotional and mental health when assessing tasks the youth can do independently that require transportation.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 1, 2020 – P.T. 2020.03

5) **Right: To receive necessary ongoing prenatal, medical or dental care.**

Early and routine prenatal care and support is essential for all pregnant youth regardless of a youth's decision about the outcome of the pregnancy. Prenatal care is defined as the health care provided to the pregnant youth and fetus before birth. The goal of prenatal care is to monitor the progress of the pregnancy and identify potential risks to the pregnant youth and fetus, thus reducing the risk of premature delivery and/or other serious conditions related to pregnancy. Pregnant youth have the right to consent to and make decisions regarding their own prenatal care. Agencies must ensure that all pregnant youth have access to quality prenatal services, paying special attention to high-risk pregnancies.

Pregnant youth who have not received the following vaccinations prior to pregnancy should be encouraged to consult with their OB/GYN about being vaccinated during pregnancy:

- Whooping Cough
- Flu
- Hepatitis B.

The HPV (Human Papillomavirus) vaccine is recommended for youth either before the onset of sexual activity or after. However, this vaccine is not recommended for use in pregnant youth. A pregnant youth who has started the series should stop the series and then should start up again after the pregnancy outcome.

The Permanency Worker's role includes the following:

- give a printed, up-to-date Health Passport from SACWIS to each youth. (See **Procedures 302.360(c), Health Passport**);
- encouraging and preparing youth to attend all prenatal visits by providing transportation to and from the appointments, and assisting in formulating questions and voicing expectations as it relates to the youth's pregnancy and delivery. The Permanency Worker may attend a prenatal visit with the pregnant youth's consent;
- referring youth to health care or pharmacy personnel who can educate and assist them with management and appropriate self-administration of medications during and after pregnancy and, after childbirth, appropriate administration of medications to their child;
- referring pregnant youth to prenatal support programs (e.g., Family Case Management, Better Birth Outcomes, Doula, Nurse Family Partnerships, or Healthy Families Illinois);

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 1, 2020 – P.T. 2020.03

- requesting consultation with DCFS Nursing Services if a youth's pregnancy is determined to be high-risk and it is suspected that the youth is not receiving appropriate medical care through a primary medical provider. The following conditions may require a nursing referral:
 - diabetes;
 - high blood pressure;
 - history of miscarriage, stillborn and premature birth;
 - family history of genetic disorders;
 - exposure to drugs and alcohol, x-rays and other harmful agents;
 - extreme over- or underweight;
 - positive HIV and/or other sexually transmitted infections; or
 - previous pregnancy considered high-risk.

In addition to medical risk factors, there are social risk factors that should be considered for further assessment and services, including but not limited to: active substance abuse (including consumption of alcohol and/or tobacco); involvement in a domestic violence relationship; lack of resources where food is not readily available or accessible; or lack of operable utilities;

- developing a birth plan (including family planning) with the pregnant youth that outlines supports, requests and needs during labor and delivery (e.g., plan of care for other children), including access to a lactation consultant if planning to breastfeed, and linking the youth to WIC services. As part of the birth plan, youth who are considering a long acting reversible contraceptive (LARC) should discuss this with the physician in advance of delivery and obtain a prescription for the LARC to be administered at the hospital after the delivery. The Permanency Worker can check with the hospital prior to the delivery, and if necessary, help the youth make alternate arrangements to have the LARC administered;
- identifying and securing specialized educational accommodations for the youth prior to or following the birth (e.g., 504 Plan and homebound schooling);
- transporting and accompanying the youth to the 6-week post-partum follow-up exam and ensuring that, if not already addressed at the hospital, family planning options/services are discussed so that the youth can make an informed decision regarding family planning. Any barriers to attending this exam must be promptly identified and resolved. If the 6-week follow-up appointment is missed for any reason, the Permanency Worker must work diligently with the youth to reschedule that appointment;

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 1, 2020 – P.T. 2020.03

- asking the youth to consent to release of information to the Permanency Worker for all services received by the youth and child (a pregnant youth may consent to decisions regarding her own medical care during her pregnancy and a parenting youth may consent to decisions regarding their child's care). The pregnant youth may refuse to consent without recourse;
- referring the infant to the DCFS Medical Director (phone: **312-814-6800**) for an assessment for suspected Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/Exposure (FAS/FAE) when the Permanency Worker knows or suspects the youth used alcohol during pregnancy; and
- assisting the youth in developing a service plan that addresses how the youth can acquire skills to be the best parent possible.

6) **Right: To receive financial assistance and a medical card through DCFS.**

A parenting youth with custody of his/her child is eligible to receive a monthly payment for the care of the child (the equivalent of the Department of Human Services "child-only" TANF grant) and a medical card for the child (see **Procedures 359.80(b), Financial Aid for Ward Parents Whose Children Are Living in their Care**). The child-only monthly payment is provided to the parenting youth when the child is living with the parenting youth in care. The Permanency Worker is responsible for notify the DCFS Technical Support Unit at DCFS.youthwithbaby@illinois.gov whenever the parenting youth has relinquished custody or the child is no longer living with the parenting youth. This does not apply to respite care that does not exceed 14 days.

The payment begins after the birth of the child. The Permanency Worker shall send the following information to TPSN at DCFS.DG.TPSNintake-referrals@illinois.gov and the DCFS Technical Support Unit at DCFS.youthwithbaby@illinois.gov for approval to ensure the special service fee payments and supports are in place:

- **CFS 906/E or 906-1/E*** for HFM (Hospital-Facility-Medical) when the parenting youth was hospitalized to give birth;
- **CFS 906/E or 906-1/E*** for return to placement; and
- The infant's full name, date of birth, gender and race.

* See **Policy Guide 2012.06, Accessing, Completing, and Submitting the New Electronic CFS 906/E and CFS 906-1/E Placement/Payment Authorization Forms**.

A time-limited special service fee may also be requested for foster parent expenses when a parenting youth and their child are living in the foster home (see **Procedures 359.40(k), Special Service Fees**).

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 1, 2020 – P.T. 2020.03

For a youth whose parenting status was discovered after birth, a youth whose child is returning home following DCFS removal or a youth entering substitute care with a child, the Permanency Worker shall notify DCFS.DG.TPSNintake-referrals@illinois.gov via DCFS Outlook e-mail and the DCFS Technical Support Unit at DCFS.youthwithbaby@illinois.gov. The email should include the following information:

- both parent's names (identify which is in care);
- child's name and birthdate;
- verification of child's residence (i.e., court order for return home, worker observation of child in placement or other legal documentation); and
- a signed voluntary acknowledgement of paternity form, when available.

SSU Eligibility. A parenting youth, age 18 or older, residing in Illinois with their child in an SSU placement is eligible to receive from DCFS the equivalent of the DHS child-only payment. (The youth cannot be receiving funds from DHS.)

The Permanency Worker must complete a Significant Event Report and also report the birth information to TPSN Intake at DCFS.DG.TPSNintake-referrals@illinois.gov and DCFS.YouthWithBaby@illinois.gov (include child's full name, sex, race and DOB).

In addition, the Permanency Worker must ensure a **CFS 906** has been completed to reflect both the youth being admitted to the hospital (HFM) to give birth and the youth returning to the youth's SSU or approved placement. The Permanency Worker must send the **CFS 906** to TPSN Intake and CAPU for processing.

Medical Card. Pursuant to an agreement with the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS), the DCFS Technical Support Unit initiates medical cards in the HFS/DHS systems for children of youth in care as outlined below:

- The child lives with the parenting youth who remains in DCFS care up to the parent's age of 21 (or age 24 if the parent receives a DCFS Scholarship (CUS placement)).
- The child and parenting youth reside in Illinois. (Should the youth and child move outside of Illinois but the parent's DCFS case remains open, the youth should contact the other state's Medicaid agency to obtain the other state's medical card. The youth should not apply for TANF as Illinois will continue to provide the child-only payment when appropriate.)

Note: If the parenting youth is attending college or receiving residential services they are not considered residents of the other state.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 1, 2020 – P.T. 2020.03

- When the parenting youth ages out and/or the youth's DCFS case closes, the medical card for the child, associated with the parenting youth's foster care episode, ends and will be placed in Continuing Eligibility (CE) status for up to one year to allow the parenting youth to obtain medical coverage for the child via DHS or a private insurance provider.

7) Right: To have the support in learning to be the best parent possible if parenting is the youth's choice.

Each child and family served by the Department is required to have a written service plan, whether or not a child is in placement, and whether casework services are provided by Department or POS staff. When pregnant or parenting youth intend to parent their child, the service plan should address how those youth can acquire skills to be the best parents possible. Tools such as the New Birth Assessment and Risk Reduction for Pregnant and Young Parents Training (set out below) can be used to help identify parenting skills that need to be acquired or enhanced.

New Birth Assessment. The New Birth Assessment (NBA) is a tool to support youth in parenting their infants. This assessment:

- provides parenting youth with knowledge of child development and community resources;
- helps identify any concrete needs of the parent and child;
- evaluates the current level of parent-child interaction;
- notes any current safety/risk factors and how they impact parenting; and
- makes recommendations for follow-up tasks and services.

As part of the NBA process, youth will receive the CANS; Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale for postnatal depression; Adult Adolescent Parenting Inventory; and Ages and Stages Questionnaire. NBA assessments are conducted by specialty parenting providers (PPT) assigned by TPSN in the third trimester of pregnancy. (Note: For questions about the New Birth Assessment, contact TPSN Statewide New Birth Assessment Coordinator at **773-429-0300**).

The Permanency Worker is responsible to provide each pregnant youth with information about the New Birth Assessment process during pregnancy. When the tool or assessment is administered, the Permanency Worker shall accompany the specialty parenting provider and coordinate the needed tasks and services identified by the assessment. The NBA Assessor will provide the Permanency Worker and Supervisor with a copy of the completed NBA report and recommendations. The Permanency Worker should review the recommendations with the pregnant youth and incorporate the recommendations in the youth's service plan.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 1, 2020 – P.T. 2020.03

Risk Reduction. The Permanency Worker must ensure that each pregnant and parenting youth participates in the **Risk Reduction for Pregnant and Young Parents Training**.^{*} This training is offered several times per year to accommodate newly expectant parents, and includes information on safe sleep strategies, choosing appropriate caregivers, how to identify suspicious marks or bruising and infant brain development. The Permanency Worker shall transport pregnant and parenting youth to and from the Risk Reduction Training and assist a parenting youth in arranging child care while the youth participates in the training. (Contact the TPSN Training Coordinator at **773-429-0300** for a statewide training schedule.)

^{*} A youth will not be required to attend this training when it is determined to be clinically inappropriate for that youth to participate or the youth has opted to terminate the pregnancy. A TPSN Clinical Consultant, in consultation with the Permanency Worker, will make this decision based upon a review of the case. When deemed necessary, the review process may include a case staffing or record review to determine if a youth should be excluded from the training.

Adverse Pregnancy Outcomes Report System (APORS). An APORS birth meets one or more of the following criteria:

- The infant was born at less than 31 weeks gestational age;
- The infant was part of a triplet, or higher order, birth;
- The infant is diagnosed as having a positive drug toxicity for any drug, shows signs and symptoms of drug toxicity or withdrawal, or the infant's parent admits to illegal drug use during the pregnancy;
- the infant is diagnosed with a congenital anomaly; a serious congenital infection; an endocrine, metabolic or immune disorder; a blood disorder; or another high-risk medical condition; or
- a neonatal or fetal death has occurred.

When an infant of a youth in care is born with an APOR indicator, the Permanency Worker shall request consultation from a DCFS Regional Nurse within 48 hours of learning of the infant's birth. The Permanency Worker shall complete the **CFS 339-1, Division of Clinical Practice Referral Form**, and e-mail the completed form with any supporting documentation via Outlook email to "DCFS.ClinicalRef". Referrals that cannot be emailed can be faxed to **800-753-3308**.

Emergency referrals and consultations may be made by calling the Office of the Chief of Nursing (phone: **312-814-5993** during normal business hours (Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.), and **312-718-5177** after hours and on weekends and holidays).

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 1, 2020 – P.T. 2020.03

When the Permanency Worker has concerns about the health of a newborn infant of a youth in care and the infant is not in DCFS custody, the Permanency Worker shall, with the parent's consent, make a DCFS nurse referral as soon as possible.

Child Well-Being and Early Learning. All children of parenting youth in care will receive a developmental screening as soon as possible after birth as part of the New Birth Assessment process. The DCFS Early Childhood Unit (ECU) also offers developmental screenings for children 0 – 3 years of age. Children can also be screened by their pediatrician, parenting worker (PPT), or other community resource such as Child Find; the goal is to have every child screened as early as possible.

For a child screened through the DCFS/Erikson Institute Early Childhood Project, the Permanency Worker will schedule the screening, secure the parenting youth's consent, transport, and accompany the youth and their child to the screening. If screening results indicate, the DCFS/Erikson Institute Early Childhood Project will link the child to the Early Intervention system (Child and Family Connections or CFC) for further evaluation to determine if the child is in need of services. The Permanency Worker will support the youth and child in following through with the CFC evaluation process and in engaging in any services that CFC recommends as a result of the evaluations. Early Childhood TPSN Developmental Screening/Consultation Referral Form and Procedures are available from Family Development Supervisor at TPSN (phone: **773-429-0300**).

If the child's screening results identify areas of development that are of concern though not yet in a range that suggests potential delay, the child should be rescreened at an interval determined by the screener.

Wherever a screening is held, if a screening for a child 0 – 3 identifies a potential delay, the child must be referred to CFC for further evaluation to determine if the child needs Early Intervention services. Early Intervention services are provided free of charge to any child age 0 – 3 found eligible through CFC evaluation. These services can include in-home occupational, physical, developmental, speech, and other therapies and services to address the child's needs and assist the parenting youth in their ability to support the child's development. For children ages 3 – 5, screenings are provided by:

- Child Find;
- The local public school district;
- other community providers; or
- DCFS Early Childhood Unit on a case by case basis and determined by consultation, particularly when there are parent/child relationship or parenting issues or trauma-related concerns.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 1, 2020 – P.T. 2020.03

If the screening identifies potential delays for a child age 3 – 5, the child must be referred for a Case Study Evaluation through the child's local public school district to determine whether the child is eligible for Early Childhood Special Education services. If the Case Study Evaluation does not find a child eligible for Early Childhood Special Education services, the child should be periodically rescreened to ensure the child is on track developmentally.

Children ages 0 – 3 who are not eligible for Early Intervention services, and children ages 3 – 5 who are not eligible for Early Childhood Special Education services should be referred and enrolled in home visiting programs such as Healthy Families (if they are not already receiving PPT services), and early learning center-based programs such as Early Head Start (infants and toddlers) and Head Start (3 years old and up). Even children who do receive services through Early Intervention or Early Childhood Special Education and their parents can benefit from these kinds of services.

For older children, Preschool for All and Head Start programs prepare 3 and 4 year olds to succeed in school. Preschool for All and Head Start offer high quality early childhood educational programs in a variety of settings (public and private schools, child care centers, community and faith-based organizations, and other settings). Children of youth in care are categorically eligible for these programs, and Permanency Workers should educate parenting youth as to their benefits, assist in locating programs that are accessible to them, conduct visits with the parenting youth to select a program, assist in enrolling their children, help to develop a plan for transportation, and assist in locating other needed child care if the parenting youth requires more hours of care than are provided by the early childhood program.

Resources for early childhood education programs can be identified through the Early Head Start/Head Start Program Locator and the City of Chicago early learning portal, and should be included on the parenting youth's individual Community Map.

To keep children ages 0-5 nutritionally healthy, Permanency Workers must assist parenting youth in enrolling themselves during pregnancy, and enrolling their children if parenting, in their local WIC program. Permanency Workers must also help parents apply for SNAP benefits, complete Mid-Point, Re-Determination, and other reporting requirements and generally maintain these benefits if they are eligible and in need.

8) Right: To receive necessary child care for their children.

Parenting youth have the right to child care while they attend school or work. (See **Procedure 359, Authorized Child Care Payments**). With the parenting youth's consent, the Permanency Worker will provide information to the youth about what to look for in a child care provider, accompany the youth to interview

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 1, 2020 – P.T. 2020.03

prospective providers and assist the youth in selecting a provider. The Permanency Worker shall make sure appropriate payment requests are submitted to the DCFS Office of Child Development (phone: **312-808-5000**). The Permanency Worker will participate in or encourage regular parent/provider communication regarding the child's development. The Permanency Worker shall document all discussions, activities, referrals and interventions regarding any developmental, behavioral or parent/child interaction concerns in a case note.

A parenting youth may be eligible for Employment-Related Day Care services or Protective Day Care services. (See **Procedures 302.330, Day Care Services.**)

- A parenting youth who is in school, employed and/or in a job training program is eligible for Employment-Related Day Care.
- A parenting youth with a history of mental illness, substance abuse, violent or aggressive behavior or developmental delays, and who is not eligible for school or Employment-Related Day Care services, is eligible for Protective Day Care services.
- A parenting youth who is not enrolled in school, employed or participating in a job training program is eligible for up to two days per week of day care, for 2 months, for the purposes of reengaging in school, employment and/or in a job training program.
- A parenting youth for whom a report of child abuse/neglect has been "indicated" is eligible for Protective Day Care services when the child remains in the youth's care, regardless of whether the youth is in school or working.
- A parenting youth who has lost and subsequently regains custodial rights to their child (i.e., reunification) is eligible for Protective Day Care services, regardless of whether the parenting youth is in school or working.

9) Right: To receive services for needs that may impact a youth's ability to parent.

New birth and parenting assessments are different from other child welfare assessments. The purpose of these assessments is to determine how the parent functions in their individual capacity as a parent; if the parent requires additional support; the child's developmental, social and emotional needs; and how the family unit functions.

Comprehensive planning and assessment provides the foundation for launching healthy families from DCFS care. The Permanency Worker is required to ensure the youth completes the appropriate Casey Life Skills Assessment (CLSA)

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 1, 2020 – P.T. 2020.03

parenting supplement assessment (based on the age of the youth). Any recommended parenting services shall be included in the youth's service plan. When planning service interventions, special attention should be given to parenting programs that rely on evidence based or research informed curriculums and programs that promote family protective factors.

Casey Life Skills Assessment's (CLSA). Comprehensive planning and assessment provides the foundation for launching healthy families from DCFS care. The Permanency Worker is required to ensure each pregnant/parenting youth completes the appropriate CLSA Pregnant and Parenting Assessment (based on the age of the youth). Any parenting services recommended by this assessment shall be included in the youth's service plan. When planning service interventions, special attention should be given to parenting programs that rely on evidence-based or research-informed curricula and programs that promote family protective factors.

The CLSA Pregnant and Parenting Assessment includes the following:

- **Healthy Pregnancy** - Addressing a range of prenatal and post-partum care issues that pregnant youth need to know, this 31-item assessment focuses on skill areas important to having a healthy pregnancy, birth and recovery, including medical; daily habits and care; safety and well-being; newborn care; self-care following birth; and expectant fathers.
- **Parenting of Infants** - This 77-item instrument is designed to help parents of infants (birth to one year) learn skills and gain knowledge. It covers health, nutrition, child care, safety and well-being, child growth and development, and nurturing behaviors. The assessment helps young parents gain knowledge and heighten self-awareness about proper parenting approaches in skill areas needed to insure healthy babies.
- **Parenting Young Children** - This 61-item assessment covers skill areas to promote positive parenting of young children (two to six years) including health; nutrition; child care; safety and well-being; child growth and development; and nurturing behaviors. Very young parents may lack knowledge about toddler health, nutrition, and safety issues. This assessment promotes conversations between young parents and teachers in order to improve overall parenting skills.

Assessment and service planning are also conducted to meet the needs of the parenting youth to mitigate issues that impact their ability to parent (e.g., mental health issues, developmental/intellectual disability, domestic/family violence, and substance abuse). For parenting youth presenting with these or other issues, the Permanency Worker shall obtain written consent from the parenting youth to make appropriate specialty referrals for assessment and services.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 1, 2020 – P.T. 2020.03

Parenting Capacity Assessment. The Parenting Capacity Assessment and the Parenting Assessment Team can be used for parenting youth with significant mental health issues or a development disability that may adversely affect their ability to parent their children. To obtain DCFS authorization to conduct an evaluation, the **CFS 417, Psychology Department Testing Referral Form** must be completed and submitted with supporting documentation as listed on the form to the assigned consulting psychologist.

A Parenting Capacity Assessment (PCA) is an evaluation conducted by a DCFS-approved, licensed clinician that gathers information concerning whether a youth can demonstrate minimal parenting capacity. Minimal parenting capacity is the ability to provide for the basic safety and/or well-being of the child. PCAs involve extensive interviewing, parent-child observation, record review and collateral contact with important people in the lives of the parent and child. To provide Parenting Capacity Assessments, the applicant must be a licensed clinical psychologist, licensed clinical social worker, licensed marriage and family therapist or licensed clinical professional counselor in the State of Illinois approved by DCFS.

Parenting Assessment Team Evaluation. The Parenting Assessment Team (PAT) Program provides comprehensive clinical assessments that assist Permanency Workers and Supervisors in assessing risk and exploring permanency issues for children with mentally ill parents. Each PAT includes a psychiatrist, a psychologist and a team coordinator. The psychiatrist will evaluate the parent and the psychologist will assess parent-child interactions, administer any standardized tests of developmental, cognitive, emotional and parent functioning, as well as consult with collateral professionals. In addition to a written report, the psychologist will convene a brief feedback session with the Permanency Worker, Supervisor and the parent. The consulting psychologist will assign the family to a geographically desirable PAT agency that is contracted with the Department.

Parenting youth that are involved in ongoing domestic violence situations or have a history of domestic violence must be assessed to determine current risks to both the youth and child. (See **Procedures 302.260, Domestic Violence.**)

Parenting youth with a history of substance misuse must be assessed through an Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse (AODA) provider or Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor (CADC). Recommendations from these assessments must be included in the youth's Service Plan and monitored for progress. (See **Procedures 302.Appendix A, Substance Involved Families.**)

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 1, 2020 – P.T. 2020.03

- 10) **Right: To be connected to ongoing parenting supports and community resources.**

Community Mapping: Identifying and Collaborating with Parental Supports and Community Resources for the Family. A Community Map is a visual representation of the supportive systems at play in a young family's life. It is used to help the pregnant or parenting youth get connected to important parenting and other community resources to support the young family where they live. This includes the community in which the young family will reside following discharge from DCFS care.

The goal of the family's Community Map is to identify high-quality, supportive services that enrich a young family's well-being, educational/employment development, and overall health. Mapping is a process that continues to evolve and be enhanced over time.

A Community Map must be created within 30 days of case assignment and must be updated during periods of transition, such as:

- when a Permanency Worker first learns that a youth in care is expecting a child;
- when a youth becomes a parent;
- when a youth changes placements (including moving into a TLP or ILO, or moving into a launch placement);
- when a parenting youth's child turns 2½, so the Permanency Worker and parent can prepare for the child's enrollment into a Head Start, public Pre-Kindergarten or other early learning program at age 3; and
- within 90 days of case closure (to coincide with the youth's final Child and Family Team Meeting). This is especially critical if the youth is relocating to their final living arrangement, far from their primary support.

If a youth has a visiting resource that is utilized consistently and the community is different from where the youth resides, the Permanency Worker and youth shall create a Community Map for the visiting resource community as well.

The Community Map also includes the names of support persons in the parenting youth's life. Older youth tend to have a blend of families and fictive kin. The Permanency Worker should encourage the youth to build and maintain connections with nurturing family members and fictive kin (i.e., relationships that are safe and appropriate) in preparation for exiting care.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 1, 2020 – P.T. 2020.03

Community Mapping and planning also occurs in the context of Child and Family Team Meetings, Launch and Discharge meetings, and in review of housing and other community resources. (A major domain of discharge planning is housing resources.)

Part of the Community Mapping process includes searching for and visiting community resources. All DCFS and POS agencies and programing that serve pregnant and parenting youth are expected to develop relationships with local resources. **Attachment 1** includes a variety of locator sites, resource links and information, including how to access the new DCFS Service Provider Identification and Exploration Resource (SPIDER) application (<https://spider.dcfs.illinois.gov/>). Permanency Workers and parenting youth are encouraged to use this resource list to find the right blend of support services to meet the needs of these young families.

Note: SPIDER is the redesigned resource formerly known as the Statewide Provider Database.

11) Right: To actively participate in the care and support of their children by having appropriate regular visitation and contact when they do not have physical custody.

It is the Department's goal to strengthen each child's support system by enhancing both parents' ability to be a strong and positive influence in the child's life. Young parents who do not reside together may require assistance in formalizing a co-parenting or visitation agreement in order to maximize their child's support system and relationship with the other parent.

For a parenting youth in care whose child is also in care, the child's Permanency Worker shall prepare a Visitation and Contact Plan with the involvement of the parenting youth and their Permanency Worker to ensure that the frequency and consistency of visitation support optimal bonding and attachment.

For a youth in care that chooses to co-parent their child, the Permanency Worker shall:

- help the parenting youth in care navigate a safe and appropriate relationship with the other parent, and establish clear and consistent communication with the other parent and the co-parent's family (when safe and appropriate);
- encourage the other parent to cooperate/assist with family finding efforts and planning visitation and contact between the child and family members in that parent's family;

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 1, 2020 – P.T. 2020.03

- with consent of the youth in care, ensure identification and outreach to the other parent and the co-parent's family to assess the co-parent's level of involvement, ongoing role as parent and supports, willingness and ability to support the child and the parenting youth in care and the need for service referrals;
- develop a plan for establishing parentage, visitation and education surrounding child support and the benefits of providing financially for the child;
- assist in applying for parentage or child support at the request of either parent;
- keeping safety at the forefront, support the parents in the development and implementation of their child's Visitation and Contact Plan;
- educate the parenting youth and their family on the importance of the co-parent's relationship with the child (if the youth chooses to share the identity of the co-parent).;
- offer information, referrals, and services to the co-parent while encouraging the co-parent's involvement, regardless of financial support to the child; and
- coordinate service provision with the co-parent's Permanency Worker when both parents are in DCFS care.

12) Right: To receive services to promote self-sufficiency as a family unit in DCFS legal custody and post discharge.

Research demonstrates that there may be a delay in achieving adolescent/young adult milestones due to past trauma and early parenthood. Therefore, it is recommended that parenting youth engage in services aimed at promoting self-sufficiency while they remain in the care of the Department.

DCFS/POS Permanency Workers and agencies must begin comprehensive transition/discharge planning upon intake of a parenting youth. Discharge planning is conducted to help determine the array and intensity of support and services (e.g., education/vocation services, parenting, therapy, community services) necessary to ensure a successful transition out of substitute care. Permanency Workers and Supervisors have an ongoing responsibility to ensure that:

- the parenting youth is involved in transition planning and exiting care;
- the parenting youth has a plan and a backup plan for ongoing and stable housing before the youth leaves care;

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 1, 2020 – P.T. 2020.03

- the parenting youth's connections to family, community and social supports are nurtured and maintained;
- the parenting youth's educational and vocational plans are realistic and in process prior to exiting care; and
- the parenting youth is working toward financial stability.

(See **Procedures 302, Appendix M, Transition Planning for Adolescents** that outlines Department procedures for preparing all youth in care to prepare for discharge from care. including Countdown to 21, youth driven transition planning, life skills assessment, housing assistance and educational/vocational programming. Appendix M also requires enhanced discharged planning for pregnant and parenting youth in care at ages 20.3 and 20.9.)

Early Discharge. If a parenting youth is being considered or recommended for, or has requested, early case closure (i.e., before reaching age 21), the Permanency Worker shall conduct a Child and Family Team Meeting. Staff persons from TPSN and the DCFS Clinical Division shall be invited. The purpose of this Child and Family Team Meeting is to:

- explore the parenting youth's wishes;
- provide full and unbiased information regarding the services and supports available to the parenting youth if the youth remains in substitute care;
- develop a transition plan for exiting care, if the parenting youth is determined to exit care;
- verify or develop a plan to ensure that the parenting youth is able to meet the family's need for food, clothing and shelter;
- provide community mapping that identifies resources in the community where the parenting youth and their child will live; and
- inform the parenting youth how they may re-enter DCFS guardianship and access services should they wish to do so prior to reaching age 21. (See **Procedures 301.60(f), Supporting Emancipated Youth Services.**)

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT
April 1, 2020 – P.T. 2020.03

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SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

April 1, 2020 – P.T. 2020.03

Appendix J – Attachment 1

Statewide Locator Resources

- **SPIDER (Statewide Provider Identification and Exploration Resource)**
 - <https://spider.dcs.illinois.gov>
Locator site that has a variety of community based resources that can be searched by zip code, address, user's current location and statewide program search.
- **Illinois Department of Human Services Office Locator:**
 - <http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?module=12>
Locator site for resources funded by IDHS; WIC, SNAP, specialized services.
- **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Head Start Center Locator:**
 - <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/center-locator>
Locator site for Early Head Start and Head Start.
- **Title X Family Planning Clinic Locator:**
 - <https://www.hhs.gov/opa/>
Locator site for family planning clinics and sexual health services.
- **Health Center Locator:**
 - <https://findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov>
Locator site for federally qualified health centers.
- **iGrow-Illinois Home Visiting Collaboration:**
 - www.igrowillinois.org/find-a-program
Locator site for various Coordinated Intake programs for home visiting services.
- **Crisis Nursery Programs:**
 - <http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=55909>
Locator site for crisis nurseries.
- **Library Locator:**
 - <http://www.publiclibraries.com/illinois.htm>
Locator site for public libraries.

Chicago Only

- **Chicago Public Library:**
 - <https://www.chipublib.org/>
Site for the branches and services of the Chicago Public Library.
- **City of Chicago Park District Locator:**
 - <https://www.chicagoparkdistrict.com/parks-facilities/find-park-facility>
Site for the parks and facilities in the city of Chicago.
- **Streetlight App**
 - <https://www.tlpchicago.org/streetlight-app>
Mobile app designed for use by Chicago area homeless youth for bed availability, health care and other resources.
- **Respite Program:**
 - <https://safe-families.org/>
Respite resource for Cook and collar counties.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT
April 1, 2020 – P.T. 2020.03

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SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

December 15, 2023 – P.T. 2023.07

302. APPENDIX K Support and Well-Being of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning/Queer, Intersex, and Asexual (LGBTQIA+) Children and Youth

a) Purpose

Procedures 302, Appendix K requires the Department of Children and Family Services (“DCFS” or “Department”) staff, Child Welfare Contributing Agency (CWCA or Contributing Agency) staff, and foster parents to provide affirming and supportive care promoting the well-being and safety of children and youth in care of the Department (“Youth”) who are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Queer/Questioning, Intersex, and/or Asexual⁺ (“LGBTQIA+”).

All foster parents (“Caregivers”) are responsible for supporting and maintaining an affirming environment for LGBTQIA+ Youth. Likewise, all others who have contact with Youth and who are acting under DCFS/CWCA authority or control, whether or not directly employed by DCFS or a CWCA (hereinafter collectively referred to as “Staff”), are responsible for supporting and maintaining an affirming environment for LGBTQIA+ Youth. Discrimination, bias, or harassment in the substitute care environment directed toward any LGBTQIA+ individual, whether that person is a child or youth, family member, friend, Caregiver, or Staff is strictly prohibited.

Anyone with questions about how to provide affirming and supportive care for LGBTQIA+ Youth should contact the DCFS Clinical Coordinator through the Office of Specialty Services at 855-814-8421 under the Division of Clinical Practice & Development for information and guidance.

Anyone who observes non-affirming conduct violating the requirements herein, including discriminatory conduct or harmful conduct towards LGBTQIA+ Youth, family members, friends, Caregivers, or Staff, should contact the DCFS Clinical Coordinator, or alternatively complete a **CFS-399-1 Clinical Referral Form** and submit it to DCFS.ClinicalRef <DCFS.ClinicalRef@illinois.gov> utilizing the DCFS Outlook application.

Youth who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, and asexual⁺ are protected by the Illinois Human Rights Act [755 ILCS 5] <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs5.asp?ActID=2266>. LGBTQIA+ Youths’ protected legal rights while in care include, but are not limited to: (1) the right to be free from verbal, emotional and physical harassment in their placements, schools, and communities; (2) the right to be treated equally, to express their gender identity, and (3) the right to choose to be open or private about their sexual orientation, gender expression and gender identity. Adults involved in the care of LGBTQIA+ Youth have a legal and ethical obligation to ensure these youth are supported, safe, and their rights are protected.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

December 15, 2023 – P.T. 2023.07

The Department requires and supports the creation and maintenance of an affirming and safe environment for LGBTQIA+ Youth in DCFS care regardless of placement type. LGBTQIA+ Youth are to be placed in the least restrictive setting appropriate for their needs, and LGBTQIA+ status is not an indicator, much less a justification, to place a child in a more restrictive setting.

In the performance of their work, all Staff are prohibited from engaging in any form of discrimination, bias or harassment based on the LGBTQIA+ status of Youth and their family members. Staff may not impose personal, organizational, or religious beliefs on LGBTQIA+ Youth or their families or allow their beliefs to impact their work or service to Youth and their families. DCFS employees can be disciplined for violating this policy up to and including discharge, in accordance with the Employee Handbook and CMS Personnel Rules. See

http://dnet/DCFS_Employee_Handbook/Illinois_Department_of_Children_and_Family_Services_Employee_Handbook.pdf. DCFS will not accept the services of volunteers who fail to abide by guidelines outlined herein, and will not contract with contributing agencies who fail to adopt LGBTQIA+ policies that are at least as extensive as those outlined herein (including, without limitation, policies providing for employee discipline, up to and including termination, for conduct in violation of this Appendix).

Youth shall be informed that they can challenge any denial of any request for LGBTQIA+ related support, assistance, or services, including without limitation any denial of a request for affirming medical care or treatment, by calling the Youth Advocacy Office and/or the DCFS Clinical Coordinator. Staff shall provide Youth with the necessary information and means to make those contacts.

Mandatory Training

It is important for Staff and Caregivers to understand that when children and youth (including DCFS Youth) explore/express their sexual orientation and/or gender identity, the youth must be supported and respected.

DCFS is committed to supporting the physical and emotional health and well-being of all Youth, including LGBTQIA+ Youth. DCFS requires that all LGBTQIA+ Youth be placed in an affirming environment, receive LGBTQIA+ competent medical and mental health services, and have equal opportunity and access to care. All Staff and Caregivers shall treat LGBTQIA+ Youth in an affirming manner and proactively work to create a respectful space. All Staff and Caregivers are required to be culturally competent in serving the needs of LGBTQIA+ Youth, including understanding the challenges that LGBTQIA+ and particularly transgender/gender expansive Youth face in foster care and congregate care. Therefore, any person who is involved with DCFS Youth will complete mandatory training in LGBTQIA+ competency. Specifically, LGBTQIA+ training will be included in the required foundations training to secure and maintain a Child Welfare license, the PRIDE training, and the DCFS core training. Staff must complete additional, mandatory standalone LGBTQIA+ training provided or pre-approved by the Department at least annually. Contributing agencies must include LGBTQIA+ training in the training of volunteers. Annual training in LGBTQIA+ competent care is required for all child welfare

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

December 15, 2023 – P.T. 2023.07

providers, regardless of whether the provider is currently serving Youth who identify as LGBTQIA+.

It is critical that Staff and Caregivers always speak and behave in ways that are respectful to LGBTQIA+ people even if it is not clear if a LGBTQIA+ Youth is present. Staff and Caregivers must model respect and value all people they encounter in their work regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression. Staff in congregate care facilities must be especially sensitive to the needs of and be culturally aware when serving LGBTQIA+ Youth. Also, professionalism in providing affirming care is crucial at emergency facilities that serve as points of entry for many Youth coming into DCFS care.

The Department encourages Staff to engage in early consultation with the DCFS Clinical Coordinator when questions arise regarding a Youth who has self-identified as LGBTQIA+ and has asked for supports, or who may be in an environment that is not affirming. The Clinical Coordinator can be of assistance in identifying or stabilizing placements, preventing unnecessary placement disruptions, and linking Youth and families, to appropriate supports and services.

b) **Definitions:**

NOTE: In reviewing the Definition section and this Amendment in its entirety, please know people may have LGBTQIA+ experiences or be gender expansive with or without claiming a LGBTQIA+ identity. In addition, it should be expected and accepted that a child or youth's use of identity categories and gender pronouns may be fixed or fluid. It is important to support all children and youth in their self-identification and to respect the language they use to express their gender identity and sexual orientation. Language associated with being LGBTQIA+ varies greatly across communities and is constantly evolving.

Affirming: Publicly communicating that all LGBTQIA+ people are welcome, encouraged to live authentically in all aspects of family life, and will be treated with respect and dignity.

Affirming Conduct: Supporting and encouraging a person's comfort in working towards authenticity and self-acceptance regarding their gender identity and sexual orientation, does not attempt to "change" or "convert" them, or try to "eliminate or diminish" same-sex "desires and behaviors."

Asexuality: A lack of sexual attraction to anyone, or low or absent interest in or desire for sexual activity.

Bisexual: A person emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to more than one sex, gender or gender identity, though not necessarily simultaneously, in the same way or to the same degree. Sometimes used interchangeably with pansexual.

Cisgender: A person whose gender identity aligns with those typically associated with the sex assigned to them at birth.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

December 15, 2023 – P.T. 2023.07

Coming-Out: The process in which a person first acknowledges, accepts and appreciates their sexual orientation or gender identity and begins to share that with others.

Congregate Care: A setting consisting of ‘group living’, i.e., Residential Treatment Facilities, Group Homes, Transitional Living Programs, and Emergency Shelters. These facilities must also be licensed as a childcare institution by DCFS to serve youth in care.

Culturally Competent: (Culturally Informed, Culturally Aware) A set of skills, values and principles that acknowledge, respect, and contribute to effective interactions between individuals and the various cultural and ethnic groups they come in contact with at work and in their personal lives.

Culturally Informed Practice: The ongoing implementation of respect for families of all cultures; appreciation of cultural diversity; advocacy for social justice and equal opportunity for all families; awareness of one’s own cultural biases; approaching relationships with culturally different families with openness and a willingness to learn.

Gay: A person who is emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to members of the same gender. Men, women and non-binary people may use this term to describe themselves.

Gender Dysphoria: Replaces the obsolete diagnosis of gender identity disorder. Clinically significant distress caused when a person's assigned birth gender is not the same as the one with which they identify. Not all transgender and gender expansive people experience gender dysphoria.

Gender Expansive: A person with a wider, more flexible range of gender identity and/or expression than typically associated with a binary gender viewpoint. Often used when referring to young people still exploring the possibilities of their gender expression and/or gender identity.

Gender Expression: External appearance of one’s gender identity, usually expressed through behavior, clothing, haircut or voice, and which may or may not conform to socially defined behaviors and characteristics typically associated with being either masculine or feminine.

Gender Identity: A person’s innermost concept of self as male or female or both or neither; how an individual perceives themselves and what they call themselves. A person’s gender identity can be the same or different than the sex assigned at birth.

Intersex: A person born with any one or more of a variety of differences in their sex traits and reproductive anatomy, including differences in genitalia, chromosomes, gonads, internal sex organs, hormone production, hormone response, and/or secondary sex traits.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

December 15, 2023 – P.T. 2023.07

Lesbian: A person whose emotional, romantic, and sexual attraction are focused on other women. Women and non-binary people may use this term to describe themselves.

LGBTQIA+: A common acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning/queer, intersex, asexual persons. It is written LGBTQIA+ to identify the many possible additions to earlier terminology.

Non-binary: A person who does not identify exclusively as a man or a woman. Non-binary people may self-identify as being both a man and a woman, somewhere in between, or as falling completely outside these categories. Some non-binary people may also identify as transgender. Non-binary can also encompass identities such as agender, bigender, genderqueer, or gender-fluid.

Personal Gender Pronoun (PGP): The pronoun or pronouns that a person identifies with and uses to refer to themselves. Single use pronouns may include, but are not limited to; he/him, she/her they/them, ze/zir, fae/faer, and xe/xem.

Queer: A term often used to express a spectrum of identities and orientations that are considered outside the mainstream. Queer is often used as a catch-all to include many people, including those who do not identify as exclusively straight and/or people who have non-binary or gender expansive identities.

Sex Assigned at Birth: The sex (male or female) assigned to a child at birth, often based on the child's external anatomy.

Sexual Orientation: An inherent or immutable enduring emotional, romantic or sexual attraction to other people. An individual's sexual orientation is independent of their gender identity.

SOGIE: An abbreviation for "sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression."

Transgender: A person whose gender identity and/or expression is different from cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth. Being transgender does not imply any specific sexual orientation. Therefore, transgender people may identify as straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, etc.

c) **Background**

For many children and youth, understanding their sexuality, sexual orientation and gender identity can be a time of reflection, questioning, turmoil, and stress. For LGBTQIA+ children and youth this exploration is often more difficult, as LGBTQIA+ children and youth may face prejudice and discrimination from their family, friends, and community. LGBTQIA+ children and youth of color and diverse cultural backgrounds may experience additional bias. America's children and youth bear much of the fallout from anti-LGBTQIA+ prejudices. According to the Child Welfare League of America and other experts, LGBTQIA+ children and youth are at a higher risk than their heterosexual cisgender counterparts for emotional and physical abuse from family members and/or

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

December 15, 2023 – P.T. 2023.07

peers, failed out-of-home placements, homelessness, emotional/physical victimization, and/or institutional neglect or abuse. As a result, LGBTQIA+ youth, as a group, have a higher incidence of suicide attempts, runaway behavior, substance abuse, high-risk sexual behaviors, sexually transmitted infections, HIV, and pregnancy. In school, LGBTQIA+ youth are at greater risk than their heterosexual cisgender counterparts for academic failure, school truancy and premature withdrawal, often as a result of fear, intimidation or threats from other students or school staff. Consequently, many LGBTQIA+ children and youth are unlikely to reveal their sexual orientation or gender identity, particularly to people in perceived positions of authority or power (e.g., Staff, family members, Caregivers, teachers, church members, etc.).

d) Identifying a Need

DCFS child protection and child welfare Staff share in the responsibility of identifying the individual needs of all Youth assigned to their caseload. The Department is developing guidelines for discussions with Youth about their SOGIE information, how that information will be documented, and how the confidentiality of the information will be protected.

A child or youth may self-identify to Staff or others may so identify a child or youth to DCFS child protection, or child welfare Staff. All Staff and Caregivers involved with children and youth are responsible for respecting their sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and for informing all children or youth about their legal rights, and protecting their privacy in the coming-out process. Staff are responsible for ensuring that all DCFS Youth know that discrimination on the basis of LGBTQIA+ status is unlawful in Illinois.

Understanding and exploring one's sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression are normal stages and critical components of every child and youth's development. It is important to recognize that such exploration is not a concerning behavior requiring a clinical response. When an LGBTQIA+ Youth has psychological or behavioral health needs that are not being met, the Clinical Coordinator or Designated Individual, can provide information, clinical consultation, training, and resources to Staff and participate in Child and Family Team Meetings (CFTMs).

Staff shall notify their supervisor and contact the DCFS Clinical Division immediately when there are concerns regarding a Youth's safety and well-being. Cases will be assigned according to the Youth's Region, Site and Field. Staff and their supervisors are responsible for ensuring that recommendations from the consultation are implemented to support, affirm, and protect the Youth.

e) Meeting the Need

Placement and Support Services: It is critical that Youth be in an affirming, supportive, and safe environment that promotes physical and emotional well-being. Staff shall ensure ongoing assessments regarding each Youth's placement and their receipt of affirming supportive services. A Youth's LGBTQIA+ status is not basis for placing them in

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

December 15, 2023 – P.T. 2023.07

congregate care. If a Youth is known to be LGBTQIA+, the caseworker is responsible for determining prior to placement, that the Caregiver is able and committed to providing affirming care to the Youth. **In no instance should LGBTQIA+ transgender/gender expansive Youth be placed with Caregivers who are unwilling or unable to provide affirming care.** If a Caregiver is found to be non-affirming or otherwise cannot or will not comply with the nondiscrimination requirements herein, the Youth's caseworker must take immediate action to intervene and must contact DCFS Clinical Division.

Staff, Caregivers, Youths' family members, and others may also need assistance in supporting the LGBTQIA+ Youth. The Clinical Division and the Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, can provide education and identify resources that will assist these individuals in supporting the LGBTQIA+ Youth in placement. Participation in education and support groups, such as, PFLAG <https://www.pflag.org/> for Parents, Families, Friends, and allies united with people who are LGBTQIA+, shall be encouraged.

LGBTQIA+ Youth may also experience mistreatment in school. For example, schools do not always honor transgender students' right to use the gendered school facilities (e.g., restrooms and locker rooms) that correspond to the students' gender identities. Caseworkers, other Staff and Caregivers must assist Youth in obtaining their school's permission to use these facilities. Organizations such as the ACLU of Illinois www.aclu-il.org/ are available to assist in this area if the need arises. Agencies, such as the Illinois Safe Schools Alliance <http://illinoisafeschools.org/>, promote safe and respectful schools for LGBTQIA+ children and youth and their allies throughout Illinois. These organizations provide professional development to school personnel, support children and youth in organizing Gender & Sexualities Alliances, advocate for inclusive school policies, and provide crisis intervention to children and youth and families in need. Consult a DCFS Educational Advisor and DCFS Clinical Coordinator if school is impacted.

Like any other Youth, LGBTQIA+ Youth who experience emotional and/or behavioral problems may require specific services, such as short-term outpatient counseling or psychotherapy. The caseworker is responsible for ensuring that service providers working with LGBTQIA+ Youth and their families or Caregivers are providers that demonstrate cultural competence.

All Staff should recognize that adolescence is a time when many Youth explore their sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or gender expression. Staff should also recognize that a Youth's lack of familiarity with LGBTQIA+ vocabulary does not mean the Youth does not know or understand their own sexual orientation/gender identity.

Staff and Caregivers should support exploration of LGBTQIA+ matters through an affirming approach with Youth by being open, non-judgmental, and empathetic. Staff, Caregivers and clinicians must allow Youth to guide the process of choosing language with which they feel most comfortable while discussing their sexual orientation and gender identity and/or expression. Staff, Caregivers, and clinicians also must recognize that this language may change over time and affirm and support Youth in their process of identity formation and expression.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

December 15, 2023 – P.T. 2023.07

If an LGBTQIA+ Youth is in a placement where they do not feel safe from harassment, stigma, or discrimination, the Clinical Coordinator may be able to assist by providing the child or youth and their Caregiver with education or support services. However, when maintaining the child or youth in the placement is no longer in their best interest, the caseworker shall immediately make every effort to seek an alternative placement that is LGBTQIA+ affirming and respectful of the Youth's right to self-determination. As appropriate, based on their age and maturity, the Youth should be involved in assessing whether the placement is in their best interest. The Clinical Coordinator also can assist with identifying alternative placement resources. Additional resource assistance can be sought from the Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, LGBTQIA+ Chief, and LGBTQIA+ Diversity Trainers.

f) Expectations for Direct Services Staff, Caregivers, and Congregate Care (Residential, TLP, Shelter, Group Home) Staff

Respect and Privacy: LGBTQIA+ Youth are entitled to be treated respectfully as to their sexual orientation, gender expression and self-determination, including their choice of clothes, make-up, hairstyle, friends, and activities, within appropriate boundaries. For example, if a Caregiver permits a heterosexual cisgender Youth to date at a certain age, the Caregiver may not prohibit a gay or transgender Youth from dating. The Youth's chosen name and preferred gender pronoun (including gender-neutral pronouns such as "they" or "ze/zir") must be respected. In instances when records require use of the Youth's legal name, the chosen name should also be indicated where possible. Their chosen name must be used when communicating directly to the Youth.

If an LGBTQIA+ Youth chooses to keep their SOGIE information private, they have a right to confidentiality about their information. Staff must be sensitive to the timing and nature of the Youth's coming-out process. They must obtain the Youth's explicit oral or written permission prior to disclosing this information. ([CFS 600-3, Consent for Release of Information](#), or on the DCFS at: [Forms](#)) Moreover, permission is not "universal" once given. Rather, the caseworker must request permission from the Youth each time disclosure to a different individual is involved. To the extent a Youth requests their preferred name, and/or gender-neutral pronoun also be included in specified types of written documents, that instruction also should be followed. Such written records could include DCFS documentation, court documents, medical records, school records, and clinical or other service referrals. Staff should understand and honor the scope of the consent for disclosure.

When a Youth requests the use of a chosen name and/or specifies their gender pronoun, Staff should ask the Youth how they would like to be referred to in conversations with family members, the court, and any other service providers (e.g., community-based service providers, and school officials). Youth may want to limit the people with whom their preferred name and pronouns are used, often due to fear of rejection or even physical harm. These limitations must be observed. As Youth may experiment with different names and pronouns, regular check-ins with the Youth are necessary to confirm their preferences. Staff are required to remain affirming, respectful and flexible when working with Youth in these circumstances.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

December 15, 2023 – P.T. 2023.07

If a transgender Youth under DCFS' care is to be bodily searched, they may only be searched by someone of the same gender as the Youth's gender identity, unless the Youth requests otherwise.

If a Youth feels they are being discriminated against or harassed, or that their service needs are not being met, they should be advised to contact their Caseworker and/or DCFS Advocacy Office @ 1-800-232-3798 or 1-217-524-2029. Youth also have the right to contact their Guardian Ad Litem (GAL), Lambda Legal @www.lambdalegal.org, or the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). (See resource section)

g) Documentation

Documentation and disclosure of LGBTQIA+ matters shall be guided by the child and youth's right to privacy and their informed consent. Permission to include explicit LGBTQIA+ references in documentation shall be sought from the child or youth; if permission is denied, references shall not be made.

h) Sleeping Arrangements for LGBTQIA+ Youth:

The Youth's perception of where they should be placed and would feel safe should be the primary factor determining housing decisions. Placement decisions should never be made before discussing the issue with the Youth. Transgender and gender expansive Youth should be specifically assured that placement will be consistent with their gender identity rather than their sex assigned at birth unless the Youth prefers otherwise.

1) Foster Care Licensed, Foster Home, Home of Relatives and Home of Fictive Kin

There should be no presumption that the LGBTQIA+ status of a Youth requires the Youth have a separate bedroom, shower or restroom, changing area, or other facilities. When an LGBTQIA+ Youth is residing in a foster home, the agency is expected to make sleeping arrangement decisions on an individualized basis considering the Youth's preferences and well-being. If an LGBTQIA+ Youth will not feel safe and affirmed unless they have a separate room and accommodations, that setting must be provided. For LGBTQIA+ Youth who will be sharing a room and accommodations with others, Staff are responsible for ensuring that the shared arrangements will be affirming, and that the LGBTQIA+ Youth will be protected from bullying, harassment, or other maltreatment.

LGBTQIA+ Youth are vulnerable to failed placements when there is insufficient investigation before placement regarding the Youth's needs, preferences and well-being, the Caregiver's capacity and willingness to provide affirming care, and when supports are not immediately provided at the first sign that the Youth or their Caregivers need additional support. (See resources)

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

December 15, 2023 – P.T. 2023.07

2) Congregate Care: (Residential, Group Home, Shelter, Transitional Living)

A Youth's LGBTQIA+ status is not a reason to place them in congregate care. For situations where a transgender/gender expansive Youth is in congregate care for appropriate clinical reasons, DCFS and the residential care providers are required to ensure that placement Staff are affirming and provide culturally competent care. As noted above, transgender/gender expansive Youth should be consulted about where they are housed, with the expectation that in most instances they will be housed consistent with their gender identity if that is their preference. Separate rooms and accommodations for LGBTQIA+ Youth in congregate settings are appropriate when requested by the Youth, but forced separation and isolation is not permitted. Congregate care providers are responsible for ensuring that LGBTQIA+ Youth are not bullied, harassed, mocked, or threatened by other Youth in the facility regardless of where the Youth are housed.

If a transgender/gender expansive Youth is to be bodily searched, the search can only be performed by someone of the same gender as the Youth's gender identity, unless the Youth requests otherwise. This must be clearly stated in the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) manual for the congregate care facility.

Designated Staff should conduct ongoing check-ins with the LGBTQIA+ Youth to confirm their congregate care placement continues to be supportive of their identity and meets their needs.

i) Expectations for the DCFS Clinical Coordinator

The DCFS Clinical Coordinator can help workers and supervisors in addressing the sensitive matters of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression of Youth for whom the Department is responsible. The DCFS Clinical Coordinator can help:

- consult about the Department's LGBTQIA+ policy
- educate Staff, Caregivers, and Youth about LGBTQIA+ legal rights and matters
- raise self-awareness about attitudes or bias through consultation and training
- participate in meetings and staffings
- identify LGBTQIA+ -sensitive resources and placements
- help with the preparation of a new placement
- consult about the preservation of the current placement
- distinguish problematic behaviors from identity development
- consult with Youth about legal rights process, and resources
- advocate respect for diversity

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

December 15, 2023 – P.T. 2023.07

j) **Health Care:**

Medical: Culturally competent medical care and sexual health education and resources shall be provided to all DCFS Youth.

All DCFS Youth receive a comprehensive health assessment at case opening which includes identification of existing medications being taken. If the Youth reports they were prescribed hormones or puberty blocking medications by a licensed medical provider, these medications continue under appropriate medical supervision while the Youth is in care. A referral to DCFS Nursing Services should be made to ensure continuity of care. **CFS 531, DCFS Regional Nurse Referral Form**, should be sent to *NurseRef* via DCFS Outlook, DCFS.NurseRef@illinois.gov.

If a Youth makes a request to begin puberty blocking/hormone therapy while under DCFS care, a prompt referral must be made to medical professionals who are recognized as medically competent in the care of transgender children and youth. The DCFS Clinical Coordinator and DCFS Guardian's office must be contacted immediately when transgender medical care has been requested or otherwise is being considered by the Youth.

Please refer to **Procedures 327.5 Medical Consents** Section (a)(5) for the new initiation of puberty blocking/hormone therapy. If the Youth is under 18 and their Permanency Goal is to return home, and if the parent's whereabouts are known, they must be informed of the initiation of puberty blocking/hormone therapy unless such disclosure would present a risk of harm to the safety and/or well-being of the Youth.

For initiation of therapy, approval of care for minor Youth shall be based on either: (i) one letter from a member of the Youth's culturally competent multidisciplinary team (involving both medical and mental health professionals) reflecting the assessment and opinion of the team that the Youth is appropriate for initiation of puberty blocking / hormone therapy; or (ii) if the Youth does not have access to a multidisciplinary team, one letter of assessment from the Youth's culturally competent health care professional stating that the Youth is appropriate for initiation of puberty-blocking therapy. Definitions and information regarding these terms can be found at <http://transhealth.ucsf.edu/trans?page=guidelines-youth>.

Intersex Youth: For youth who are intersex, a referral to a health provider/specialist should be made. In addition, a referral to DCFS Nursing, utilizing the referral form **CFS 531** should be sent to *NurseRef* via DCFS Outlook, DCFS.NurseRef@illinois.gov.

Mental Health:

No Youth under DCFS care shall be subjected to any therapy or other interventions intended or designed to change the Youth's self-identified sexual orientation or gender identity.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

December 15, 2023 – P.T. 2023.07

Many LGBTQIA+ Youth experience chronic stress related to harassment, discrimination and abuse, coming-out to family and friends, and having one's private and personal identity and/or orientation disclosed without their consent. Chronic stress can lead to increased levels of depression and anxiety. Studies indicate a higher risk of suicidal ideation and attempts among LGBTQIA+ youth compared to their heterosexual cisgender peers. LGBTQIA+ children and youth are also at risk for inappropriate mental health treatment, including misdiagnosis of mental health conditions and unnecessary institutionalization. Transgender children and youth may present distinct physical and mental health needs. They are entitled to receive information regarding the full continuum of transition-related care – both medical and non-medical – as appropriate to their age and individual circumstances. Staff and Caregivers must remain sensitive to the increased risk of depression and hopelessness that transgender youth face, and that these youth may require care for gender dysphoria. (See, CWLA Best Practice Guidelines <https://familyproject.sfsu.edu/sites/default/files/documents/bestpracticeslgbtyouth.pdf>.)

Staff must consult with the DCFS Clinical Coordinator when an LGBTQIA+ Youth is demonstrating signs of stress or anxiety to ensure the child or youth is referred to a mental health professional experienced in serving LGBTQIA+ Youth.

k) Child Welfare Do's and Don'ts

Do:

- 1) **If an incident in the youth's placement is deemed inappropriate (e.g., bullying or harassment) and if the Youth consents, Staff should contact the DCFS Clinical Coordinator. When there are acknowledged or suggested concerns about the lack of an affirming environment for a Youth, the DCFS Clinical Coordinator must be contacted immediately regardless of the Youth's actual LGBTQIA+ status.** For example, a Youth may confide to Staff that his Caregiver or other people in the home tease him because he "acts like a girl" or "acts gay." The DCFS Clinical Coordinator and Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion can provide information, training, and resources and can be contacted in the Clinical Division's Specialty Services office at **855-814-8421** and by completing the Clinical Referral Form **CFS-399-1** and sending to *ClinicalRef* utilizing DCFS Outlook.
- 2) **Recommendations made by the LGBTQIA+ Clinical Services Team should be implemented within five working days of the contact. If there are barriers to meeting this deadline, contact the DCFS Clinical Coordinator to request additional assistance or an extension.**
- 3) **Inform Youth about their legal rights.** All LGBTQIA+ individuals are protected by the Illinois Human Rights Act <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs5.asp?ActID+2266>. Youth have many legal rights while in care, including the right to be free from verbal, emotional and physical harassment in their placements, schools, and communities. The adults

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

December 15, 2023 – P.T. 2023.07

involved in their care have a legal and ethical obligation to ensure that they are safe and protected. These Youth also have the right to be treated equally, to live in a manner consistent with their gender identity, and to have the choice to be open or private about their sexual orientation.

- 4) **Ensure that LGBTQIA+ Youth are placed in LGBTQIA+ affirming environments that respect their right to self-determination.** The Clinical Coordinator and the LGBTQIA+ Diversity Trainers can assist by providing training and resources to the Caregiver or provider prior to placement or any time concerns about the lack of an affirming environment are identified. When there is risk of impending emotional or physical harm in the Youth's placement due to the bias of others regarding their acknowledged or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, Staff must contact the Clinical Coordinator. Together they will consider the prompt removal of the child or youth from that placement, if the risk cannot be mitigated.
 - 5) **Always be respectful of the Youth's gender expression and self-determination.** Staff must be sensitive to the nature and timing of the Youth's personal development and preferences. The Youth's choice of clothes, hairstyles, make-up, friends, and age-appropriate activities should be respected along with regard for their chosen name and gender pronoun (e.g., if the Youth's name is displayed at their placement, such as on an in/out board, use the Youth's chosen name, if that is their preference).
- No Youth should be required to adhere to a gender-based dress code applicable to a gender that differs from their gender identity.
- 6) **Protect the Youth's right to privacy about their sexual orientation and gender identity.** Staff must obtain the Youth's explicit oral or written permission and document the parameters of the permitted disclosure.
 - 7) **Provide supportive and affirming care regardless of one's personal attitudes, beliefs, preconceptions or judgments, if any, surrounding matters of sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.** LGBTQIA+ Youth are entitled to receive care and services from people who treat them with respect and without bias. Staff who have difficulty meeting this standard for personal reasons should seek assistance from supervisors and the Clinical Coordinator to address those issues. DCFS will not tolerate exposing LGBTQIA+ Youth to Staff/service providers who are not supportive of Youths' right to self-determination of gender identity and sexual orientation.
 - 8) **Create an environment in your office and in meetings that signals to all clients that you are a safe and supportive person regarding LGBTQIA+ matters and concerns.** "Safe space" stickers and DCFS LGBTQIA+ printed material must be displayed in the office reception area. Display of additional informational pamphlets from local LGBTQIA+ child and youth support and drop-in groups is encouraged.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

December 15, 2023 – P.T. 2023.07

Do Not:

- 1) **Provide or disclose information about a Youth's sexual orientation, gender identity or expression *without* their permission.**
- 2) **Address or treat a Youth as deviant, pathological, immoral or in need of changing because of their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or questioning status, or tolerate such conduct from others in the child welfare environment.**
- 3) **Contract or seek treatment services for the purpose of changing a Youth's self-identified sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.** Such treatment is harmful, damaging, and illegal in Illinois [405 ILCS 48 et seq. and 815 ILCS 505/2Z]
- 4) **Assume that only LGBTQIA+ adults can be affirming or effective in working with or caring for LGBTQIA+ Youth.**
- 5) **Ask Youth about their sexual orientation, gender expression/gender identity in a public space.** A private space is required to protect the Youth's right to privacy, and it creates an affirming environment in which they are more likely to feel safe and respected.
- 6) **Discuss a Youth's sexual orientation, gender expression/gender identity in front of anyone, including the Youth's family, without prior consent of the Youth.** Doing so violates the Youth's rights and may expose them to rejection and significant physical or emotional harm.
- 7) **Assume sites/service providers/agencies have the appropriate physical arrangements to serve LGBTQIA+ Youth.** Some LGBTQIA+ Youth may express that to feel safe and affirmed, they need to be housed in a private bedroom with access to private accommodations for dressing, bathing, and other personal activity. Although DCFS requires that all sites/service providers/agencies be culturally competent, affirming and equipped to care for LGBTQIA+ Youth, each Youth's individual needs regarding personal space must be considered in consultation with them when making placement decisions. Human Rights Campaign www.hrc.org has guidelines and certifications for agencies to become LGBTQIA+ culturally competent.
- 9) **Assume the sexual orientation of transgender/gender expansive people.** Gender identity and sexual orientation are separate and distinct matters.
- 10) **Shame a Youth for fluctuating in their gender presentation.** Switching names/pronouns/physical presentation is a common developmental step for LGBTQIA+ Youth.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

December 15, 2023 – P.T. 2023.07

- 11) **Assume that you know a Youth's gender pronoun based upon their appearance.** Always ask Youth how they wish to be addressed, regardless of whether the Youth has identified as LGBTQIA+.

Resources

Chicago LGBTQIA+ services:
<https://www.centeronhalsted.org>

Child Welfare Information Gateway:
www.childwelfare.gov/

Lambda Legal – Making the Case for Equality – lambdalegal.org fighting for LGBTQIA+ right
www.lambdalegal.org/

American Civil Liberties Union of Illinois:
WWW.ACLU-IL.ORG

Illinois Safe Schools Alliance
www.illinoissafeschools.org

Human Rights Campaign
www.hrc.org

The Clinical Coordinator and Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusions (DDEI) Chief of LGBTQIA+ and LGBTQIA+ Diversity Trainers can provide additional resources including community services, publications, videos and websites.

Glossary: These are additional terms which are used or are outdated in the LGBTQIA+ community which are important to understand when working with LGBTQIA+ Youth.

Closeted: Keeping one's sexual orientation or gender identity secret.

Gender fluid/expansive/creative: Conveys a wider, more flexible range of gender expression, with a range of interests and behaviors which may expand beyond traditional gender stereotypes. It reinforces the notion that gender is non-binary, but a continuum; and that many children and adults express their gender in multiple ways.

Gender Non-binary: Those with non-binary genders can feel that they: 1) Have an androgynous (both masculine and feminine) gender identity, such as androgyne; 2) Have an identity between male and female, such as intergender; or 3) Have a neutral or nonexistent gender identity, such as agender or neutrois.

Heteronormativity: A belief system that assumes heterosexuality is normal and that everyone is heterosexual.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

December 15, 2023 – P.T. 2023.07

Heterosexism: A belief system that assumes that heterosexuality is inherently preferable and superior to other forms of sexual orientation.

Heterosexual: A person whose emotional, romantic, and sexual attractions are primarily for individuals of a different sex. Sometimes this is referred to as “straight.”

Homophobia: Fear, hatred of, aversion to, or discrimination against homosexuality, LGBTQIA+ individuals or those perceived as LGBTQIA+, and anyone associated with LGBTQIA+ persons.

Homosexual: This is an outdated term used to refer to a person based on their same-sex sexual orientation, identity or behavior. Many LGBTQIA+ individuals prefer not to use this term, especially as a noun, because of its historically negative use.

Pansexuality: Is sexual attraction, sexual desire, romantic love, or emotional attraction toward people of any sex or gender identity. Individuals who are pansexual refer to themselves as gender-blind, asserting that gender and sex are insignificant or irrelevant in determining whether they will be attracted to others.

Transphobia: Discriminatory acts or behaviors directed toward those who are gender expansive or transgender.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

October 18, 2024 – PT 2024.17

APPENDIX L - SERVICES FOR CLIENTS WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING

a) PURPOSE

Procedures 302, Appendix L establishes requirements for DCFS and Child Welfare Contributing Agency (Contributing Agency) child protection and child welfare workers to ensure that children and adults who are deaf or hard of hearing have equal access to services provided by the Department and that the services or interventions are beneficial to them.

b) DEFINITIONS

“American Sign Language (ASL)” means a language in and of itself, different from the English language: It has its own word order and syntax.

“Auxiliary Aids” Appropriate auxiliary aids and services are required by the ADA to ensure effective communication. Appropriate auxiliary aids and services may include, but are not limited to: *interpreters on site or through video remote interpreting (VRI) services* (manual or oral), *note takers*; *real-time computer-aided transcription services*; *written materials*; *exchange of written notes*; *telephones handset amplifiers*; *assistive listening devices*; *assistive listening systems*; *telephones compatible with hearing aids*; *closed caption decoders*; *open and closed captioning, including real-time captioning*; *voice, text, and video-based telecommunication products and systems, text telephones (TTYs), videophones, and captioned telephones, or equally effective telecommunications devices*; *videotext displays*; *accessible information and communication technology*; or *other effective methods of making aurally delivered information available to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.* (45 CFR 92.102)

“Child Welfare Contributing Agency” or “Contributing Agency” means a public or private entity that, by contract or agreement with the title IV-E agency, provides child abuse and neglect investigations, placement or child welfare case management (or any combination of these) to children and families, formerly referred to as “Purchase of Service” or “Private” agencies.

“Deaf” means any person who, because of the severity of a hearing loss, is not able to discriminate speech when spoken in a normal conversational tone regardless of the use of amplification devices and whose primary means of receiving spoken communication is through visual input, including but not limited to American Sign Language, speech reading, sign systems, tactile sign, fingerspelling, reading, or writing.

“Department Statewide 504 Coordinator or “ADA Coordinator” means the employee in the Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion responsible for coordinating Department compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

“Hard of Hearing (HOH)” means any person who, because of a hearing loss, finds hearing difficult, but does not preclude the understanding of spoken communication through the ear alone, regardless of the use of amplification devices or assistive devices,

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

October 18, 2024 – PT 2024.17

and whose primary means of receiving spoken communication is through visual or auditory input, including but not limited to assistive devices, speech reading, sign language, fingerspelling, reading, or writing.

“Interpreter” means a person who facilitates communication through sign language or other visual means for persons who are deaf or persons who have a partial or severe hearing loss. A person who translates sign language or other means of visual communication into spoken English for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing.

“Lip Reading” or “Speech Reading” means watching a person's mouth and face to read what words are being said.

“Primary Language” or “Preferred Language” means the language which the client normally uses day-to-day.

“Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID)” means a national organization that has established an evaluation and certification mechanism for sign language and oral interpreters. A certificate signifies that an interpreter has attained a minimum skill level. A registry of licensed Interpreters is published annually by the RID and is recommended as a way of verifying current certification status.

“Telecommunication Device for Deaf (TDD)” means a special typewriter-style device that enables the telephone conversation to be typed rather than spoken. A deaf person can communicate directly with anyone who has a similar device.

c) **ACCESSIBILITY OF SERVICES TO ALL PERSONS**

It is the policy of the Department to provide services to all persons without discrimination against an individual because of their actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, marital status, order of protection status, disability, military status, sexual orientation, pregnancy, or unfavorable discharge from military service. Such services shall be provided in compliance with Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 793 and 794); the U.S. Constitution; the 1970 Illinois Constitution; and applicable state and federal laws, regulations or court orders which prohibit discrimination in the delivery of services. There is no distinction in eligibility for or in the availability or manner of providing services.

All persons and organizations having occasion either to refer persons for services or to recommend DCFS services are advised to do so without discrimination to the person's race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, marital status, order of protection status, disability, military status, sexual orientation, pregnancy, or unfavorable discharge from military services. [775 ILCS 5/1-103] Additionally, children or their families shall not be denied services under this part solely on the basis that a parent is admitted to an Illinois mental health facility, detained in an Illinois jail, or committed to the Illinois Department of Corrections.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

October 18, 2024 – PT 2024.17

d) REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEPARTMENT

- 1) The Department must develop procedures clearly stating the obligations of Contributing Agencies to offer and provide sign language interpreters or other auxiliary aids which enable individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to participate and benefit from their services. The procedure must provide instructions on how to arrange for an interpreter (directly or through the Department) and whether the Department or the Contributing Agency provider is responsible for the cost of the interpreter.
- 2) The Department must disseminate the procedures to all current Contributing Agency providers and provide training for these providers on its implementation.
- 3) The Department is responsible for the cost of **interpreters** and translations services (spoken, **sign**, auxiliary aids, and in print) for all language/dialects and **sign language interpreters**.
- 4) Through its State Deaf and Blind Services Coordinator, the Department conducts training on the Department's procedures regarding interpretive services and the Department's obligation to assure the compliance of its Contributing Agency providers.
- 5) Through its State Deaf and Blind Services Coordinator, the Department provides all regional and field offices within Cook County and statewide a composite list of resources for sign language interpreter services, updated at least annually, and ensures that staff is informed of these resources via memoranda or other communication.
- 6) The Department is responsible for assessing requests for Cochlear Implant procedures before initiating the medical/surgical consent process. The Department's Deaf and Blind Services Coordinator, in collaboration with the Department of Nursing, will examine that the following criteria have been met by the Department and Contributing Agency prior to consent being obtained.

Caseworkers and Investigators are responsible for the following:

- The **initial step** requires a referral submitted for consultation with the Deaf and Blind Services Coordinator and the Division of Nursing, and consultation has occurred.
 - If the youth is under 18 and their permanency goal is to return home, and if the parent's whereabouts are known, they must be informed of the initiation of cochlear implant surgery unless such disclosure would present a risk of harm to the safety and/or well-being of the Youth.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

October 18, 2024 – PT 2024.17

- Further information to be obtained and documented within this discussion includes deaf culture amongst the biological/birth family, history of deafness, and possible acceptance issues with return home.
- The foster parents have met with the Deaf and Blind Services Coordinator and Nursing to discuss reasoning, implications, aftercare, etc.
- A second evaluation has been obtained from a medical provider outside of the identified procedure specialist clinic.
- The birth parents and current foster parents are connected to caregivers with implant and non-implanted children along with a recipient of a Cochlear Implant.

Note: If you have any questions about obtaining these services or require more information, contact:

Statewide Deaf and Blind Services Coordinator

Video Phone: (312) 957-4817

Phone: (217) 785-2651

E-mail: DCFS.DeafBlindClientNotification@Illinois.gov

IF YOU FEEL YOUR NEEDS HAVE NOT BEEN MET BY DCFS, CONTACT:

Advocacy Office

Phone: (217) 524-2029 or (800) 232-3798

Fax: (217) 557-7278

E-mail: dcfs.advocacy@illinois.gov

e) TRAINING

1) Parent Training

Ideally, **training for parents who are deaf or hard of hearing** should be conducted by a parent trainer and professionals that are either deaf or hard of hearing or are a child of a deaf adult (CODA) and can sign to the parents. If such a trainer is not available, a licensed interpreter shall be present at the training sessions and translate the information to the parent(s). Training sessions can be one on one or in groups. Group sessions encourage sharing concerns that all parents who are deaf or hard of hearing have in common about their children such as discipline, health, and general child rearing. A portion of the training should also cover the cultural issues unique to the deaf. For this reason, Deaf Parent Training is available through the Chicago Hearing Society or the Illinois Service Resource Center. The training is recorded in ASL by a Deaf peer. The training is supplemented by a Deaf trainer.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

October 18, 2024 – PT 2024.17

Parent training for hearing parents who have children who are deaf or hard of hearing also requires a trainer specialized in deaf culture and familiar with all the auxiliary aids that are available to the parents to assist them in raising their child.

2) **Foster Parent Training**

Training of potential foster parents in areas specific to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing will be arranged through the Statewide Deaf and Blind Services Coordinator provided resources. A communication plan for ongoing training of foster parents wanting to be a communication accessible household will be developed and followed.

3) **DCFS and Contributing Agency Staff Training**

The online training course, Bridging Language Barriers is mandatory for all DCFS, Contributing Agency direct service child welfare professionals and their supervisors. After completing Bridging Language Barriers online training, staff will be able to:

- A) Explain the services the Department is mandated to provide to individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing.
- B) Locate resources for individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing.
- C) Engage with people who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing.
- D) Assess the need for service provision of individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing.
- E) Arrange for communication access to people who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing in the following areas:
 - i) DCP investigations;
 - ii) Intact services; and
 - iii) Permanency/foster care services.
- F) Reference rules, procedures, and regulations related to communicating effectively with the Deaf or Hard of Hearing.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

October 18, 2024 – PT 2024.17

f) **SPECIALIZED INTERVENTIONS AND SERVICES FOR CLIENTS WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING**

1) **Requirements for DCFS and Contributing Agency Workers**

The following requirements are for DCFS and Contributing Agency Workers alike. Monitoring of Contributing Agency Workers' compliance with the following requirements takes place through DCFS Contributing Agency Monitoring Office/Agency Performance Team (APT).

A) **Communication Requirements**

A prerequisite to the provision of services to clients is that the services be made available in a manner which can be understood by individuals with special communication needs such as those who have limited or no English-speaking ability or hearing loss. The Department facilitates communication with such clients through the early identification of communication needs, the assignment of staff who can communicate with the clients, the translation of forms, notices, and letters into a language the client can understand and using interpreters and other auxiliary aids. DCFS and Contributing Agency caseworkers and supervisors are responsible for locating and accessing services that are provided in the client's preferred mode of communication.

Note: DCFS and Contributing Agency workers who need a list of resources can refer to the D-net. The Statewide Deaf and Blind Services Coordinator will assist staff in accessing and acquiring resources. Catalogues are available from the Deaf and Blind Services Coordinator and a list of suppliers is maintained for reference.

B) **Initial Contact**

Department and Contributing Agency staff who are responsible for initial contact with the client shall ensure that persons with hearing loss are identified and the mode of communication which they use is documented. In many instances, at the initial contact, the worker will have been alerted by the referring party, agency, family member, client, etc., that the client is deaf or hard of hearing and requires the use of an interpreter to facilitate communication. DCFS and Contributing Agency staff shall then obtain the services of a licensed sign language interpreter whenever possible for the initial contact with the client or at the earliest time an interpreter can be secured. If the staff person does not know how to obtain an interpreter or translator for communication with the client who is deaf or hard of hearing, he or she must immediately contact the Deaf and Blind Services Coordinator by voice 217-785-2651, video phone 312-957-4817 or email DCFS.DeafBlindClientNotification@illinois.gov.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

October 18, 2024 – PT 2024.17

Note: See **Attachment I Interpreter Standards** of these procedures for additional information). Interpreter services are provided at no cost to the client.

A **CFS 496-5, Notice of Client's Rights for Individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing**, shall be provided to clients who are deaf or hard of hearing at their initial contact, informing the client of the right to an interpreter or other auxiliary aids at no cost to the client. The notice describes the auxiliary aids options, the right to a psychological assessment performed by a qualified professional, services available to meet the needs of individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing and contact information for the Deaf and Blind Services Coordinator. If there is a question or complaint regarding compliance with the auxiliary aids and these procedures the Deaf and Blind Services Coordinator can be contacted. The notice also informs individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing of their right to contact the Office for Civil Rights if there are questions regarding compliance.

The DCFS or Contributing Agency worker shall document on the **Case Note** the individual's preferred method of communication and shall identify the client as deaf or hard of hearing in the initial **SACWIS Client Service Plan, under "Language/Mode of Communication."** Additionally, workers must document as described above, any needed specialized communication services required, including but not limited to sign language interpreter services, to successfully service the corresponding case.

C) **Use of Sign Language Interpreters and Translators**

The Department provides interpreters, translators, and other auxiliary aids in order to enable clients who are deaf or hard of hearing access to the service it provides at no cost to the client. A licensed interpreter is also provided when clients attend a hearing or appeal, when clients must be present at an Administrative Case Review and all other appearances required to conduct business with the Department related to their case.

A licensed **interpreter for the deaf** must show proof of a certificate issued by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID); a satisfactory evaluation by the National Association of the Deaf; a satisfactory evaluation; or licensure or certification or a satisfactory evaluation or screening in another state.

According to the Illinois Deaf Hard of Hearing Commission (IDHHC) the following requirements are true for State Licensure Levels for Sign Language Interpreters working for DCFS.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

October 18, 2024 – PT 2024.17

- Red Licensure SLI – Provisional Skills (Unable to provide any sign language services to DCFS.)
- Yellow Licensure SLI – Intermediate Skills (Qualified to provide general meeting and communication sign language services to DCFS and Contributing Agency when youth or caregivers are not present.)
- Green Licensure SLI – Advanced Skills (Qualified to provide services to all DCFS programs except legal services.)
- Silver Licensure SLI – Masters Level (Qualified for all DCFS services.)

All Sign Language Interpreters are licensed by IDHHC and will provide proof of, at least, green licensure when working for DCFS youth in care, birth parents, care givers, Contributing Agency, Intact Families, IA, etc and proof of Silver Licensing for Juvenile Court and other legal venues.

A **sign language translator** is a person who is qualified to translate based on to their education and experience.

A licensed interpreter shall be present for all the following:

- Visits between a hearing child and an adult who is deaf;
- Investigations;
- Home Visits;
- Office visits;
- Visits with children attended by Recipient's staff;
- Case Plan Meetings;
- Evaluations;
- Social histories;
- Psychological evaluations;
- Psychiatric evaluations;
- Substance abuse treatment evaluations; and
- Other interactions as deemed necessary by DCFS or Contributing Agency provider or the client.

Family members or friends of the adult or minor person who is deaf or hard of hearing **may not** be used as interpreters in cases involving alleged abuse, neglect, dependency, and hearings and appeals. The use of family or friends to interpret may compromise the Department's investigation of child abuse or neglect if, for example, a parent is reluctant to disclose child abuse or domestic violence when the spouse is present and

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

October 18, 2024 – PT 2024.17

interpreting or a deaf child does not disclose child abuse if the parent is interpreting for child. Minor children must never serve as interpreters as doing so places the child in an unacceptable child-parent role, increases the likelihood of inaccurate information being conveyed, and allows the child access to the parent's confidential information including such matters as mental health or substance abuse treatment history. These restrictions are to ensure confidentiality of information and accurate communication.

In other situations, after being informed in writing that the Department will provide an interpreter at no cost to the client, the adult client who is deaf or hard of hearing may request that a family member or friend be used as an interpreter for themselves. Such a request shall be documented in the case file. However, the Department will still have a licensed interpreter present to ensure accurate account is being conveyed. Parents can't provide such consents for their children. Sign language interpreters are to serve only as facilitators of communication and are not otherwise involved in the client's business. Interpreters should never be expected to act as social workers, psychologists, or counselors. All licensed interpreters are bound by the Registry for Interpreters for the Deaf Code of Ethics and all applicable state laws to keep all information strictly confidential.

DCFS workers and those employed by private child welfare agencies shall document on the **Case Note** each instance that an interpreter was provided, including the date and purpose and explain any circumstances under which an interpreter was not provided.

No determination or final decision regarding service delivery shall be made until an interpreter has been involved.

D) Specialized Parenting Services

A person's inability to hear does not render them unfit as parents. Evaluation of a person who is deaf or hard of hearing to determine their ability to care for children must be individualized. The DCFS or Contributing Agency worker shall explore the technology and auxiliary aids that may assist such parents in caring for their children. Auxiliary devices such as doorbell and a flashing device, closed captioning, specialized webcams, baby monitors and alerts, computer programs to teach sign language, and other devices can improve the ability of parents who are deaf or hard of hearing to take care of their children. Parent coaching on the use of auxiliary devices should be provided.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

October 18, 2024 – PT 2024.17

E) Auxiliary Aids

In addition to qualified interpreters, auxiliary aids, and services for clients who are deaf or hard of hearing shall, if needed by a child or adult, be provided at no cost to the client. Auxiliary aids and services may include qualified sign language or oral interpreters, computer-assisted real time transcription service (CART), written materials, telephone handset amplifiers, assistive listening devices and systems, telephones compatible with hearing aids, TDDs and referral/guidance on obtaining service animals. There are also devices available to individuals that are deaf or hard of hearing that will assist in making their environment safer for themselves and their families. They include:

- Monitors that flash when the child cries or makes noise in the nursery;
- Devices that allow a lamp and a phone line to be plugged into them. The light flashes when the phone rings;
- Devices that are wired into the doorbell and flash when the doorbell rings;
- Smoke detectors that have high powered strobe lights that flash when set off;
- Devices that are available for deaf motorists to alert them when an ambulance or other emergency vehicle is with a siren is approaching; and
- Most communities have a pager available to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing that sets off (with visual and vibrating alarm features and simple text readouts) when severe weather warnings are sent out.

Note: DCFS and Contributing Agency workers that are needing a list of resources can refer to the D-net and the Deaf and Blind Service Coordinator can provide instructions regarding how to access them. The Statewide Deaf and Blind Services Coordinator will assist staff in acquiring resources. Catalogues are available from the Deaf and Blind Services Coordinator and a list of suppliers is maintained for reference.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

October 18, 2024 – PT 2024.17

2) Assessments

A mental health or psychological assessment of clients who are deaf or hard of hearing require effective communication between the client who is deaf or hard of hearing and a therapist or psychologist that is skilled in signed language communication or familiar with using qualified sign language interpreters. The therapist, psychologist or other clinician conducting the assessment shall have extensive knowledge of deafness and the cultural implications. This knowledge is particularly critical in the evaluation of clients who are deaf or hard of hearing regarding their individual's interests, abilities, life experiences, and aspirations.

3) Misdiagnosis and Biases

There are several tools available to qualified professional clinicians that will prevent misdiagnosis of their clients who are deaf or hard of hearing. A diagnostic tool that is designed specifically to meet the needs of someone who is Deaf or hard of hearing shall be used when conducting a psychological assessment.

It is extremely important for the selected professional to be familiar with these tools and their use. There have been cases in which psychometric tools unsuited for use with individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing were used, resulting in the individual being misdiagnosed as having an intellectual disability. Misdiagnosis and biases are obstacles to achieving the preferred outcome for children and families, preventing or delaying their reunification. The caseworker may be able to determine whether the therapist/psychologist is familiar with individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing and their culture by how they communicate and respond to questions about individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing themselves or through qualified interpreters.

4) Common Indicators of Misdiagnosis and Bias

There are several indicators in the assessment of a client who is deaf or hard of hearing that may indicate the presence of misdiagnoses or bias. The following is needed when each service takes place:

- The findings of the assessment indicate the client who is deaf or hard of hearing has an intellectual disability;
- A psychiatric examination was conducted by a person who is not fluent in sign language or without a qualified interpreter present;
- The assessment was not individualized to meet the needs of a client who is deaf or hard of hearing;

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

October 18, 2024 – PT 2024.17

- An evaluation tool was used which relies heavily upon English language competence and the client who is deaf or hard of hearing is diagnosed with an intellectual disability;
- The clinician conducting the assessment has no training in the psychosocial aspects of deafness, no exposure to deaf culture and no experience evaluating clients who are deaf or hard of hearing; or
- Failure by the psychologist to conduct both cognitive and adaptive functioning.

If one or more of these indicators is present, a copy of the assessment report shall be forwarded to the Statewide Deaf and Blind Services Coordinator and the Clinical Services Coordinator in the child's region and a clinical review shall be conducted.

5) **Placement Considerations for Children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing**

DCFS and Contributing Agency workers must adhere to **Procedures 301.60, Placement Selection Criteria** when selecting a placement for children. All placements are to be made consistent with the best interests and special needs of the children. The Department will make diligent efforts to place children who have special communication/language needs in a home that can meet those needs. This includes children with limited English-speaking ability and children who are deaf or hard of hearing. The Department uses specialized caseworkers, sign language interpreters or translators, and other auxiliary aids to meet the communication needs of children and adults who are deaf and hard of hearing.

Communication must be a critical consideration when placing children who are deaf or hard of hearing or hearing children of deaf adults (CODA). In order to preserve the child's deaf culture and maintain their ties to the deaf community, when a child who is deaf or hard of hearing must be removed from the home, DCFS and Contributing Agency caseworkers shall document all efforts to place the child in a home that is communication accessible.

A) **Placement of a Child who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing (HOH)**

In prioritized order, a child who is deaf or hard of hearing shall be placed in a foster home in which:

- At least one individual who is deaf or hard of hearing, has sign language abilities.
- Individuals that are familiar with sign language and the deaf culture and who may or may not have sign language skills. Examples: Children of Deaf Adults (CODA), audiologists, or others working in fields who may work with individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing on a regular basis.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

October 18, 2024 – PT 2024.17

- Any other foster home that is willing to undergo the necessary training to become communication accessible for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.

If a home meeting these criteria is not available, the DCFS or Contributing Agency worker shall initiate targeted recruitment for a home that can support the child's communication needs. Locating an emergency foster home or adoptive home that is communication accessible must be a priority for the DCFS or Contributing Agency worker and the supervisor.

In the absence of an interpreter, it may be necessary to communicate by writing or if the child is unable to read or write, books, computer software, or videos showing, and teaching signs are available. Auxiliary aids to assist in communication must be provided and may include video equipment (television sets, VCR's, DVD players, etc.) that display the closed captions on the video programs, a TDD if the child is old enough to use a telephone and special alarms for smoke/carbon monoxide detectors, fire alarms, doorbells, and telephones. Videophones are available free of charge to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing provided they have high speed internet in the home. The Department shall ensure that the youth in care has access to communication through interpreter services in the home.

The child's worker is responsible for developing a Plan of Accommodation when a child who is deaf or hard of hearing (HOH) is placed in a home with hearing foster parents who have no sign language skills.

B) Placement of a Hearing Child of Deaf Adults (CODA)

Children of deaf adults (CODA) who are not deaf or hard of hearing shall be placed in communication accessible homes where they will be able to maintain or develop their signing skills, be exposed to the deaf culture, and maintain their involvement in deaf organizations and activities. If an accessible home is not available, targeted recruitment efforts shall be conducted. The child's case plan shall include sign language classes and exposure to deaf culture.

g) MONITORING SERVICES TO CLIENTS WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING

The Office of Information Technology provides the Statewide Deaf and Blind Services Coordinator with identifying information on children, youth, caregivers, and family members who are deaf or hard of hearing each month. The Deaf and Blind Coordinator monitors to ensure that appropriate resources and supports are provided to youth in care, birth parents and caregivers.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

October 18, 2024 – PT 2024.17

h) CASE ASSIGNMENT

For clients who are deaf or hard of hearing, DCFS and Contributing Agency supervisors shall make case assignments to staff in the following order:

- Staff that specialize in services to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing and who can effectively communicate using American Sign Language (ASL); or
- Experienced staff having no fewer than three (3) years working for DCFS or a Contributing Agency and have completed the DCFS Bridging Language Barriers training; or
- If there are no staff available meeting these criteria, the most senior staff will be assigned to the case and, if not already trained, will contact the Statewide Deaf and Blind Services for immediate training.

i) RESOURCES

A list of providers who provide services to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing can be obtained from the Deaf and Blind Services Coordinator. These services include but are not limited to interpreter services, counseling, advocacy, foster care and adoption, homemaker, case management, residential and psychological services.

Additionally, updated lists of resources by region are available online by visiting the State of Illinois Deaf and Hard of Hearing Commission's (IDHHC) website at [Resources \(illinois.gov\)](https://resources.illinois.gov) or send an email to dhh.contactus@illinois.gov for general comments & questions. For a list of licensed Interpreter Directory visit [Interpreter Directory \(illinois.gov\)](https://interpreterdirectory.illinois.gov) or for interpreter questions emails can be sent to dhh.interpreter@illinois.gov.

Note: Please refer to **Procedures 359.58, Payment for Interpreter Services and Auxiliary Aids.**

- Targeted Resource Development

In its ongoing efforts to meet the needs of children and families it serves, DCFS has developed a resource development plan for its clients who are deaf or hard of hearing which focuses on:

1. Contracting with specialized counseling, treatment, evaluation, and case management services for the child and adult who are deaf or hard of hearing.
2. Recruitment of communication accessible foster and adoptive homes for children who are deaf or hard of hearing to prevent placement with foster parents unable to communicate with the children in their preferred/primary language.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

October 18, 2024 – PT 2024.17

j) **FREEDOM FROM DISCRIMINATION**

If any individual seeking or receiving Department services has reason to believe that they have been discriminated against they shall be directed to file a complaint with the Department's Deaf and Blind Services Coordinator:

Department of Children and Family Services
Deaf and Blind Services Coordinator
406 E Monroe St.
Springfield, IL 62701
Voice (217) 785-2651 Video Phone (312) 957-4817
DCFS.DeafBlindClientNotification@illinois.gov

A complaint can be initiated verbally or in writing but must be filed within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory act. The individual will be asked to complete the complaint form, **CFS 766-1 Discrimination Complaint Form for non-employees**, which are to be sent to the above address. Staff will assist individuals in obtaining and/or completing the form, if assistance is needed.

The Statewide Deaf and Blind Services Coordinator will conduct an internal investigation and make a recommendation within 30 working days to appropriate management personnel regarding whether there is substantial evidence to support the charge. If there is substantial evidence finding, conciliation will be recommended. If there is a lack of substantial evidence finding, reconciliation will not be recommended. The complainant will be notified of the results of the investigation.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the results of the investigation, the complaint can also be filed with any of the following agencies:

Illinois Department of Human Rights

| | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 555 W Monroe, STE 700 | 524 S. 2nd St. STE 300 |
| Chicago, IL 60661 | Springfield, Illinois 62701 |
| Tel: (312) 814-6200 | Tel: (217) 785-5100 |
| TTY: (866) 740-3953 | TTY: (866) 740-3953 |
| Fax: (312) 814-6251 | Fax: (217) 785-5106 |

Email: IDHR.ReportSH@illinois.gov or IDHR.Intake@illinois.gov

Email: idhr.webmail@illinois.gov

Website: www2.illinois.gov/dhr or [Human Rights \(illinois.gov\)](http://HumanRights(illinois.gov))

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Office for Civil Rights

200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Room 509F HHH Building
Washington, D.C. 20201
Tel: (800) 368-1019
TDD: (800) 537-7697
Website: www.hhs.gov/ocr

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

October 18, 2024 – PT 2024.17

ATTACHMENT I

INTERPRETER STANDARDS

Sign language interpreters are considered “facilitators” for clients who are deaf or hard of hearing. However, sign language interpreters will be the main communication link between clients that are deaf/hard of hearing and DCFS/Contributing Agency staff. It is important that DCFS/Contributing Agency staff dealing with individuals who are deaf/heard of hearing understand the terminology used in classification of sign language interpreters.

According to Illinois Law (225 ILCS 443/1) “Interpreters for the Deaf” licensure Act of 2007; “On or after January 1, 2009, no person shall practice as an interpreter for the deaf, hold himself or herself out as a licensed interpreter for the deaf, or use the title “Licensed Interpreter for the Deaf,” “Licensed Transliterator for the Deaf,” or any other title or abbreviation to indicate that the person is a licensed interpreter, unless he or she is licensed in accordance with the provisions of this Act.”

A person practicing as an interpreter for the deaf/hard of hearing under this new law must be licensed with the State of Illinois Deaf and Hard of Hearing Commission. DCFS will recommend that only licensed interpreters be used. See above, Section (h)(1)(C) of these procedures for additional licensure requirements for interpreters working with DCFS.

Licensed Deaf Interpreters (CDI) are increasingly being used in the interpreting process. The CDI is a person who is deaf or hard of hearing. In addition to proficient communication skills and general interpreter training, the CDI has specialized training and/or experience in the use of gesture, mime, props drawings and other tools to enhance communication. The CDI has knowledge and understanding of deafness, the Deaf community, and Deaf culture. The CDI also possesses native or near-native fluency in American Sign Language.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

October 18, 2024 – PT 2024.17

ATTACHMENT II

Glossary: These are some additional terminologies/terms that are used in the deaf/hard of hearing community and they are important to understand when working with clients who are deaf or hard of hearing.

“Illinois Relay Center (IRC)” or “Dual Party Relay” is a 24-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week service which provides a communications link between those who use a Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) and those who use a standard voice telephone. IRC provides relay service through a program by the Illinois Telecommunications Access Corp. (ITAC), the local phone company, and AT&T.

“Manually Coded English” or “Signed English” means signs that represent English words in English word order.

“Prelingual Deafness” means deafness which occurs before the acquisition of language (usually before 3 years of age). Such a person will have no language frame of reference for English when learning to speak, write, or speech read.

“Post-lingual Deafness” means deafness which occurs after the acquisition of language (usually after 3 years of age). In most cases, persons who have lost their hearing after this age have a relatively strong language base.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

October 18, 2024 – PT 2024.17

RESOURCES

The list below are additional resources for clients who are deaf or hard of hearing:

- 1) **[Centers for Independent Living \(CIL\)](#)**
Core services include information and referral related to disability law and awareness, peer support, independent living skills, and self-advocacy assistance. Some CILs may also provide: interpreter/reader referrals, transportation and housing assistance, and Disability awareness training.
- 2) **[Chicago Hearing Society \(CHS\)](#)**
Provides communication access, hearing and assistive technologies, and support services for persons who are Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing.
- 3) **[CHOICES for Parents](#)**
A statewide coalition of parents and professionals ensuring that children with identified hearing loss and their families receive the necessary resources, advocacy, information, services and support.
- 4) **[Equip for Equality \(EFE\)](#)**
Promotes self-advocacy and serves as a legal advocate for people with disabilities, and handles individual cases and systems-change litigation to achieve broad-based societal reforms.
- 5) **[Family Matters: Parent Training & Information Center](#)**
Build upon families' strengths, empowers parents and professionals to achieve the strongest possible outcomes for students with disabilities, and to enhance the quality of life for children and young adults with disabilities.
- 6) **[Family Resource Center on Disabilities](#)**
Provides parents of children with disabilities with information, training and assistance including rights and responsibilities under the IDEA, make informed decisions on your child's IEP plans, obtain appropriate services for your child.
- 7) **[Guide By Your Side \(GBYS\)](#)**
Offers parent-to-parent support. Parents of child(ren) who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing have been trained to provide unbiased support, resources and to mentor other parents whose children have been identified having a hearing loss. GBYS is partnered with Illinois Hands & Voices, and the Illinois Early Hearing Detection & Intervention Program.
- 8) **[Hearing Loss Association of America](#)**
[Chicago Lincoln Park Chapter & Chicago North Shore Chapter](#)
of the Hearing Loss Association of America. The mission of Hearing Loss Association of America and its Chapters is to open the world of communication to people with hearing loss by providing information, education, support and advocacy.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

October 18, 2024 – PT 2024.17

- 9) **Helen Keller National Center for DeafBlind Youths & Adults (HKNC)**
Provides training and resources exclusively to people age 16 and over who have combined vision and hearing loss; Students across the country travel to the headquarter in New York for an on-campus training in assistive technology, vocational services, orientation and mobility, communication and independent living; regional offices are also located around the country to bring HKNC resources to communities.
- 10) **Illinois Association of the Deaf (IAD)**
Illinois' leading civil rights organization of, by and for Deaf, Hard of Hearing, DeafBlind Illinoisans.
- 11) **Illinois Early Hearing Detection & Intervention Program**
Works with parents and providers to ensure all babies get screened for hearing loss no later than 1 month of age; all infants who do not pass their hearing receive a diagnostic evaluation no later than 3 months of age; and all infants with a hearing loss enroll in early intervention services no later than 6 months of age. Works with parents and providers to ensure all babies get screened for hearing loss no later than 1 month of age; all infants who do not pass their hearing receive a diagnostic evaluation no later than 3 months of age; and all infants with a hearing loss enroll in early intervention services no later than 6 months of age.
- 12) **Illinois Hands & Voices**
A parent driven, non profit organization that support families with children who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing without a bias around communication modes or methodologies.
- 13) **Illinois School for the Deaf Outreach Program**
Supports families, programs, & services for children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing throughout Illinois. The following services are provided: Training on topics associated with hearing loss, consultation & technical assistance, conferences for parents & professionals, assessments to identify educational & vocational needs, and cochlear implant support.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

October 18, 2024 – PT 2024.17

EDUCATION:

- 1) [Department of Human Services, Early Intervention](#)
Assures families who have infants and toddlers, birth to age three, with diagnosed disabilities (including hearing/vision loss), developmental delays, or substantial risk of significant delays receive resources and supports that assist them in maximizing their child's development while respecting the diversity of families and communities.
- 2) [Illinois School for the Deaf \(ISD\)](#)
A state residential school that educate students to become responsible, self-supporting citizens. It provides a safe learning environment that encourages students to attain their highest potential in reading, writing, and mathematics; and empowers students to explore the technological trends and employment opportunities.
- 3) [Phillip J Rock Center & School](#)
A residential school providing intensive, educational programs and services to DeafBlind individuals ages 3-21 and serves as a resource for services provided in schools, medical settings, early intervention centers and homes.
- 4) [Illinois Service Resource Center \(ISRC\)](#)
Provides behavior support for students who are deaf or hard of hearing in Illinois and provides training, onsite assistance and resources for parents and educators of students who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- 5) [Illinois State Board of Education \(ISBE\), Special Education Services](#)
Partners with school districts to provide programs and services for students with specialized educational needs and assures state and federal requirements are met and regulates the educational interpreters working in the K-12 setting.

EQUIPMENT:

- 1) [Anixter Center](#)
administers the National DeafBlind Equipment Distribution program through [ICanConnect](#) which provides low-income individuals with combined hearing and vision loss with access to telephone, advanced communications and information services. For more information, contact Jason Weiland at JWeiland@anixter.org.
- 2) [Illinois Assistive Technology Program \(IATP\)](#)
Promotes the availability of assistive technology services and programs for people with disabilities and serves all people with disabilities in Illinois, their families, service providers, state agencies, private industry, educators, and other interested individuals, regardless of age or income.
- 3) [Illinois Telecommunications Access Corporation \(ITAC\)](#)
Provides a Free Equipment Program and Illinois Relay to ensure telephone access for people who are Hard of Hearing, Late Deafened, Deaf, Deaf-Blind or Speech Disabled. ITAC is governed by the Illinois Commerce Commission, a Board of Directors and an Advisory Council.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

October 18, 2024 – PT 2024.17

OTHER:

- 1) **[Department of Human Services, Division of Mental Health \(DHS-DMH\)](#)**
A Statewide Deaf and Hard of Hearing Coordinator is available to assist in with finding mental health services for Deaf, Hard of Hearing and DeafBlind individuals.
 - For questions or information, check their [website](#) or contact Jessena Williams at Jessena.Williams@illinois.gov, 217.786.0023 (V) or 217.303.5807 (VP).
- 2) **[Department of Human Services, Division of Rehabilitation Services \(DHS-DRS\)](#)**
Helps individuals, who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Late Deafened, or Deafblind find jobs, get ready to go to work, or obtain services required to maintain employment; and serves as a resource to professionals, state agencies, community organizations, and the public, providing information related to employment, training, and accommodations for persons who have a hearing loss.

A [listing](#) of Rehabilitation Counselors for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing is available. Filling out an online [Rehabilitation Services Referral](#) form in order for a local counselor to contact you is also available. The DRS Services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing can be contacted at DHS.DRSSDHH@illinois.gov.
- 3) **[University of Illinois at Springfield, Division of Specialized Care for Children \(DSCC\)](#)**
Focuses on public service, education and research as a basis to provide, promotes and coordinates family-centered, community-based, culturally competent care for eligible children with special health care needs in IL. Helps children with disabilities and those who have conditions which may lead to disabilities grow and develop to the full extent of their abilities.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT
October 18, 2024 – PT 2024.17

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SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 24, 2020 – PT 2020.15

Procedures 302.APPENDIX M – Transition Planning for Adolescents

Table of Contents

- a) Purpose
- b) Population Served
- c) Transition to Independence
 - 1) Life Skills Assessment
 - 2) Life Skills Training
 - 3) Vocational and Career Planning
 - 4) Health Care
 - 5) Clinical Services-Counseling
- d) Countdown to 21 Program
 - 1) Countdown to 21 Meeting
 - 2) Financial Literacy
 - 3) Eligibility Requirements for Transition Funding
 - 4) Payment of the Transition Funds
 - 5) Youth with Developmental Disabilities
 - 6) Youth Leave Care with Medicaid Coverage
 - 7) Required Elements and Data Reporting
- e) Youth Housing Assistance Program
 - 1) Youth Housing Advocacy Program – (YHAP)
 - 2) Youth Cash Assistance Program (YCAP)
- f) Youth in Transition Programs
 - 1) Youth in College / Vocational Training Program (YIC/VT)
 - 2) Education and Training Voucher Program (ETV)
 - 3) Independent Living Placement Services (ILO)
 - 4) Department Scholarship Program
 - 5) Tuition and Mandatory Fee Waiver Program
 - 6) Pregnant and/or Parenting Program
 - 7) Employment / Job Training / Apprenticeship Incentive Program (EIP)
 - 8) Lincoln's Challenge Program
 - 9) Job Corps
- g) DCFS Website
- h) Youth Advisory Boards
- i) National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD)
- j) Release of Guardianship

a) Purpose

The purpose of this Appendix is to provide guidance to staff regarding effective planning for adolescent youth in care that will be transitioning from the child welfare system.

b) Population Served

Permanency Workers from the Department or purchase of service (POS) agencies shall provide appropriate transition planning and services to youth in care 14 years of age or older on their caseloads.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 24, 2020 – PT 2020.15

c) **Transition to Independence**

Transition planning is an ongoing process for youth in care. Beginning as early as age 14, transition planning starts with an assessment of the youth's strengths and needs in order to function as an independent adult, and allows for input from the youth, caregiver, Permanency Worker and other appropriate individuals who have strong concern for the youth's welfare (e.g., youth's family, teachers and counselors) in identifying the skills the youth needs to begin to acquire. At age 17, the youth and Permanency Worker develop the youth's first Youth Driven Transition Plan (YDTP). This written transition plan, documented on the **CFS 2032-1, Youth Driven Transition Plan**, will list the developmental activities and identify the supportive services designed to assess and enhance the youth's development of independent living skills.

The youth and Permanency Worker are expected to review and update the YDTP at regular intervals to ensure that it remains current and includes all identified needs. Regular reviews will also ensure that the youth, Permanency Worker, Department/POS agency, and the listed service providers are performing their assigned tasks and fulfilling their responsibilities.

The YDTP must also contain information about the importance of designating another individual to make health care treatment decisions on behalf of the youth, if the youth becomes unable to participate in such decisions and does not have, or does not want, a relative who would otherwise be authorized under State law to make such decisions. The youth must be provided the option to execute a health care power of attorney, health care proxy or other similar document recognized under State law for this purpose.

At ages 19 and 20.9 (or 90 days prior to leaving care), the youth and Permanency Worker will attend Countdown to 21 (C21) Meetings. A Countdown to 21 Meeting is a youth driven team planning process, guided by a facilitator who has no prior involvement in the case, that engages the youth, Permanency Worker, caregiver, family, and other individuals who have strong concern for the youth's welfare to help identify the youth's adult connections/relationships and determine the array and intensity of supports and services needed to assist the youth in planning for successful discharge from care.

It is the Department's expectation that youth in care ages 17 and older will be engaged in a post-secondary educational or vocational program, employed at least part time (80 hours/month), or participating in a program or activity designed to promote or remove barriers to employment. Advanced educational and/or work experience is critical to ensure the youth is continuing to learn skills necessary to successfully sustain themselves upon leaving care.

For Federal IV-E claiming purposes, the Permanency Worker must document in the Service Plan for youth in care age 18 through 20 years old whether the youth is attending school, working, or participating in a job training related activity. When a youth is incapable of attending school on a full-time basis due to a medical condition, the Permanency Worker shall ensure that information related to that condition is documented in the case record and Service Plan. When a youth is incapable of doing any of these activities due to a medical condition, the Permanency Worker must ensure that

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 24, 2020 – PT 2020.15

information related to that condition is documented in the case record and Service Plan. “Medical condition” is defined as follows:

A disability, as defined in the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), means either:

- *a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of an individual's major life activities;*
- *a record of such an impairment; or*
- *being regarded as possessing such an impairment.*

“Major Life Activities” are those basic activities that the average person can perform with little or no difficulty. This includes, but is not limited to, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working.

Note: A youth in care age 18 through 20 who is placed in a residential treatment center or group home setting is presumed to have a medical condition, sufficient to meet this definition.

In addition to completing the **CFS 2032-1, Youth Driven Transition Plan (YDTP)** with the youth at age 17, the Permanency Worker must also:

- Provide education regarding Power of Attorney for Healthcare to all youth in care who are 17 years of age, regardless of living arrangement, and inform the youth regarding their option to execute the Power of Attorney for Health Care on or after their 18th birthday by reviewing **CFS 2032-2, Your Future, Your Health;** with Statutory Short Form Power of Attorney for Health Care with the youth;
- Obtain the youth’s signature on the **CFS 2032-3, Receipt of Information & Education Regarding Health Care Options** after this review;
- Sign and date the **CFS 2032-3, Receipt of Information & Education Regarding Health Care Options** and retain copies for the youth’s permanent record as appropriate; and
- Provide the Administrative Case Reviewer with copies of all signed documents (i.e., the **CFS 2032-1** and **CFS 2032-3**).

1) Life Skills Assessment

The Department has chosen the Casey Life Skills Assessment (CLSA) to establish the baseline life skills needed of youth served by the Department. The CLSA is a self-reporting instrument that allows youth and their Permanency Workers to assess their strengths and challenges for each of the eight life skill domains: Daily Living; Self Care; Relationships and Communication; Housing and Money Management; Work and Study; Career and Education Planning; Looking Forward; and Permanency.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 24, 2020 – PT 2020.15

The CLSA is appropriate for all youth ages 14 to 21 regardless of living circumstances. The Permanency Worker is required to administer the assessment to each youth on their caseload no later than 30 days after the youth's 14th and 16th birthdays, and 6 months prior to the youth's planned discharge from guardianship. Youth entering the child welfare system after their 14th birthday shall be administered the life skills assessment no later than 60 days after their entry into substitute care.

When administered at these intervals, the CLSA provides an ongoing guide for the Permanency Worker and other providers to ensure development of appropriate service plans for each youth to acquire independent living skills.

The Permanency Worker shall do the following in preparation for each youth's ACR:

- At Quarterly Child and Family Team Meetings, evaluate the youth's progress in completing the Service Plan's life skills objectives.
- Administer an updated CLSA to the youth utilizing only those domains needed to review the life skills objectives in the youth's Service Plan. The CLSA can be administered in English, Spanish or French. (For Spanish-speaking youth or youth who express a preference to complete the assessment in the Spanish language, the assessment shall be completed in Spanish and all written documentation accompanying services must be in the Spanish language in accordance with the Burgos Consent Decree.)
- Print a copy of the CLSA assessment results and any documentation of the programs or services in which the youth is participating that will enable the youth to live independently. The program/services may include chores and/or training and direction that the youth is receiving in their foster home or living arrangement. The CLSA assessment results and documentation of the programs and services shall be taken to the ACR.
- When appropriate, establish new life skills Outcomes, Action Steps and time frames in the Service Plan to address identified unmet needs.

The Permanency Worker can obtain a copy of the Casey Life Skills Assessment instrument, a sample template for the Service Plan and a resource guide from the organization's website (www.caseylifeskills.org). This website can also be accessed through the Resources link on D-net (Resources>Youth in Care>Promoting Independence and Self Sufficiency>Life Skills). To administer the life skills assessment, the Permanency Worker must establish an account on the Casey website. If assistance is needed, click on the "Help and Training" link on the Casey Life Skills homepage. "How to" guides and video tutorials are also available on the Casey website.

The Casey Life Skills Assessment may not be appropriate for adolescent youth in care with special needs due to developmental disabilities. For youth who have cognitive challenges, the Permanency Worker can use the Level 1 (elementary

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 24, 2020 – PT 2020.15

age) assessment, Level 2 (middle school age) assessment, or sit with the youth to help the youth complete skill areas in the CLS main assessment. (E.g., read the statements to them if they have reading challenges.) Permanency Workers may contact the DCFS Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities Program (Outlook email: DCFS.TransitionToAdultServicesDevelopmentalDisabilities) with any questions.

Pregnant/parenting youth should complete the CLSA supplement for pregnant/parenting youth in addition to the primary assessment, and receive parenting education and/or training to address identified deficits and reinforce identified strengths.

2) Life Skills Training

Acquisition of daily living skills are critical to the achievement of economic and social self-sufficiency. As part of the CLSA process, the Permanency Worker, in consultation with the youth, caregiver and involved providers, shall develop a Transition Plan with the youth that contains individualized objectives, tasks, and resources. The youth's assessment shall be used as a guide in developing the transition plan. The Permanency Worker shall document the Transition Plan objectives and tasks in the youth's Service Plan.

A significant segment of the youth's practical independent living training will take place in his/her placement environment and the Permanency Worker must provide the youth's caregiver with life skills instructional activities and suggestions. The Permanency Worker should offer the "Resources to Inspire Guide" as a reference for caregivers. This guide lists goals, learning objectives and a sample of youth-appropriate resources that may be useful to the caregiver, and may also be helpful when preparing a youth's Service Plan.

The Permanency Worker should also refer a youth to community-based life skills training programs when available and appropriate. Many providers offer community-based life skills development programs for youth who demonstrate a need for training beyond what can be provided by the caregiver and Permanency Worker. Program curricula may provide practical experience that reinforce money management, consumer awareness, food management, personal appearance, health, housekeeping, transportation, educational planning, job-seeking skills, emergency and safety skills, knowledge of community resources, interpersonal skills, and housing. Classes are structured to meet the identified needs of the participants.

To refer a youth for life skills training, the Permanency Worker shall complete and send a referral packet to the appropriate Transition Manager of the Office of Education and Transition Services (OETS).

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 24, 2020 – PT 2020.15

The referral packet for life skills training shall include the following documents:

- **CFS 912, Referral Form;**
- Scored Casey Life Skills Assessment;
- Face sheet and child specific section of the current Service Plan;
- Integrated Assessment; and
- **CFS 600-3, Consent for Release of Information** signed by the youth and/or DCFS Authorized Agent.

3) Vocational and Career Planning

The purpose of vocational and career planning is to ensure that youth in care are prepared for employment or continuing, post-secondary education. By the youth's high school freshman year, formalized planning, high school credits earned and work experience should be considered annually and included in the youth's educational and transition plans.

Note: For youth eligible for special education or receiving special education services, planning post-secondary education or employment must start at age 14½ and be a part of an IEP transition plan that is later noted in the **CFS 2032-1, Youth Driven Transition Plan (YDTP)** (developed at age 17). The transition plan at this age drives the education plan process (see **Procedures 314.50, Educational Plan**).

Youth in care planning for post-secondary education should obtain information and assistance from their school counselor concerning colleges or trade schools, campus visitation, American College Test (ACT) or Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) registration and preparation, financial aid and scholarships (Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)). The Permanency Worker should provide the youth with information regarding payment of educational expenses and the Department scholarship. (See **Procedures 359.60, Payments for Independent Living Arrangements, Procedures 359.75, Payments for Children's Educational Expenses** and **Rule and Procedures 312, Department Scholarship Program**.)

DCFS Permanency Workers can obtain technical assistance for education issues from the Regional OETS/DCFS Education Advisors listed below. POS Permanency Workers should contact their agency's Education Liaison.

DCFS Education Advisors

- DCFS Cook North (Chicago and Suburbs)
312-328-2607
- DCFS Cook Central (Chicago Suburbs)
708-338-6641

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 24, 2020 – PT 2020.15

- DCFS Cook South (Chicago and Suburbs)
773-371-6479
- DCFS Cook South (Suburbs and Northern Region)
708-210-3050
- DCFS Northern Region (Aurora Sub-region and Rockford)
815-967-9750
- DCFS Central Region (Champaign Sub-Region)
217-875-6797
- Central Region - (Peoria and Springfield Sub-Regions)
309-671-7933 or 217-557-3985
- Southern Region (East St. Louis and Marion Sub-Regions)
618-583-2125
- Statewide Post-Secondary Education Specialist
708-210-2845 or 309-671-7969

4) Health Care

Medical services are available through the Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) Medical Assistance Program via the Medicaid card for youth in care. The Department will provide continued medical coverage for youth determined Medicaid ineligible when the Department is legally responsible for the youth. (See **Procedures 359.90, Payments for Medical Care.**)

Medical services include:

- assignment of a primary care physician;
- ongoing medical care (i.e., physical, dental, hearing and vision exams, and immunizations);
- specialty care; and
- medical case management services through the Department of Human Services for pregnant youth and children of youth in care (0-5 years of age).

(See **Procedures 302.360, Health Care Services.**)

Medicaid eligible youth age 18 and under are eligible for a 12-month extension of medical coverage after their case has been closed. The medical coverage extends for a maximum of 12 months after the case is closed or until a youth turns age 19, whichever occurs first. Youth living out of state are not eligible for extended medical coverage. To ensure continuous coverage for youth in care transitioning to reunification or independence, it is important that this information be provided as part of transition planning. When closing a case, the Permanency Worker shall inform the family, or the youth if the youth is transitioning to independence, that

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 24, 2020 – PT 2020.15

the youth is eligible for the 12-month extension and the importance of keeping the DCFS Technical Support Unit informed of any address changes. The Technical Support Unit will also notify youth who qualify for the extension.

Youth age 19 or older who transition out of DCFS care from any living arrangement (e.g., foster care, ILO/TLP, etc.), and who meet Medicaid eligibility requirements at that time, qualify for Medicaid until age 26 under the Affordable Care Act through the HFS “Former Foster Care Program” as long as they are Illinois residents. (For more information, see **Procedures 302.360(x), Extension of Medical Coverage (Continuous Eligibility).**)

5) Clinical Services-Counseling

Counseling may be provided to assist youth in care with problem resolution or to identify and obtain other community services. This service can be accessed directly by the Permanency Worker, a POS referral or through purchase. (See **Procedures 302.320, Counseling and Casework Services** and **Procedures 359.52, Payments for Counseling and Psychological Assessment**).

d) Countdown to 21 Program

Countdown to 21 (C21) is the DCFS program aimed at improving outcomes for youth exiting care that embeds improved youth driven transition planning activities at age 19 and continuing until the youth’s 21st birthday.

The model of practice for C21 supports transition-aged youth through the following activities:

- C21 Meetings (formerly known as D-CIPP) at age 19 and 20.9 are a team planning process, guided by a facilitator that is independent of the case that engages the youth, Permanency Worker and Permanency Supervisor, caregiver, family and other individuals who have a strong concern for the youth’s welfare to help identify the youth’s adult connections/relationships and determine the array and intensity of supports and services needed to assist the youth in planning for a successful exit from care.
- Financial literacy training for youth beginning at age 19 and who are preparing to exit care. Youth in care must be referred for and begin receiving financial literacy upon reaching their 19th birthday. The Department recognizes the “Get Real: Financial Decision in the Real World” curriculum as meeting this requirement.
- Establishment of eligibility requirements for the availability of youth to receive Transition Funds, a one-time financial assistance as they exit care at age 21 (formerly called emancipation funds). The youth must be discharging from a Department approved placement. Transition funds are provided to the youth in connection with a transition plan and budget that is developed during the youth’s final C21 Meeting (approximately 90 days prior to a planned discharge).

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 24, 2020 – PT 2020.15

1) Countdown to 21 Meeting

A C21 Meeting is required 90 days prior to any youth exiting care and within 90-days of youth reaching their 19th birthday. The primary objective of the C21 Meeting is the development of a **CFS 2032-1, Youth Driven Transition Plan** or enhanced **CFS 375-2 ILO/TLP Quarterly Transition Discharge Transition Plan** when a current youth-driven plan exists.

Pregnant and/or parenting youth will have a second C21 Meeting 90 days after turning age 20, as enhanced transition planning is required to successfully exit from care with a child or children.

A C21 Meeting will be convened 90 days prior to the youth's 21st birthday to review and update the **CFS 2032-1, Youth Driven Transition Plan** and **CFS 374, Transition Funding Application and Disbursement Plan**. If the current plan is no longer viable, a new plan will be created. The **CFS 374** is part of the application for Transition Funds.

A C21 Meeting will be convened “off-cycle” if a meeting is recommended by the youth, a team member, court, monitor, guardian ad litem or Administrative Case Reviewer. An off-cycle C21 Meeting may not replace the reviews required at ages 19 and 20.9.

A C21 Meeting is held for all youth age 19 and over who are seeking a placement and are not stepping down from TLP or ILO. In these cases, the time to discharge is short and the plan must consider how the placement recommendation supports discharge planning.

Countdown to 21 Meeting Objectives:

A) Improve discharge outcomes by ensuring the following:

- i) the youth identifies and develops a detailed plan to address their top 2 or 3 goals toward transitioning out of care of DCFS or the child welfare system;
- ii) there is a well-developed plan in place for the youth to reside in a sustainable final living arrangement prior to transition from care;
- iii) the youth's connections to family, community and social supports are nurtured and maintained;
- iv) the youth's educational and vocational plans are realistic and in process prior to transition from care; and
- v) the youth is working toward financial stability.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 24, 2020 – PT 2020.15

- B) Improve access to and use of local, community-based support services in the youth's community as related to successful transition from care (e.g., DHS resources, vocational training/planning, housing resources).
- C) Improve access to and use of local, community-based support to meet the youth's physical and mental health needs (e.g., dental care, medical care, Affordable Care Act enrollment).
- D) Improve collaboration between team members assisting the youth in preparing to transition from care (e.g., ensuring the youth's identified family and community supports are actively involved in their transition planning).
- E) Ensure youth leaving care prior to age 21 are making an informed decision with knowledge of the benefits that they may still access and those that they will lose access to. In this meeting, the path to reinstatement of care is discussed and documented.

2) Financial Literacy

As part of Countdown to 21, youth are required to complete a Department approved financial literacy course, within 30 days of attaining 19 years of age, that focuses on basic financial education to promote the ability to understand financial choices, plan for the future, spend wisely, and manage the challenges associated with life events such as job loss, saving for retirement, or paying for a child's education.

Every POS agency, residential program, and ILO/TLP program that serves youth ages 18-21 is expected to maintain at least one certified financial literacy instructor on staff. The DCFS Office of Workforce Development will train these financial literacy instructors.

For youth in a DCFS foster home, the DCFS Permanency Worker for the youth will complete and submit the **CFS 912, Transition Referral Form** along with the **CFS 600-3, Consent for Release of Information form** to the appropriate Transition Manager at the Office of Education and Transition Services (OETS).

3) Eligibility Requirements for Transition Funding

To be eligible to apply for and receive transition funding, all the following requirements must be met by the time the youth reaches 20 years and 9 months of age (and prior to discharge for youth with planned transitions from care prior to age 21).

- A) Youth must be in a DCFS approved substitute care placement. Youth in the following placements 90-days prior to transitioning out of care are ineligible for transition funding:

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 24, 2020 – PT 2020.15

- DET-Detention;
- IDC-Institution DOC;
- WCC-Unknown Continued Contact; or
- Youth who are in:
 - WUK-Whereabouts Unknown;
 - UAP-Unauthorized Placement; or
 - UAH-Unauthorized Home of Parent.

An exception may be granted if a youth enters into to an approved placement at least 60 days prior to discharge and sustains the placement until attaining 21 years of age/planned discharge.

Note: Youth in an open legal case who have safely transitioned to HMP-Home of Parent as their final living arrangement prior to exiting care are considered in a DCFS approved placement. Youth in an SSU-Self-Selected Unapproved living arrangement that the Permanency Worker and Permanency Supervisor have assessed as safe and appropriate but is unable to receive DCFS Placement Clearance Desk approval will also be considered an approved placement.

- B) Youth must attend the 90-day C21 Meeting in-person and on-time. Meetings held less than 60 days prior to discharge do not meet the 90-day requirement.
- C) Youth must complete a **CFS 2032-1, Youth Driven Transition Plan** or **CFS 375-2, ILO/TLP Quarterly Transition Discharge Launch Plan** and the Permanency Worker and youth must ensure the youth has obtained or compiled all documents required for the youth to function as an independent adult. The required documents are listed in **(j) Release of Guardianship**, below, and also on the **CFS 2032-1.**)
- D) Youth must provide their address and a description of their living arrangement (e.g., apartment with roommate) upon exit from care.
- E) Youth must identify a supportive resource person that will be available to assist and support youth during and after their transition from care. The resource person will be encouraged to participate in the 90-day C21 Meeting.
- F) Youth must have successfully completed a DCFS approved financial literacy course. Youth in a POS placement will be provided the course by the placing POS agency.
- G) Youth must fully complete the **CFS 374, Transition Funding Application and Disbursement Plan.**

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 24, 2020 – PT 2020.15

The Department will authorize payment for only the following “Budget Categories”:

- Housing (e.g. rent, security deposit);
- Education Related Expenses;
- Transportation;
- Medical/Health;
- Daycare/Childcare;
- Furniture (electronics not included);
- Debt Reduction;
- Emergency Funds; and
- Savings Account Deposit.

4) Payment of the Transition Funds

Once the final C21 meeting occurs, 90 days prior to exit from care, and it has been determined that the youth has met all the eligibility requirements to receive the transition funding, then the **CFS 374** must be completed, signed and dated by the youth, Permanency Worker, Permanency Supervisor and C21 Meeting Facilitator (all 4 signatures are required). The C21 Facilitator shall send the completed **CFS 374** for processing to the Central Payment Unit within 3 business days (e-mail: CPUDCFS.Mailbox@illinois.gov or fax: 217-557-0639). Payment will be made directly to the youth within 30 days of receipt of the completed application and, if applicable, issued in the youth’s name and sent to the address of the payee and/or adult guardian. The payment amount is a one-time payment set at the current rate noted in **Procedures 359.Appendix A, Payment Rates**.

5) Youth with Developmental Disabilities

Youth in care who are diagnosed with a developmental disability and have an IQ of 65 or under are NOT exempt from completing the eligibility requirements in subsections (d)(3)(B) (attend C21 meeting), (d)(3)(C) (complete the CFS 2032-1 or CFS 375-2) and (d)(3)(F) (complete a financial literacy course), above. The cases for these youth will be discussed with a C21 Meeting Facilitator and any exemption will be made on a case by case basis. In these cases, the C21 Meeting will serve to ensure that the transition to adult placement is secured and successful or that referrals for such placements have been made. The meeting will document the supportive relationships that the youth will have post-placement and plans to ensure that they have access to the information needed to provide that support.

When an adult guardian (for the person or estate) or a payee is needed to manage the youth’s Social Security and transition funds, the identity of that person must be confirmed at the C21 Meeting. When appointment of an adult guardian or payee may not be required, this information will be included in the transition plan and sent to the DCFS Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities Program (Outlook email: DCFS.TransitionToAdultServicesDevelopmentalDisabilities). If a youth does not need an adult guardian or payee, the youth will be expected to complete a modified version of financial literacy, commensurate with the youth’s capacity

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 24, 2020 – PT 2020.15

to understand the material, the availability of informal support and the expectations concerning how the youth will manage their own funds. For any youth who is unable to complete a modified version of financial literacy due to a developmental disability, a current **CFS 418-L** is required as supporting documentation.

The Permanency Worker should contact the DCFS Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities Program regarding transition questions or services available through the DHS Division of Developmental Disabilities.

6) Youth Leave Care with Medicaid Coverage

Through a joint agreement between Departments, Medicaid coverage is seamlessly continued for youth over the age of 19 with a planned discharge from care. DCFS generates a monthly list of youth whose cases are closed at 21, or earlier if identified through the C21 process. The list is shared with DHS and eligibility determinations are made by DHS. Almost all former foster care youth qualify for coverage. Coverage continues uninterrupted under the same RIN# as when the youth was in care. Within two months of leaving care, qualifying youth are mailed a new card at the address listed as their Final Living Arrangement. Medicaid for former foster care youth is not means tested. Changes in relationship status do not impact eligibility. Young adults must complete an annual renewal application that indicates that they are a former foster care youth; with this, eligibility continues until the young adult's 26th birthday. Medicaid coverage is limited to Illinois (although a few States are testing reciprocity and may accept it). Medicaid accounts must not be co-mingled with other family members including a parent, spouse or children.

7) Required Elements and Data Reporting

The Department has adopted the following expectations to guide the monitoring of C21 for all POS agencies and DCFS regions serving youth ages 19 and 20 years of age:

- Track and maintain statistics on agency compliance with scheduling and attending C21 Meetings;
- Attendance of the Permanency Worker is required;
- Permanency Supervisors are encouraged to attend in-person. When the Permanency Supervisor cannot, they are required to call in before the meeting concludes to approve the plan and give verbal consent for their signature to be added;
- In Cook County, GALs will be invited unless the youth requests that they are not included.
- Provide transportation for youth to attend C21 Meetings and ongoing support to youth in transition planning;

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 24, 2020 – PT 2020.15

- Designate agency staff to become trainers to ensure there are a sufficient number of trained agency staff, certified by the DCFS Office of Workforce Development, to present the financial literacy curriculum to youth served by the agency. Agencies are encouraged to collaborate with one another to facilitate group classes for youth; and
- Ensure that supportive family members or other adults identified by the youth participate in the C21 Meeting and/or other transition planning activities.

All **POS agencies** must submit the **CFS 2032-5, Countdown to 21 Quarterly and Annual Data Report** to the DCFS Division of Regulation and Monitoring. The **CFS 2032-5** records the number of C21 meetings scheduled, convened, missed, name(s) of agency staff certified in financial literacy instruction, number of youth 19 years of age and over on the agency caseload who have and have not completed financial literacy, a detailed explanation for any youth who did not have a C21 meeting, and the agency's transition planning action plan for each youth.

e) **Youth Housing Assistance Program**

Housing services provided by the Department include arrangements for safe and adequate housing, education regarding housing choices, financial management, community resources, and tenants' rights and responsibilities. The Youth Housing Assistance Program has two main components: Youth Housing Advocacy Program and Youth Cash Assistance Program.

1) **Youth Housing Advocacy Program (YHAP)**

Youth may receive housing advocacy services to ensure that a youth's housing situation becomes or remains stable. Housing advocacy services may include the following:

- Assistance in securing affordable housing;
- Consumer education;
- Budget counseling;
- Linkages to community-based resources for assistance, for example utilities, food, health services and clothing;
- Connection to the local Homeless Continuum of Care; and
- Follow-up services, including home visits, monthly contacts, and contacts with the property manager, after the youth secures appropriate housing.

A) **Eligibility Criteria**

i) **Youth who have an open case shall:**

- currently be in the custody of the Department or a child welfare agency from a state other than Illinois;
- be at least 17½ years of age;

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 24, 2020 – PT 2020.15

- be less than 21 years old (except for youth referred to a federal housing subsidy program created specifically for youth aging out of the care of a child welfare agency. Youth referred to those programs can be served until they are 23 years old); and
 - need housing advocacy services to ensure that their housing situation becomes or remains stable.
- ii) Youth who no longer have an open case or who had an open child welfare case from a state other than Illinois shall:
- reside in Illinois;
 - have had their DCFS case or case with a child welfare agency in another state closed on or after their 14th birthday;
 - be at least 18 and less than 21 years old (except for youth who receive services through a federal housing subsidy program created specifically for youth aging out of the care of a child welfare agency. Youth referred to those programs can be served until they turn 23 years old); and
 - need these services to ensure that their housing situation becomes or remains stable.

B) Referral Process

- i) **Youth who have an open case.** Referrals for housing advocacy services may be made by the youth's Permanency Worker by submitting a completed **CFS 370-5YHAP** to the Permanency Supervisor for approval. Supervisors will forward the referral to the DCFS YHAP Coordinator.
- ii) **Youth who no longer have an open Department case.** Youth can make a self-referral by contacting the YHAP Coordinator directly or through any Department field office or YHAP housing advocacy provider. The YHAP Coordinator, DCFS Permanency Worker or housing advocate will complete **CFS 370-5YHAP** with information provided by the youth to make a referral for housing advocacy. The YHAP Coordinator or designee must approve all requests for housing advocacy for youth with a closed DCFS case.

2) Youth Cash Assistance Program (YCAP)

The Department may provide cash assistance to purchase hard goods on behalf of youth who meet the eligibility criteria listed below to ensure that the youth's housing situation becomes or remains stable. Assistance is provided in the form of checks made payable to the person or organization from which the items or

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 24, 2020 – PT 2020.15

services are purchased. Cash assistance checks are not made payable directly to the youth. The Department can provide cash assistance for youth who are transitioning from DCFS Care and for youth who have already aged out of care. (See subsections (A) YCAP Transition and (B) YCAP Crisis, below). The amount of cash assistance that the youth can receive from these programs will not exceed \$2,000 per year and \$4,000 lifetime. The YCAP Subsidy is not included in this limit. (See subsection (C) YCAP Housing Subsidy, below) The Department will consider assistance provided by either program when determining if the youth has reached those limits when the youth does not have the income to purchase the item:

- Housing security deposit;
- Rent, if the youth can make future rent payments;
- Beds and furniture for the youth and his or her children;
- Utility deposits or bills, if the youth can make future utility payments;
- Appliances;
- Household items: and,
- Other items necessary to ensure that the youth's housing situation becomes or remains stable.

A) YCAP Transition

YCAP Transition provides cash assistance to stabilize a youth's housing situation as the youth prepares to transition from DCFS care.

i) Eligibility Criteria

Youth applying for YCAP Transition shall:

- have an open case with the Department or a public child welfare agency in another state, be currently in the care of the Department or child welfare agency within 6 months of having their case closed or be in or ready to enter the Youth in College Program, living in an authorized placement or seeking an approved Placement Alternative Contract;
- be at least 17½ years of age;
- be less than 21 years of age (except for youth who receive services through a federal housing subsidy program created specifically for youth aging out of the care of a child welfare agency. Youth referred to those programs can be served until they turn 23 years of age);
- be living in inadequate housing or in a situation that will result in the youth living in inadequate housing if cash assistance is not provided; and

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 24, 2020 – PT 2020.15

- have an income that will likely meet monthly expenses after the assistance is provided.

ii) Referral Process

Referrals for YCAP Transition may be made by the youth's Permanency Worker by completing the **CFS 370-5YHAP**, and **CFS 370-5Y**. The Permanency Worker shall submit the completed forms to the Permanency Supervisor for approval. When approved, the Supervisor will forward the forms to the Youth Housing Assistance Coordinator for approval.

B) YCAP Crisis

YCAP Crisis provides cash assistance to youth who have already aged out of DCFS care.

i) Eligibility Criteria

Youth applying for cash assistance shall:

- be at least 18 years of age;
- have had their Department case or case with a child welfare agency in another state closed on or after their 18th birthday in accordance with the Emancipation of Mature Minors Act or was adopted after their 16th birthday or placed by a juvenile court in subsidized guardianship after their 16th birthday;
- be under 21 years of age (except for youth who receive services through a federal housing subsidy program created specifically for youth aging out of the care of a child welfare agency. Youth referred to those programs can be served until they turn 23 years of age);
- be living in inadequate housing or be in real and significant danger of becoming homeless; and
- have an income that will likely meet future rent and utility costs.

ii) Referral Process

To apply for the YCAP Crisis cash program, the Youth Housing Advocate or the youth's Permanency Worker must complete the **CFS 370-5YHAP** and **CFS 370-5Y**. The Permanency Worker shall give the completed forms to the Permanency Supervisor. When approved, the Permanency Supervisor will forward the forms directly to the Youth Housing Assistance Program Coordinator for approval. The Youth Housing Assistance Program

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 24, 2020 – PT 2020.15

Coordinator or designee will use the information on these forms to determine if the youth meets the eligibility requirements for the program.

C) YCAP Housing Subsidy

Youth may receive a housing subsidy of up to \$500 per month until the youth's 21st birthday. Youth are required to contribute 30% of their income towards the cost of their housing (rent and utilities).

The amount of the housing subsidy will be reduced by \$100 every 6 months until the youth turns 21.

i) Eligibility Criteria

Youth applying for a YCAP Housing Subsidy shall:

- be at least 18 years of age;
- have a closed case with the Department or a child welfare agency in another state;
- have had their case closed on or after their 18th birthday or were adopted after their 16th birthday or placed by a juvenile court in a subsidized guardianship home after their 16th birthday;
- be less than 21 years of age;
- have housing costs that exceed 30% of the youth's income (at the time the youth applies); and
- have completed the **CFS 370-5Y** budget statement which demonstrates that the subsidy, when combined with the youth's income, will enable the youth to cover all remaining living expenses (i.e. housing, utilities, clothing and food).

ii) Referral Process

Referrals for a YCAP Housing Subsidy may be made by the youth's Permanency Worker or housing advocate by completing the **CFS 370-5YHAP**, **CFS 370-5Y** and **CFS 370-5B**. The Permanency Worker or housing advocate shall give the completed forms to the supervisor for approval. The supervisor will forward the forms to the Youth Housing Assistance Program Coordinator for approval. The Youth Housing Assistance Program Coordinator may approve the entire subsidy at the time eligibility is determined.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 24, 2020 – PT 2020.15

f) **Youth in Transition Programs**

The following Department, State and Federal programs are available to assist youth in becoming successful members of their community, work and school.

1) **Youth in College / Vocational Training Program (YIC/VT)**

The YIC/VT Program is a Department placement available to youth for whom the Department is legally responsible and who are enrolled in an accredited, full-time post-secondary educational or vocational training program. Youth in this program have up to 5 years of eligibility or through age 25 (whichever occurs first). (See **Procedures 314.75(c), Youth in College Program/Vocational Training Program** and **Procedures 359.60, Payments for Supervised Independent/Transitional Placement Contracts.**)

2) **Education and Training Voucher Program (ETV)**

The ETV program assists youth with eligible post-secondary education related expenses not covered by financial aid grants. Youth for whom the Department is legally responsible, those who age out of care at 18 or older, and those who go to adoption or guardianship at age 16 or older are eligible for the program. Youth must be attending a U.S. Department of Education accredited post-secondary program. Youth remain eligible until they attain age 26 as long as they are making satisfactory academic progress in their program, but may not participate in the ETV program for more than 5 years (whether or not consecutive). (See **Procedures 314.75(b), Education and Training Voucher Program.**)

3) **Independent Living Placement Services (ILO)**

The Supervised Independent Living Program provides supportive services and living maintenance to youth for whom the Department is legally responsible. The purpose of the program is to assist youth who have demonstrated the minimum requirements for living independently to progress toward their goal of independence. (See **Procedures 301.60(e), Transitional and Independent Living Program Services (ILO/TLP), Procedures 302.Appendix H, Supervised Independent Living Program** and **Procedures 359.60, Payments for Supervised Independent/Transitional Placement Contracts.**)

4) **Department Scholarship Program**

The Department Scholarship Program provides 53 scholarships each year, four of which are awarded to children of veterans. The Department Scholarship Committee awards scholarships to students for whom the Department has legal responsibility, who aged out of the Department's care at age 18 or older, or who the Department had legal responsibility for immediately prior to the adoption or private guardianship being finalized. Scholarship recipients receive up to 5 consecutive years of tuition and academic fee waiver to be used at participating Illinois state universities and community colleges, a monthly grant and a medical card. (See **Rule 312, Department of Children and Family Services Scholarship**

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 24, 2020 – PT 2020.15

Program and Procedures 359.60, Payments for Supervised Independent/Transitional Placement Contracts.)

Youth who apply for a Department scholarship but do not receive one are eligible for tuition and fee waivers at Illinois public colleges and universities. [20 ILCS 505/8]

5) Tuition and Mandatory Fee Waiver Program

Tuition and fee waivers are available to a youth or former youth in care for the first 5 years the youth or former youth in care is enrolled in a community college, university, or college maintained by the State of Illinois so long as the youth or former youth in care makes satisfactory progress toward completing his or her degree. The community college or public university that an eligible student attends must waive any tuition and fee amounts that exceed the amounts paid to the eligible student under the federal Pell Grant Program or the State's Monetary Award Program.

Eligible students are youth for whom the Department has court-ordered legal responsibility, youth who aged out of care at age 18 or older, or youth formerly under care who have been adopted and were the subject of an adoption assistance agreement or who have been placed in private guardianship and were the subject of a subsidized guardianship agreement.

To receive a waiver under this Tuition and Mandatory Fee Waiver Program, an eligible student must:

- 1) have earned a high school diploma from an accredited institution or a high school equivalency certificate or have met the state criteria for high school graduation before the start of the school year for which the eligible student is applying for the waiver;
- 2) enroll in a qualifying post-secondary education program before the eligible student reaches 26 years of age;
- 3) apply for federal and state grant assistance by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA); and
- 4) submit a **CFS 438-A, Tuition and Fee Waiver Program** application to DCFS.TuitionWaiver@illinois.gov.

6) Pregnant and/or Parenting Program

The Pregnant and/or Parenting Program provides supportive services and living maintenance to pregnant and/or parenting youth in care. Non-custodial parenting youth shall receive support services that promote and enhance their awareness and positive parenting engagement with their children. The Department recognizes that custodial and non-custodial parenting youth and their children are a family, and this program is designed to ensure that their role and responsibility as parents

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 24, 2020 – PT 2020.15

are respected and supported through a comprehensive array of services. (See **Procedures 302.Appendix J, Pregnant and/or Parenting Program.**)

7) **Employment / Job Training / Apprenticeship Incentive Program (EIP)**

The Employment / Job Training / Apprenticeship Incentive Program provides supplemental services and a cash grant to youth and young adults who meet eligibility requirements. The youth must be employed and working a minimum of 20 hours per week (or 80 hours per month), be engaged in an approved job training program or enrolled in an approved apprenticeship program. The EIP is designed to provide financial and supplemental services to help youth and young adults gain marketable skills through on-the-job work experience, through job training programs or through an approved apprenticeship program. (See **Procedures 302.Appendix F, Employment Incentive Program.**)

8) **Lincoln's Challenge Program**

The Illinois National Guard's Lincoln's Challenge Program is a voluntary, federally funded youth program for 16 to 18 years old at-risk youth. This program is designed to offer its students a variety of educational and vocational opportunities as well as the necessary life skills to be a successful member of their community, work and school. This is a 17-month, two-phased military modeled training program. Information and applications for the program can be obtained by calling 800-851-2166 or at www.lincolnschallengeacademy.org. Applications must be received 30 days prior to the class start date.

9) **Job Corps**

The Job Corps is a voluntary, residential education and training program for disadvantaged youth between the ages of 16 and 24. There are 110 Job Corps centers throughout the United States, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. The program offers students the opportunity to enroll in basic education and GED classes while they receive vocational training. Program information can be obtained by calling 312-596-5470 or at www.jobcorps.gov.

g) **DCFS Website**

The Department's website (www2.illinois.gov/DCFS) provides information on Department programs and services for older youth under the "Brighter Futures" tab on the homepage.

h) **Youth Advisory Boards**

The Regional and Statewide Youth Advisory Boards are comprised of youth, ages 14 to 21, who have received or are currently receiving services from the Department. Youth on these boards advise the Director about program issues that relate to youth in care. Information concerning Youth Advisory Boards may be obtained by calling the DCFS Youth Hotline at 866-459-6884 (866-IL YOUTH) or at the Department's website (www2.illinois.gov/DCFS).

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 24, 2020 – PT 2020.15

i) National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD)

1) Description

In 1999, Congress passed Public Law 106-169, establishing the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP), amending section 477 of the Social Security Act. This law expanded state funding to carry out programs to help youth transition from foster care to self-sufficiency. The law also requires the federal Administration for Children and Families (ACF) to develop a data collection system to track independent living services that states provide to youth and develop outcomes to measure states' success in preparing youth for independence. The law requires ACF to impose a penalty of between 1 and 5 percent of a state's annual Chafee allotment for any state that does not comply with reporting requirements.

To meet the mandate, ACF published a rule in the Federal Register on February 26, 2008. The rule establishes the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) requiring states to conduct client-specific data collection activities on an ongoing basis.

The purpose of NYTD is to measure the effectiveness of providing independent living services to youth by measuring outcomes for youth who have aged out of care.

2) NYTD Requirements

The NYTD regulation identifies three populations that are separate, but not mutually exclusive. Together, these three populations comprise the reporting population.

NYTD requires that states report to ACF all youth who receive at least one independent living skills service paid for, or provided by, the Chafee-funded agency (DCFS). This is the "Served Population." NYTD requires that the following 14 independent living skills services be reported:

- **Independent Living Needs Assessment.** An independent living needs assessment is a systematic procedure to identify youth's basic skills, emotional, and social capabilities, strengths, and needs to match youth with appropriate independent living services. An independent living needs assessment may address knowledge of basic living skills, goal setting, task completion, and transitional living needs. These procedures require youth to complete the Casey Life Skills Assessment (CLSA) at age 14, 16, and 6 months prior to discharge. The Permanency Worker shall indicate the names of youth who were given a CLSA during the report month and the date the assessment was given.
- **Academic Support.** Academic supports are services designed to help youth complete high school or obtain a General Educational Development (GED) credential. Such services include the following: academic counseling;

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 24, 2020 – PT 2020.15

preparation for a GED, including assistance in applying for or studying for a GED exam; tutoring; help with homework; study skills training; literacy training; and help accessing educational resources. Academic support does not include youth's general attendance in high school. The Permanency Worker shall indicate the names of youth who received any of these described academic supports during the report month and the dates of those services.

- **Post-Secondary Educational Support.** Post-secondary educational supports are services designed to help youth enter or complete a post-secondary education and include the following: classes for test preparation, such as the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT); counseling about college; information about financial aid and scholarships; help completing college or loan applications; or tutoring while in college. The Permanency Worker shall indicate the names of youth who received post-secondary educational supports during the report month and the dates of those services.
- **Career Preparation.** Career preparation services focus on developing youth's ability to find, apply for, and retain appropriate employment. Career preparation includes the following types of instruction and support services: vocational and career assessment, including career exploration and planning, guidance in setting and assessing vocational and career interests and skills, and help in matching interests and abilities with vocational goals; job seeking and job placement support, including identifying potential employers, writing resumes, completing job applications, developing interview skills, job shadowing, receiving job referrals, using career resource libraries, understanding employee benefits coverage, and securing work permits; retention support, including job coaching; learning how to work with employers and other employees; understanding workplace values such as timeliness and appearance; and understanding authority and customer relationships. The Permanency Worker shall indicate the names of youth who received career preparation services during the report month and the dates of those services.
- **Employment Programs or Vocational Training.** Employment programs and vocational training are designed to build youth's skills for a specific trade, vocation, or career through classes or on-site training. Employment programs include youth participation in an apprenticeship, internship, or summer employment programs and do not include summer or after-school jobs secured by youth alone. Vocational training includes youth's participation in vocational or trade programs and the receipt of training in occupational classes for such skills as cosmetology, auto mechanics, building trades, nursing, computer science, and other current or emerging employment sectors. The Permanency Worker shall indicate the names of youth who attended an employment program or received vocational training during the report month and the dates of those services.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 24, 2020 – PT 2020.15

- **Budget and Financial Management.** Budget and financial management assistance includes the following types of training and practice: living within a budget; opening and using a checking and savings account; balancing a checkbook; developing consumer awareness and smart shopping skills; accessing information about credit, loans and taxes; and filling out tax forms. The Permanency Worker shall indicate the names of youth who received budget and financial management assistance during the report month and the dates of those services.
- **Housing Education and Home Management Training.** Housing education includes assistance or training in locating and maintaining housing, including filling out a rental application and acquiring a lease, handling security deposits and utilities, understanding practices for keeping a healthy and safe home, understanding tenants' rights and responsibilities, and handling landlord complaints. Home management includes instruction in food preparation, laundry, housekeeping, living cooperatively, meal planning, grocery shopping and basic maintenance and repairs. The Permanency Worker shall indicate the names of youth who received housing education or home management training during the report month and the dates of those services.
- **Health Education and Risk Prevention.** Health education and risk prevention includes providing information about: hygiene, nutrition, fitness and exercise, and first aid; medical and dental care benefits, health care resources and insurance, prenatal care and maintaining personal medical records; sex education, abstinence education, and HIV prevention, including education and information about sexual development, sexuality, and gender identity, pregnancy prevention and family planning, and sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS; substance use disorder prevention and intervention, including education information about the effects and consequences of substance use (alcohol, drugs, tobacco) and substance avoidance and intervention. Health education and risk prevention does not include actual receipt of direct medical care or substance abuse treatment. The Permanency Worker shall indicate the names of youth who received these services during the report month and the dates of the services.
- **Family Support and Healthy Marriage Education.** Such services include education and information about safe and stable families, healthy marriages, spousal communication, parenting, responsible fatherhood, childcare skills, teen parenting, and domestic/intimate partner and family violence prevention. The Permanency Worker shall indicate the names of youth who received these types of services during the report month and the dates of the services.
- **Mentoring.** Mentoring means that youth have been matched with a screened and training adult for a one-on-one relationship that involves the two meeting on a regular basis. Mentoring can be short-term, but it may also support the development of a long-term relationship. While youth often are connected to adult role models through school, work, or family, this service category only

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 24, 2020 – PT 2020.15

includes a mentor relationship that has been facilitated, paid for or provided by the State or private agency, and its staff. The Permanency Worker shall indicate the names of youth who received these described mentoring services during the report month and the dates of those services.

- **Supervised Independent Living.** Supervised independent living means that youth are living independently under a supervised arrangement that is paid for or provided by the Department. Youth in supervised independent living are not supervised 24 hours a day by an adult and often are provided with increased responsibilities, such as paying bills, assuming leases, and working with a landlord, while under the supervision of an adult. The Permanency Worker shall indicate the names of youth who were living in a supervised independent living setting during the report month and the dates of service.
- **Room and Board Financial Assistance.** Room and board financial assistance is a payment for room and board, including rent deposits, utilities, and other household start-up expenses. The Permanency Worker shall indicate the names of youth who received financial assistance for room and board during the report month, the amount of funds provided, and the dates of service.
- **Education Financial Assistance.** Education financial assistance is a payment for education or training, including allowances to purchase textbooks, uniforms, computers, and other educational supplies; tuition assistance; scholarships; payment for educational preparation and support services (i.e., tutoring), and payment for GED and other educational tests. This financial assistance also includes vouchers for tuition or vocational education, or tuition waiver programs paid for or provided by the Department. The Permanency Worker shall indicate the names of youth who received education financial assistance during the report month and the dates of service.
- **Other Financial Assistance.** Other financial assistance includes any other payments made or provided to help youth live independently. The Permanency Worker shall indicate the names of youth who received other financial assistance during the report month and the dates of services. The Permanency Worker shall either choose what type of assistance was provided from the selections provided or choose “other” and describe the assistance provided, including the monetary value.

Once every three years the Department must collect outcome information on all youth who are in care on or within 45 days of their 17th birthday. These youth must complete a **CFS 2030-1, NYTD Baseline Survey**. From this “Baseline Population,” a sample of youth will be drawn by the federal Administration on Children and Families who will constitute the “Follow-Up” Population.

The Department must locate the “Follow-Up Population” within the reporting period of their 19th and 21st birthdays to collect outcome information. The goal is for these youth to again complete an outcome survey.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 24, 2020 – PT 2020.15

The surveys for both baseline and follow-up populations seek information about the following outcomes:

- Financial self-sufficiency;
- Experience with homelessness;
- Educational attainment;
- Positive adult connections;
- High risk behavior; and
- Access to health insurance.

States have implemented these standards and have collected data since October 1, 2010.

3) Permanency Worker Responsibilities

A) Reporting of Services for the Served Population

Permanency Workers must report any independent living services that are delivered to youth or that are arranged for youth and delivered by another person/entity. These services shall be entered in SACWIS within 30 days of service delivery date.

B) Completing Outcome Survey for Baseline Population

Every third year, youth who are in care on or within 45 days of their 17th birthday must complete the **CFS 2030-1, NYTD Baseline Survey**. The Permanency Worker for each youth must ensure this mandate is met. The youth can complete the **CFS 2030-1** online, via email or in person at the Permanency Worker's office or the youth's residence. The **CFS 2030-1** is available on the Templates Drive and the Department's website (www2.illinois.gov/DCFS).

C) Completing Outcome Survey for Follow-Up Population

Youth from the Baseline Population who are designated by the Administration on Children and Families as the Follow-Up Population are required to complete the **CFS 2030-2, NYTD Follow-up Survey for 19-21 Year Old Youth**, at ages 19 and 21. For those youth still under legal guardianship of the Department, the Permanency Worker must ensure this requirement is met. The youth can complete the **CFS 2030-1** online, via email or in person at the Permanency Worker's office or the youth's residence. The **CFS 2030-2** is also available on the Templates Drive and the Department's website (www2.illinois.gov/DCFS).

4) Questions / Additional Assistance

Additional information regarding NYTD, including frequently asked questions (FAQs), is available on the NYTD link on the DCFS D-Net homepage. Questions or concerns can also be emailed to DCFS.NYTD@illinois.gov.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 24, 2020 – PT 2020.15

j) Release of Guardianship

The permanency goal of independence is achieved when a) the youth reaches 21 years of age (unless otherwise ordered by the court), or b) is an emancipated minor under the Emancipation of Mature Minors Act, and, in the Permanency Worker and supervisor's judgment, the youth is functioning successfully on his or her own. A youth's lack of cooperation with the Permanency Worker or *"services provided by the Department...shall not by itself be considered sufficient evidence that the [youth] is prepared to live independently and that it is in the best interest of the [youth] to terminate [guardianship]. [705 ILCS 405/2-31]*

In most instances, the youth will be employed, enrolled in a job training or educational program, and have financial support or income from an outside source, and custody or guardianship has been terminated and case closure is planned. (See **Procedures 306, Service Termination.**)

At a minimum, the Permanency Worker must review the **CFS 2032-1, Youth Driven Transition Plan (YDTP)**, or for youth in TLP or ILO, the transition plan required of those programs, with the youth 90 days prior to discharge and updated/revised as necessary or directed by the youth. This review should include discussions concerning the youth's employment and/or educational opportunities, job resume, housing, health care, counseling, health and life insurance, information on use of community resources, reference letters and a list of emergency contact persons.

The Permanency Worker must also assist the youth in obtaining or compiling the documents necessary to function as an independent adult. These documents must be identified and obtained prior to the closure of the youth's case and termination of guardianship. [20 ILCS 505/35.10] The required documents include, but are not limited to:

- Social Security card;
- Driver's license and/or State-Issued Identification Card. At 16 years of age, each youth should have a State of Illinois Identification Card or a driver's license;
- Medical records and documentation, including but not limited to:
 - Health Passport;
 - Dental records;
 - Immunization records;
 - Name and contact information for all current medical, dental and mental health providers working with the youth, and clinics used;
 - Name and contact information for OB/GYN, when applicable;
 - Education on Healthcare Power of Attorney, including signed certification on having received information and education regarding health care options;
- Certified copy of birth certificate;
- Documents and information on the youth's religious background;

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 24, 2020 – PT 2020.15

- Voter registration card;
- U.S. documentation of immigration, citizenship or naturalization, if applicable;
- Death certificate(s) of parent(s), if parent(s) is deceased;
- Medicaid card or other health eligibility documentation;
- Life book or compilation of personal history and photographs;
- List of known relatives, with relationships, addresses, telephone numbers and other contact information, with the permission of the relative;
- Copy of Court Order for Case Closure;
- Resume;
- List of placements while in care;
- Educational records, including list of schools attended, and transcript, high school diploma or high school equivalency certificate; and
- List of community resources with self-referral information, including Medicaid, WIC, TANF, SSI, and the Midwest Adoption Center for search and reunion services for former youth in care, whether or not they were adopted (phone: 847-298-9096; website: info@macadopt.org; email: mac@macadopt.org); and the Illinois Chapter of Foster Care Alumni of America (<https://fostercarealumni.org/illinois-chapter>).

Many of these documents should already be in the youth's or family's record. When a listed document is not in the record, the Permanency Worker shall assist the youth in obtaining it. When each listed document is provided to a youth, or when the Permanency Worker verifies that the youth obtained a listed document independently, the Permanency Worker shall note that information in a case note or contact note. The Permanency Worker should ask to make copies of any documents the youth obtains independently to include in the youth's record.

It is important to keep a record of the documents identified, obtained or provided under this section. Failure to make reasonable efforts to assist a youth over 18 years of age in obtaining these listed documents may result in a court finding that prolongs guardianship, when transition out of care is the desired outcome. Section 2-31 of the Juvenile Court Act states:

It shall not be in the [youth's] best interest to terminate wardship of a [youth] over the age of 18 who is in the guardianship of the Department...if the Department has not made reasonable efforts to ensure that the [youth] has documents necessary for adult living as provided in Section 35.10 of the Children and Family Services Act. [705 ILCS 405/2-31]

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT
January 31, 2024 – PT 2024.02

Procedures 302.Appendix N – Transition Planning for Adolescents in Care with Developmental Disabilities

The purpose of Appendix N is to provide guidance to staff regarding effective planning for adolescent youth in care who have developmental disabilities, as they transition from the child welfare system to adulthood. Youth in care with developmental disabilities require careful planning and may require adult supportive services and/or an adult guardian.

a) Definitions and Terms

“Adult Guardian” refers to a person or entity appointed by a probate court to assume personal responsibility, financial responsibility, or both for an adult with a disability.

“Adult Guardianship” involves the process of filing a petition in probate court to obtain a court order granting a person or entity legal authority over a disabled adult who has been declared incompetent due to the inability to make safe and sound decisions regarding his or her person or property.

“Developmental Disability” means a disability which is attributable to (a) intellectual disability, cerebral palsy, epilepsy or autism; or to (b) any other condition which results in impairment similar to that caused by intellectual disability and which requires services similar to those required by persons with intellectual disabilities. Such disability must originate before the age of 18 years, be expected to continue indefinitely, and constitute a substantial disability. [755 ILCS 5/11a-1]

“Developmental Disability Services” refers to an array of community-based supports and residential services designed to enable individuals with developmental disabilities to reside in their own homes whenever possible, and to achieve their maximum potential for independence and self-sufficiency. Usually the full-scale IQ must be below 70 to qualify for these services.

“Division of Developmental Disabilities” or “DDD” refers to a division within the Department of Human Services (DHS) that determines whether an individual is able to receive supportive services as an adult.

Division of Mental Health or “DMH” refers to a division within DHS responsible for assuring access to public-funded mental health services for those who are diagnosed with a mental illness or emotional disturbance and an impaired level of functioning based on a mental health assessment.

“Independent Service Coordination Agency” or “ISC” refers to a community agency under contract with the Department of Human Services to provide information, referral and coordination of services to person(s) with developmental disabilities and their families.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT
January 31, 2024 – PT 2024.02

“Intellectual Disability”, formerly known as “mental retardation”, means a significantly sub-average general intellectual functioning existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior, which manifest before the age of 18 years. Significantly sub-average is defined as an intelligence quotient (IQ) of 70 or below on standardized measures of intelligence. This limit could be extended upward depending on the reliability of the intelligence test used.

b) SACWIS System Codes

It is essential that child welfare staff correctly enter disability codes on the **CFS 1410, Registration/Case Opening** so that youth with disabilities are identified and included in service planning. The following are the disability codes that can be selected in the DCFS SACWIS system to identify a developmental disability:

| Persons with Disabilities | Codes |
|--|--------------|
| Adult with Mental Disorder | 1 |
| Autism Spectrum Disorder | 2 |
| Cerebral Palsy | 4 |
| Deaf | 6 |
| Deaf/Blind | 7 |
| Developmentally Disabled/Substance Abuse | 8 |
| Developmentally Disabled/Child in Need of Mental Health Services | 9 |
| Developmental Disability/Mental Disorder (Adult) | 10 |
| Developmentally Delayed – this is an educational term | 11 |
| Mild Intellectual Disability | 12 |
| Moderate Intellectual Disability | 13 |
| Severe Intellectual Disability | 14 |
| Profound Intellectual Disability | 15 |
| Intellectual Disability /Physically Disabled | 17 |
| Medically Complex/Developmentally Disabled | 18 |
| Epilepsy | 19 |
| Hard of Hearing/Hearing Impaired | 20 |
| Traumatic Brain Injury | 27 |
| Asperger’s Disorder | 34 |
| Pervasive Developmental Disorder | 35 |
| Bipolar Disorder | 40 |
| Down Syndrome | 41 |

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT
January 31, 2024 – PT 2024.02

c) Transition Planning

Effective transition planning for a youth in care with a developmental disability begins at age 15.5 years of age when the Permanency Worker begins gathering assessments and documentation, which identify the youth's ability and needs. A developmental disability must be clearly documented in the Individual Education Plan (IEP), psychological evaluation, and in the SACWIS system. At minimum, for purposes of transition planning, a psychological evaluation should include a full-scale IQ, adaptive functioning, a narrative on the interplay between the IQ subtests and the composite adaptive functioning scores, and capacity for independent living. A developmental disability must manifest before the age of 18 to qualify for adult services through DHS. Therefore, it is critical for the Permanency Worker to secure appropriate assessments to document an adolescent's level of functioning and existence of any developmental disability.

If a youth in care also has been diagnosed with a chronic mental illness, then a determination must be made whether the primary disability code or the chronic mental illness will be used for purpose of transition planning. DMH provides a variety of services for individuals with chronic mental illness. Refer to the following website to locate and access services through the Department of Mental Health:
<http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=29735>

Case planning for youth in care with developmental disabilities includes education and training that lead to a reduced need for adult services and increased capacity for independent living, economic self-sufficiency, and community integration. Skill areas include, but are not limited to: personal care; simple food preparation; safety precaution; use of public transportation; basic money management; and vocational training and placement.

Case plans should also outline tasks for the Permanency Worker to complete in order to ensure a youth in care with a developmental disability receives appropriate adult services, such as: ensuring the youth is added to the Prioritization of Urgency of Need for Services (PUNS) list; applying for Supplemental Security Income (SSI); conducting a diligent search for relatives and assessing relatives to serve as the adult guardian; submit referrals for placement in the appropriate adult placement setting; and submitting necessary documentation to the DCFS Office of Legal Services to ensure an adult guardian is secured for the youth prior to case closure. Permanency Workers are expected to be active in school planning for youth in care with developmental disabilities. Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) also have a component of transition planning.

1) Preparing for Eligibility and Transition into the Adult System

When a youth in care with an intellectual disability reaches 17.5 years of age, the Permanency Worker is responsible for contacting the Transition to Adult Services Program (TAS) to initiate placing the youth on the DCFS Transition List. To initiate the process of adding a youth in care to the Transition List, the Permanency Worker must complete a **CFS 418-L, Pre-Screen for DCFS Youth in Care with**

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT
January 31, 2024 – PT 2024.02

Intellectual Disabilities and submit the form and a current psychological evaluation to the [DCFS.TransitionToAdultServicesDevelopmentalDisabilities](#) mailbox.

The **CFS 418-L** is reviewed by the TAS Program. If the youth is likely to be found eligible for DHS/DDD services, the youth will be placed on the Transition List. Placement on the Transition List does not guarantee future eligibility for DHS/DDD services. A youth in care must be on the Transition List to receive DHS/DDD services as an adult.

2) Screening for Adult Services

Once the youth in care has been placed on the Transition List, the Permanency Worker will be given information to make a referral to the Independent Service Coordination (ISC) agency. All requests for adult services for individuals with developmental disabilities must be processed through the ISC agency. The ISC agency determines eligibility for adult services. The worker is responsible for ensuring the youth is available for appointments, if requested. The following list is the minimally required documentation by ISC/DHS:

- Copy of current Medicaid Card (both sides);
- Copy of Social Security Card;
- Copy of Guardianship Verification (Disposition Order);
- Copy of Current Individualized Education Plan (IEP);
- Current Multidisciplinary Conference; from school and/or residential program (Example: Quarterly Staffing, Treatment Plan, Service Plan);
- Current Psychological Evaluation (completed within last three years) The psychological evaluation must be signed by the clinical psychologist with their license number included. If there is a diagnosis of intellectual disability, an Adaptive Behavioral Assessment **MUST** be completed with the psychological evaluation;
- Current Psychiatric Evaluation and/or Psycho-Social Evaluation; (completed within last six months under some circumstances)
Note: The evaluation must be signed by a licensed psychiatrist with their license number included;
- Mental Health Assessment;
- Inventory for Client and Agency Planning (ICAP);
- DCFS Individualized Service Plan (ISP);
- Names of Potential Adult Guardians (if indicated);
- Medication List; (completed within last 90 days) current prescribed medication with dosage and time. This must be completed and signed by a physician or licensed RN;
- Medical History; (completed within last 90 days). This must be completed and signed by a physician or licensed RN; and
- Physical Exam; (completed within last 12 months). This must be completed and signed by a physician or licensed RN.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT
January 31, 2024 – PT 2024.02

An eligibility assessment for adult services will be conducted by the ISC worker and the worker should receive a determination of eligibility in writing. If the youth in care is determined to be eligible for DHS/DDD services, then the Permanency Worker will be provided with information regarding available services, which are appropriate to meet the youth's needs. Service options may include, 24-hour Community Integrated Living Arrangements (CILA), intermittent CILAs, Host home, and home-based services. For some individuals, placement in an Intermediate Care Facility (ICF/DD) or State Operated Developmental Centers (SODC) may be considered. If a youth in care is determined to be eligible for adult services, a source of funding is required for the services.

When a youth in care has a developmental disability, the Permanency Worker is responsible for applying for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) by the time the youth in care attains 18 years of age. DCFS has contracted with an agency to submit applications for SSI on behalf of DCFS the youth in care. The agency may decline to accept a referral after the youth attains the age of 20 years and 6 months of age. In the event the agency declines a referral, the Permanency Worker is responsible for submitting an application for SSI, as well as provide all necessary documents to: <https://www.ssa.gov/benefits/disability/>. Contact the following mailbox with any questions about the referral process for SSI: DCFS.SSIReferral@illinois.gov

If a youth in care is determined to be ineligible for adult services, the Permanency Worker should immediately receive a denial letter, which contains a list of reasons for the denial. Upon receipt of a denial letter, the Permanency Worker should contact the TAS Program to review the decision. If the TAS Program determines the denial of adult services should be appealed, the TAS Program will assist the Permanency Worker with the appeal process. An appeal must be filed within 10 working days of the denial letter being issued by the ISC agency/DHS.

3) Transition to the Adult Services

The ISC agency, the Permanency Worker, and the TAS Program are co-responsible for providing any necessary referral information to the prospective adult service providers, in order to secure services prior to the youth's 21st birthday.

If an adult provider has an opening and is likely able to meet the individual's needs, an interview will be scheduled and an individualized visitation plan developed. If the youth in care, adult service provider, and treatment team all agree to the placement, the adult service provider will complete a rate packet to submit to DHS for approval.

Prior to the transfer of a youth in care to their adult placement, or age 21, whichever occurs first, the Permanency Worker is responsible for ensuring an application is submitted to the DCFS Technical Support Unit, as well as Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) to establish adult Medicaid enrollment. An award letter will not be issued until adult Medicaid is in place. Once an award letter is issued by DHS, then the youth can begin to receive adult services.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT
January 31, 2024 – PT 2024.02

When a youth in care transitions to his/her adult service provider, a **CFS 906-1-E Placement-Payment Authorization Form** must be completed and submitted to the Division of Budget and Finance with the new placement information. Procedure 302, Appendix M provides guidance on securing transition funds for youth with developmental disabilities as they age out of DCFS care. The juvenile court case will close when the DCFS youth in care attains the age of 21, as wardship cannot extend beyond an individual's 21st birthday. The child welfare case remains open in SACWIS/CYCIS until the Permanency Worker can ensure that adult guardianship has been completed (if needed), the youth is stable in an adult placement, and funding responsibility has been transferred to a source other than DCFS.

Note: Absent a court order from the juvenile court authorizing the DCFS Guardianship Administrator to consent beyond the youth's 18th birthday, the youth provides his/her own consent.

d) Other Assistance Programs

There are other assistance programs that the youth may qualify for to assist the adolescents on transitioning out of DCFS care and some of these programs are as follow:

- Countdown to 21 (C21);
- Youth Housing Assistance Program;
- YCAP Transition;
- YCAP Crisis; and
- Youth Cash Assistance Program (YCAP).

Note: For a complete list of other assistance programs, see **Procedures 302.Appendix M, Transition Planning for Adolescents** for the list of programs, requirements and eligibility.

e) Securing an Adult Guardian

- 1) Not all persons with developmental disabilities require an adult guardian. Many can make their own legal decisions. Others can function in the community with supports from family, friends, former foster parents, or other community members and may require a payee to manage their SSI. The treatment team will assist the Permanency Worker in determining the appropriate level of support needed as the youth with disabilities transitions out of DCFS care.

- 2) Identifying a Suitable Guardian

If an adult guardian is needed for an individual with a developmental disability, the proposed guardian may be a private citizen, such as a family member, friend, current or former foster parent(s), etc. All immediate adult family members of the

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT
January 31, 2024 – PT 2024.02

youth with a disability should be asked by the Permanency Worker to consider serving as the adult guardian, and background checks should be completed on all individuals willing to become the guardian of a disabled adult. The Permanency Worker is responsible for completing the following tasks when a potential private individual has been identified to serve as the adult guardian:

A) Background Check Required

The person selected to serve as adult guardian will be asked to authorize a Person Searches and LEADS check with the understanding that without these checks the Department will be unable to determine their suitability. The individual is required to sign a Request for LEADS/CANTS Check.

A person is qualified to act as a guardian of the person and as guardian of the estate of a disabled person if the court finds that the proposed guardian can provide an active and suitable program of guardianship for the disabled person and that the proposed guardian:

- has attained the age of 18 years;
- is a resident of the United States;
- is not of unsound mind;
- is not an adjudicated disabled person as defined in the Probate Act of 1975; and
- has not been convicted of a felony. [755 ILCS 5/11a-5]

B) Other Criteria for Consideration

In addition to statutory requirements and safety, other factors to consider in determining the suitability of a proposed adult guardian for a youth in care with developmental disabilities should include, but are not limited to:

- i) The wishes of the youth in care with the developmental disability;
- ii) The length of time the individual has known the youth and the nature of the relationship;
- iii) Whether the individual is likely to exert undue influence or pressure on the youth rather than permit him or her to exercise independence and judgment to the maximum extent to which the youth is capable;
- iv) Whether the individual demonstrates an understanding of any special needs that the youth might have because of his or her developmental disability;

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT
January 31, 2024 – PT 2024.02

- v) Whether the person can communicate with the youth in their preferred mode of communication and/or language;
- vi) Whether the individual has an observable or diagnosed illness, disability or other impairment (including substance/alcohol dependency or abuse) which might interfere with their ability to meet the needs of the youth;
- vii) Whether the person demonstrates a willingness to work with the youth, siblings or other family members and/or community agencies to meet any special needs the youth might have;
- viii) Whether there are members of the individual's household who might pose a threat to the person with a disability;
- ix) Whether the individual attended any DCFS or CILA meetings regarding youth;
- x) Whether the individual will follow the expert clinical and placement recommendations for this youth now, and in the future;
- xi) Whether the individual understands the responsibilities and duties of being an adult guardian, including, but not limited to, making legal decisions for the youth and giving medical consent, as well as, complying with all statutory requirements;
- xii) Whether the individual understands that he/she must follow the orders of the probate court;
- xiii) Whether the individual understands that he/she must file a detailed written report with the Probate court each year, using the court's form; and
- xiv) Whether the individual understands that he/she may not make any changes, including, but not limited to changing the youth's placement and/or primary treatment without permission from the probate court.

It may be necessary to assess several potential guardians before making a recommendation to probate court. A written record shall be maintained of all persons considered and the reason(s) individuals were determined unsuitable. Once the Permanency Worker has identified and assessed a proposed guardian for a youth in care with developmental disabilities, the Permanency Worker must ask the DCFS Guardian's Attorney or DCFS Regional Counsel to file a petition in probate court to appoint the proposed

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT
January 31, 2024 – PT 2024.02

private individual to serve as the adult guardian. To do so, the Permanency Worker will be required to submit a completed adult guardianship packet to the DCFS Guardian's Attorney or DCFS Regional Counsel.

Note: The reason a youth came into care and/or termination of parental rights are not sufficient reasons alone to rule out a biological parent from being considered to serve as an adult guardian.

f) Office of the Public Guardian

The Office of the Public Guardian should be explored as the potential adult guardian when the youth has an estate of more than \$25,000. The Office of Public Guardian then manages the estate and is responsible for providing the appropriate accountings to the Probate Court each year. If the youth has such an estate, the Permanency Worker should contact the DCFS Office of Guardian to obtain information about the exact nature and extent of the estate and then refer the youth to the Office of Public Guardian.

g) Office of the State Guardian

The Office of the State Guardian (OSG), a statewide division of the Guardianship and Advocacy Commission may serve as guardian of the person (and/or guardian of the estate of an individual, when the value of the estate is less than \$25,000) when appointed by a court under the Probate Act. By statute, the Office of State Guardian is the “guardian of last resort” and can assume its guardianship role only when no private individual is available to function as guardian. The Office of State Guardian may also recommend alternatives to guardianship (such as protective payee or power of attorney) when it is felt that guardianship is not needed.

1) Referral to OSG

The Office of the State Guardian requires an application and has the discretion to accept or decline applications for guardian of adults with disabilities, particularly when there are individuals who are capable and willing to become the guardian. In the event of a referral to the Office of the State Guardian, it may also be necessary to explain why individuals were ruled out to serve as an adult guardian.

A referral to the Office of State Guardian can be made online via their website:
<https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/gac/OSG/Pages/OnlineIntakeForm.aspx>

The OSG Referral/Client Status Form requires complete information, including:

- Information on relatives and other interested parties;
- Approximate value of personal property, real estate and other income;
- Basis for Guardianship;
- Educational – Vocational Programs; and
- Guardianship and Decision Making

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT
January 31, 2024 – PT 2024.02

The OSG will review the referral and notify the Permanency Worker of its decision in writing. If OSG determines they will accept appointment to serve as the adult guardian for a youth in care with developmental disabilities, the Permanency Worker must ask the DCFS Guardian's Attorney or DCFS Regional Counsel to file a petition in probate court to appoint OSG as the adult for the youth in care. To do so, the Permanency Worker will be required to submit a completed adult guardianship packet to the DCFS Guardian's Attorney or DCFS Regional Counsel.

If the OSG determines that adult guardianship is not appropriate or necessary, or that OSG is not best suited to serve as guardian for the youth, the OSG will notify the Permanency Worker of the reasons for that conclusion.

2) Going to Probate Court

Guardianship of an adult with a disability requires filing a petition in the probate court of the county in which the youth in care with a disability resides. The DCFS Guardian's attorney will file petitions in Cook County. For all other counties, the local DCFS Regional Counsel will file the petition in the county where the youth resides. Generally, the petition should be filed no later than the date the youth reaches the age of 20 years old to allow time for the court proceeding to conclude before the youth reaches age 21. However, if all other steps towards adult guardianship have been completed, a petition for an adult guardianship may be filed at any time after the youth is 18) years old.

The Permanency Worker must provide certain background information to the DCFS Guardian's attorney or DCFS Regional Counsel before a petition for an adult guardian can be prepared and filed. The completed adult guardianship referral packet includes:

A) Physician's Report

The Permanency Worker is responsible for securing a completed physician's report and mail or deliver the original report to the attorney filing the petition for a youth in care. A petition for the appointment of a guardian of a person with a disability **must** be accompanied by an original, signed, and dated report from a licensed physician who has examined the individual with a disability within three months of the date the petition for guardianship is filed in probate court.

The physician's report attests to the mental and physical condition of the individual, as well as the physician's assessment of the individual's ability to make decisions and function independently. The physician's report must be on the court form prescribed by the county where the youth in care resides and where the petition will be filed.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT
January 31, 2024 – PT 2024.02

The physician's report should be completed by a physician who has some familiarity with the youth with a disability since the report calls for an opinion as to the youth's ability to function independently. A licensed medical doctor should complete the report if the disability is physical (cerebral palsy, epilepsy, quadriplegia). A licensed psychiatrist should complete the form if the adult suffers from a developmental disability (intellectual disability, autism, schizophrenia, psychosis). The psychiatrist must find the youth in care totally incapable of handling his/her personal affairs or estate.

B) Other Required Documentation

- i) **Proposed Guardian:** On agency letterhead, send the proposed guardian's name, address, phone number and email address, date of birth, occupation, and a description of his/her relationship with the youth.
- ii) **CANTS and LEADS:** If the proposed guardian is a private citizen, run CANTS and LEADS checks on him or her, and on every adult living in the immediate household. Provide a copy of the results to the attorney. The probate Judge must be able to verify that the proposed guardian has not been convicted of a felony.
- iii) **Office of the State Guardian:** As a last resort, if no private individual is available to act as guardian, the worker is responsible for contacting the Office of the State Guardian, Intake Division, at (708) 338-7500 and proving all information request for OSG to accept the referral. The Office of State Guardian must accept or decline guardianship in a written communication to the worker.
- iv) **Birth Certificate:** A copy of the DCFS youth in care's birth certificate.
- v) **Placement Letter:** Provide the name and address of the adult placement, where the youth **resides**, along with name, address, and telephone number of a contact person on the youth's case. The disabled adult must be served by the Sheriff with a summons to appear in court. If the disabled adult is not personally served with the Summons, the hearing cannot proceed.
- vi) **Adult Relative List:** List the names, addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses of all immediate (spouse, parents, adult siblings). If the address is unknown, conduct a diligent search. Whether the disabled adult continues to have contact with their relatives or not, pursuant to the Illinois Probate Act, the attorney filing the petition is required to provide notice of the petition to the immediate adult relatives of the youth in care.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT
January 31, 2024 – PT 2024.02

- vii) **Social History:** Submit a current social history of the youth.
 - viii) **Psychological Evaluation:** Include the most recent psychological/psychiatric evaluation
 - ix) **Service Plan:** Include the current service plan or treatment plan.
 - x) **Current Services:** In your final letter, submit a detailed description of current services provided to the youth, and a detailed description of any adult services to be added.
 - xi) **Funding Verification:** Provide a copy of the award letter issued by DHS indicating adult services have been approved and funding is in place for the disabled adult to receive services. Additional funding sources should also include SSI and Medicaid.
 - xii) **Employment Information:** Identify whether the youth is employed. If so, provide all relevant information, **including, but not limited to:** name of company, address and phone number, rate of pay and frequency, how money is distributed and to whom, etc. Also, indicate whether the youth has any additional sources of income.
 - xiii) **Estate Assets:** Identify and specify (with detail) all assets owned by the youth, including such things as bank accounts, trusts, inheritances, settlement funds, etc. Depending upon the disabled adult's assets, a guardian of the youth's estate may also need to be appointed.
- C) **Appearance at Hearing:** The youth in care and assigned worker must appear in court. If a disabled adult is unable to appear in court due to a complex medical condition or due to a threat to the safety of self or others, please notify the attorney filing the petition to appoint an adult guardian.

h) Questions regarding Appendix N

Questions regarding Appendix N should be directed to the following mailbox:
DCFS.TransitionToAdultServicesDevelopmentalDisabilities@illinois.gov

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

August 22, 2014 – P.T. 2014.16

SECTION 302.APPENDIX O REFERRAL FOR NURSING CONSULTATION SERVICES

a) Diagnoses and Medical Conditions that Are Appropriate for Referral

Referrals for nursing consultation services may be made to the Chief of Nursing Services by the Division of Specialized Care, HealthWorks, Department and purchase of service agency staff for children who have or who are suspected of having special health care needs. Children who have special health care needs are those who have chronic or acute health conditions that require medical supervision or intervention beyond that which is required by children in general. Such conditions include, but are not limited to:

- * Any rare genetic health disorder (e.g., familial dysautonomia, Tay-Sachs)
- * Asthma, moderate persistent or severe persistent
- * Asthma, despite the severity of the condition, with poor control and any of the following circumstances: two emergency room visits within a 12 month period; one hospital admission in a 12 month period; intubation (insertion of a breathing tube); prior admission to an Intensive Care Unit for the treatment of asthma; frequent and consistent absences from school due to asthma attacks; hospitalization or emergency room visit within the past month; any severity of asthma and a cardiopulmonary medical condition
- * Apnea episodes, monitored/current
- * Behavioral/psychological problem and a medical condition (e.g., autism, asthma)
- * Blind or severe vision impairments, such as retinal conditions
- * Bronchopulmonary dysplasia
- * Cerebral palsy
- * Children with multiple psychiatric hospitalizations and/or multiple psychotropic medications
- * Compromised Immune System
- * Deaf or severely hearing impaired
- * Diabetes Type I or II
- * Diseases of any organ (e.g., kidney disease, liver disease, heart disease with the exception of functional heart murmur)
- * Durable medical equipment (e.g., child uses or requires the use a wheelchair, leg brace, apnea monitor)
- * Eating disorders, severe
- * Facial paralysis
- * Failure to thrive
- * Head or facial deformities (e.g., cleft lip, cleft palate, severe burn scars)
- * Hemophilia
- * Hormone deficiencies (e.g., lack of growth hormone)
- * Hydrocephalus with shunts and/or seizures
- * Indwelling catheters or ostomies (e.g., gastronomy tube, jejunostomy tube, tracheostomy, colostomy)
- * Life threatening condition (e.g., brain tumor, cancer, leukemia)
- * Major birth defects leading to physical/developmental impairments
- * Mental retardation/developmental delay or disability and a medical condition (e.g., moderate mental retardation and asthma)

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

August 22, 2014 – P.T. 2014.16

- * Cystic fibrosis
- * Neurofibromatosis
- * Neurological conditions (e.g., nerve, brain, spinal cord)
- * Organ transplant, including pre-transplant
- * Orthopedic conditions, moderate to severe (e.g., bone, muscle, joints)
- * Osteogenesis imperfecta
- * Psychiatric problems that are moderate to severe (e.g., multiple psychiatric hospitalizations and/or psychotropic medications)
- * Quadraplegic, paraplegic, hemiplegic
- * Respiratory problems, moderate to severe that require nebulization and/or suctioning
- * Metabolic disorders, congenital (e.g., phenylketonuria-PKU, galactosemia)
- * Muscular dystrophy
- * Multiple sclerosis
- * Second and third degree burns over 10% of the child's body
- * Seizure disorder
- * Shaken baby syndrome/abusive head trauma
- * Sickle cell anemia, not sickle cell trait
- * Spina Bifida, if it causes moderate to severe impairment
- * Substance exposed infants
- * Technologically dependent, (e.g., ventilator, dialysis, oxygen dependent)
- * Traumatic brain injury-TBI/accidental head trauma
- * Urinary system impairments (e.g., kidney, ureter, bladder, except treatable enuresis)

b) Referral Process

The Chief of Nursing Services has the sole authority to evaluate referrals and authorize nursing services.

Note: The University of Illinois at Chicago, Division of Specialized Care for Children is the Illinois Title V agency that provides care coordination for families and children with special health care needs. The program content and guidelines are located at <http://dscc.uic.edu>.

When an alleged child victim of abuse/neglect is identified by the Child Protection Specialist as having special health care needs, the Child Protection Specialist shall refer the child victim for nursing consultation services no later than 48 hours after case assignment. Additional children residing in the home or who temporarily stay in the home of the alleged perpetrator who have special health care needs and are **not** subjects of the pending investigation, should be added to the investigation as an alleged victim of Allegation 79 Medical Neglect or Allegation 60 Environment Injurious to Health and Welfare, if appropriate.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

August 22, 2014 – P.T. 2014.16

The Permanency Worker and Intact Family Worker must ensure that a child with special health care needs is referred for nursing consultation services during the 45-day assessment period (if a nursing referral has not been submitted by the Child Protection Specialist).

1) Referral Forms

DCFS/POS staff may request consultation from a DCFS Regional Nurse by completing the **CFS 531, DCFS Regional Nurse Referral Form**, and e-mail the completed form with any supporting documentation via Outlook to “**nurseref**” or fax the form to the attention of Child Welfare Associate Specialist at 866-531-1459. Emergency referrals may be made during normal business hours by completing the **CFS 531** and checking “Emergency” in the Reasons for Referral section.

Reasons for emergency referrals include protective custody situations involving children with special health care needs.

Emergency nursing consultations may be requested after hours and on weekends by contacting the Chief of Nursing (312-718-6657).

HealthWorks and private agency staff with access to DCFS Outlook may submit the **CFS 531** with any supporting documentation to “**nurseref**”. Requestors without access to DCFS Outlook must fax the **CFS 531** with any supporting documentation to the Child Welfare Associate Specialists at 866-531-1459. They may not submit the **CFS 531** using the Internet or the agency’s website.

2) Notification Authorizing or Denying Nursing Consultation Services

- a) For all emergency referrals, notification of acceptance or denial of consultation services from the DCFS Regional Nurse will be provided to the referring worker within 12 hours after receipt of the referral by the Chief of Nursing Services.
- b) For all non-emergency referrals, notification of acceptance or denial of consultation services from the DCFS Regional Nurse will be provided to the referring worker within five days after receipt of the referral by the Chief of Nursing Services.

The Chief of Nursing Services may expedite a request for nursing consultation services to accommodate an investigation deadline. However, Child Protection Specialists must ensure that required referrals are made within identified timeframes.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

August 22, 2014 – P.T. 2014.16

c) Nursing Consultation Services to Support Investigation and Casework Activities

With appropriate consent, DCFS Regional Nurses may provide the following consultation/assistance services, after a referral for services is approved by the Chief of Nursing Services:

- 1) Assessment of presenting medical conditions to determine if a child has special health care needs;
- 2) Identification of a child's specific health care needs that must be fulfilled by his or her caregiver/parent;
- 3) Liaison with health care professionals to obtain required medical information;
- 4) Interpretation of a child's treatments and medications, and the effects on the child's condition when medications, medical appointments, or treatments are altered without medical consent;
- 5) Identification of safety issues linked to the child's condition that should be explored with health professionals in order to make a knowledgeable safety assessment;

Note: When nursing consultation services are being provided to a child with special health care needs, the Child Protection Specialist is required to consult with the assigned DCFS Regional Nurse prior to making an unfounded recommendation. The DCFS Regional Nurse may make recommendations concerning the need to review the child's health information, the need to interview additional health related sources or the need to initiate a staffing. The DCFS Regional Nurse's recommendations must be followed prior to discontinuing the investigation.

Note: When an intact family case that involves a child with special health care needs is receiving nursing consultation services, the Intact Family Worker must consult with the DCFS Regional Nurse prior to reducing the frequency of worker/child face-to-face contacts as part of the service termination plan.

- 6) Concurrent visitation with the Child Protection Specialist in the home of the child to assess the caregiver's/parent's knowledge and/or ability to provide for the child's special health care needs. The Chief of Nursing Services will consult with the Child Protection Specialist, the Child Protection Specialist Supervisor and DCFS Regional Nurse to determine the value of a home nursing visit. The DCFS Regional Nurse must receive consent from the Chief of Nursing Services prior to visiting the caregiver's/parent's home with the Child Protection Specialist;
- 7) Assessment of the child's home to determine if it is safely equipped and configured to meet the specific health needs of the child

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

August 22, 2014 – P.T. 2014.16

- 8) Consultation regarding pharmacokinetics/pharmacodynamics and medication compliance issues;
- 9) Liaison with the child's medical providers; and
- 10) Identification of the need for medical consultation services.

d) Protective Custody of Children with Special Health Care Needs

When there is an urgent and immediate necessity to take a child with special health care needs into temporary protective custody, do not delay the course of action until a DCFS Regional Nurse can become involved. However, whenever possible the Child Protection Specialist should consult the DCFS Regional Nurse to plan for the child's safety prior to taking the child into custody. A **CFS 531** must be completed as soon as possible after the child is taken into custody so that the plan for living arrangement/placement takes into consideration all of the relevant and necessary health issues.

1) Transportation of Technology Dependent Children

Children with a tracheostomy or who are ventilator dependent must be transported by an advanced life support ambulance to the nearest acute care facility for evaluation and treatment. If a DCFS Regional Nurse is providing nursing consultation services to the case, the DCFS Regional Nurse will call 911 to arrange for the child's specialized transportation. The child's health care plan must accompany the child to the facility.

2) Transportation of Children Who Are Not Technology Dependent

If a DCFS Regional Nurse is providing nursing consultation services to the case, the Child Protection Specialist and the DCFS Regional Nurse must jointly arrange for transportation that is appropriate for the specific health care needs of the child. The child's health care plan must accompany the child to his or her placement, and the child must receive an initial health screen.

e) Services that Are Not Provided by DCFS Regional Nurses

- 1) DCFS Regional Nurses do not provide a second medical opinion or direct nursing care.
- 2) DCFS Regional Nurses do not provide case management or safety assessment decisions.

f) Authorization to Document in the case file

The Chief of Nursing Services is authorized to grant DCFS Regional Nurses the approval necessary to document consultations and follow-up visits in the case file.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT
August 22, 2014 – P.T. 2014.16

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SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 14, 2009 –P.T. 2009.16

302.Appendix P Food Allergies and Anaphylaxis

This Appendix addresses food allergies in children and the potentially life threatening allergic reactions (“anaphylactic reaction” or “anaphylaxis”) that may result from contact with or ingestion of certain foods. However, it is important to note that substances other than food can also cause anaphylactic reactions. At the end of this Appendix is a list of websites that address food allergies, anaphylaxis, and other substances that cause potentially life threatening allergic reactions. This list is not intended to be exhaustive, but is a good starting place for caseworkers and caregivers to obtain additional information about allergies to food and other substances.

a) Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

1) Do many children have food allergies?

Food allergies affect 8% of children under age three, 6%-8% of school age children and 2.5% of adults. Nationwide, three million children suffer from food allergies. A child with an undiagnosed food allergy may experience his/her first food allergy reaction at school.

According to published studies, allergy prevalence has increased significantly in the last five years. Forty to fifty percent of those persons with a diagnosed food allergy are judged to be at high risk of having an anaphylactic reaction (a life threatening allergic reaction).

2) How do I know if a child has a food allergy?

A food allergy happens when the body reacts against harmless proteins found in foods. The reaction usually happens shortly after a food is eaten. Food allergy reactions can vary from mild to severe. Because there are many things that can be confused with food allergies, it is important to know the difference.

3) What foods tend to cause food allergies?

Food allergies are more common among children than adults. Ninety percent of all food allergy reactions are caused by 8 foods: milk, soy, eggs, wheat, peanuts, tree nuts, fish and shellfish.

Severe, life threatening reactions are more common with allergies to peanuts, tree nuts, shellfish, fish and eggs. These life-threatening reactions are more common in people who also have asthma.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 14, 2009 –P.T. 2009.16

4) **How serious are food allergies?**

Allergic reactions to foods vary and can range from mild to severe life threatening “anaphylactic reactions.” Some children who are very sensitive may react to just touching or inhaling the food or substance. The severity of a reaction is not predictable. A life threatening reaction can occur immediately, within minutes or even hours after exposure to the food or substance.

A child may suffer a cumulative effect from past exposures to a particular food or substance, and his/her reaction may worsen with each subsequent exposure.

5) **Do other allergens (besides food) cause anaphylactic reactions?**

Medications, insect stings, foods and latex most often cause anaphylaxis and anaphylactic reactions.

- **Medications are the leading cause.** Anaphylactic deaths from taking medications are well documented. Common culprits are penicillin and other antibiotics, aspirin and aspirin-related products, muscle relaxants, seizure medications and dyes used during certain procedures such as nuclear imaging. People with allergies or asthma are more likely to have an anaphylactic reaction to shots.
- **Stings from insects** such as bees, wasps, yellow jackets, hornets and fire ants can cause anaphylaxis. Bites from the "kissing bug" and deer fly also cause the reaction. Experts estimate that at least 40 deaths per year are caused by anaphylaxis to insect stings.
- **Intense exercise**, particularly in hot weather, can bring on anaphylaxis. Sometimes this only occurs with exercise after eating celery, shellfish, wheat, peaches or other specific foods to which the person is allergic.

6) **What is an “anaphylactic reaction”?**

An anaphylactic reaction (also called anaphylaxis) is a potentially life threatening medical condition that can occur after exposure to a particular food or substance. The most dangerous symptoms of an anaphylactic reaction include difficulty breathing and a drop in blood pressure or shock. Other symptoms can include flushed skin, rash, swelling of tissues such as lips or joints, stuffy nose, sweating, paleness, panting, nausea, abdominal cramps, rapid pulse, faintness, confusion, wheezing, convulsions and passing out, itching of the mouth and throat, frequent ear infections, hoarseness, cramping of the uterus, and feeling the need to urinate.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 14, 2009 –P.T. 2009.16

An anaphylactic reaction can occur immediately, within minutes or even hours after exposure to the food or substance. For children with known allergies, the onset of any of the symptoms noted above can precede an anaphylactic reaction, and immediate action is required. When these symptoms occur in children who do not have known allergies, the caregiver should be urged to watch the child closely for any further signs of distress.

7) **How is an anaphylactic reaction treated?**

An anaphylactic reaction is usually treated initially with epinephrine, which is a prescription medication. Epinephrine is given to the child by injection using an EpiPen (registered trademark for an autoinjector of epinephrine - a.k.a. adrenaline - used in medicine to treat anaphylactic shock) or similar prescribed device. After injecting epinephrine, the caregiver or responsible adult should call 911 and the child should be transported by ambulance to the nearest hospital emergency room even if the symptoms have begun to disappear.

Since a child can die if epinephrine is withheld during an anaphylactic reaction, caregivers should be told to always give epinephrine to a child having an anaphylactic reaction and to seek immediate medical help.

If a child with a life threatening allergy doesn't have an EpiPen or Ana-kit, the worker should consult with the child's physician immediately.

8) **How can a child's food or other potentially life threatening allergies be addressed while at school?**

At the beginning of each school year (or immediately after the diagnosis of a food or other potentially life threatening allergy), the caseworker shall ensure that the caregiver meets with the school nurse to discuss the child's allergies. The caseworker shall ensure that the child's primary care physician or allergist and the school nurse develop an Individual Health Care Plan that details the preventative steps the school will take to help protect a child with potentially life threatening allergies, and an Emergency Action Plan that details how the school officials will respond when the child faces a potentially life threatening emergency. The caseworker shall also ensure that a **504 Plan (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973)** is developed, if appropriate, with input from the child's primary care physician or allergist that identifies the child's needs while in the school environment and the actions required of school officials to meet those needs. The 504 plan will describe:

- the child's disabling condition;
- the major life function affected by the condition in the school setting;

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 14, 2009 –P.T. 2009.16

- how the major life activity within the school setting is limited; and
- the services to be provided by the school district to meet the needs identified.

The 504 Plan should specify that service provided by the school district will include a medication administration and monitoring program.

The caseworker shall ensure that the 504 Plan is on file with the child's school.

Additional Information on 504 Plans is available at the following website:
http://www.foodallergyinitiative.org/section_home.cfm?section_id=8&sub_section_id=3)

b) Guidelines for Children with Potentially Life Threatening Food Allergies

The long-term goal for children with potentially life threatening food allergies is to be independent in the prevention, care, and management of their food allergies and reactions based on their developmental level.

A child should be taught:

- not to trade or share foods.
- to wash hands or use hand wipes before and after eating.
- to recognize symptoms of an allergic reaction and notify an adult immediately if a reaction is suspected.
- to promptly tell an adult as soon as accidental exposure occurs or symptoms appear.
- to develop a relationship with the school nurse and at least one other trusted adult in the school to help in identifying issues related to the management of the allergy in school.
- not eat anything with unknown ingredients or ingredients known to contain an allergen.
- to develop a habit of always reading ingredients before eating food.
- never board the school bus if experiencing any symptoms of an allergic reaction.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 14, 2009 –P.T. 2009.16

- if medically necessary and developmentally appropriate, to be responsible for carrying and taking his/her medications appropriately. If a medical ID bracelet or necklace is provided, the child is responsible for wearing the ID at all times.

c) **Guidelines for Caregivers**

Caseworkers should ensure that caregivers are informed of the child's food allergies. Caregivers must assist in the prevention, care, and management of the child's food allergies and reactions. Additionally, caregivers should be encouraged to foster independence on the part of the child, based on her/his developmental level. To achieve this goal, caregivers should be asked to follow these guidelines.

- Ensure that an Individual Health Care Plan, Emergency Action Plan and a 504 Plan (if appropriate) are on file with the school, informing school officials of the child's allergies prior to the opening of school (or immediately after a diagnosis). In addition, provide:
 - medication orders from the physician;
 - EpiPen (or similar prescribed device) and other necessary medications;
 - annual updates on the child's allergy status;
 - a current picture of the child, for the Individual Health Care Plan at school; and
 - if the child carries medications, periodically check for expiration dates and replace medications as needed.
- Contact the caseworker for assistance in obtaining a medical ID bracelet or necklace for a child with a potentially life threatening allergy. When required, the child's medical ID bracelet or necklace can be purchased using payment Code 1116 (medical supplies and equipment). Vouchers for these payments are processed through the DCFS Regional Office.
- Introduce the child to the bus driver and head cook to explain the child's allergy.
- While the school will not exclude an allergic student from a field trip, a caregiver may choose to do so. Be willing to go on the child's field trips if requested.
- If needed, help decide upon an "allergy-free" eating area in the cafeteria.
- Provide safe classroom snacks for the child.
- Talk with the child about the school lunch menu as often as necessary based on the child's knowledge and maturity. If eating a lunch provided by the school is not appropriate, have the child take a lunch to school. Call the school nurse or head cook to discuss any concerns about ingredients in the school lunch menu.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 14, 2009 –P.T. 2009.16

It is important that children take increased responsibility for their allergies as they grow older and as they become developmentally ready. The caregiver should consider teaching the child to:

- Understand the seriousness and recognize the first symptoms of an allergic or anaphylactic reaction and notify an adult immediately.
- Carry and use an EpiPen (or similar prescribed device that contains self-injectable epinephrine), when this is an age appropriate task, or know where it is kept.
- Recognize safe and unsafe foods and do not touch or share snacks, lunches, or drinks.
- Encourage the habit of reading ingredient labels before eating food.
- Understand the importance of hand washing before and after eating.
- Inform others of his/her allergy and specific needs.

d) **Additional Information**

Here are several web sites that offer additional information about allergies to foods and other substances:

- New Jersey's "Ask Before You Eat" campaign home page: <http://www.foodallergy.rutgers.edu/index.htm>
- Mayo Clinic: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/food-allergies/AA00057>
- National Institutes of Health (NIH), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: <http://health.nih.gov/result.asp/265/29>
- Nutrition.gov, National Agriculture Library, U.S. Department of Agriculture: http://www.nutrition.gov/nal_display/index.php?info_center=11&tax_level=2&tax_subject=392&topic_id=1752&placement_default=0
- The Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Network: <http://www.foodallergy.org/>
- National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, National Institutes of Health: <http://www3.niaid.nih.gov/topics/foodAllergy/default.htm>

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 14, 2009 –P.T. 2009.16

- Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America: <http://www.aafa.org/>
 - General food and drug allergy information:
<http://www.aafa.org/display.cfm?id=9&sub=20>
 - Information on how the Americans with Disabilities Act protects the rights of those with allergies and asthma:
<http://www.aafa.org/display.cfm?id=9&sub=20&cont=280>
- New Jersey Department of Agriculture Links to Food and Nutrition Websites:
<http://www.state.nj.us/seafood/consumerlinks.htm>
- American Academy of Pediatrics, Children's Health Topics - Asthma and Allergies: <http://www.aap.org/healthtopics/asthma.cfm>
- *Recommended Guidelines for Medication Administration in Schools*, Illinois Department of Human Services and Illinois State Board of Education (2000):
http://www.isbe.state.il.us/spec-ed/pdfs/medication_administration.pdf
- Food Allergy Initiative. This link provides links to many other food allergy websites: http://www.foodallergyinitiative.org/section_home.cfm?section_id=9

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT
September 14, 2009 –P.T. 2009.16

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SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 14, 2009 – P.T. 2009.16

302.Appendix Q Case Management Guidelines for Children's Asthma Management

a) Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

1) What is asthma?

Asthma is a chronic disorder of the airways that involves a complex interaction of airflow obstruction, bronchial hyper-responsiveness and an underlying inflammation. Asthma can be a life threatening condition. The cause of asthma is unknown.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than 22 million people in the United States have asthma, including 6.5 million children under age 18. Asthma is the most common chronic illness in children and is the leading cause of school absenteeism due to chronic disease. Allergy induced asthma is the most common type of asthma in the United States. Sixty to seventy-five percent of the people who have asthma have associated allergies.

Asthma cannot be cured, but it can be controlled with proper environmental and medical management. For children with asthma, it is essential to provide the proper management of asthma that includes four main components: assessment and monitoring of asthma, patient education, control of factors contributing to asthma severity, and treatment with medications.

2) How severe is asthma?

Asthma severity in children is classified based upon the most severe category in which any feature occurs. The classifications of asthma severity are: intermittent, mild persistent, moderate persistent and severe persistent.

- **Intermittent:** Asthma is considered intermittent when daytime asthma symptoms occur less than or equal to twice per week, nighttime symptoms occur less than twice per month, and the child has fewer than two episodes per year. Peak flow measurements remain between 80-100% of predicted normal values.
- **Mild persistent:** Asthma is considered mild persistent when daytime symptoms occur more than twice per week but less than daily and nighttime symptoms occur more than two times per month. Peak flow measurements remain between 80-100% of predicted normal values.
- **Moderate persistent:** Asthma is considered moderate persistent when daytime symptoms occur daily and nighttime symptoms occur more than one time a week. Peak flow measurement falls between 60 – 80 % of the predicted normal values.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 14, 2009 – P.T. 2009.16

- **Severe persistent:** Asthma is classified as severe persistent when daytime symptoms occur continually and nighttime symptoms occur frequently. Peak flow measurements fall below 60% of the predicted normal values.

Note: Peak flow is measured by a peak flow meter, which is a portable hand held device used to measure how air flows from the lungs. The peak flow meter helps a child with asthma see how well his/her lungs are working by measuring child's ability to push air out of the lungs at any given time. Changes in normal peak flow values can provide early warning of an asthma attack.

3) **What triggers an asthma attack?**

Asthma can be triggered by inhaled allergens, such as dust, dust mites, mold, pollen, various grasses, animal dander, saliva from any pets, paint, perfume, strong odors, fumes, cockroaches and their droppings, wood smoke, cigarette smoke, cold air, abrupt changes in the weather, strong emotions, exercise, and having the common cold, influenza, other respiratory illnesses, etc.

4) **How is asthma managed?**

The symptoms of asthma can be managed with appropriate medical treatments, environmental adjustments and life-style changes.

Asthma Action Plan. An Asthma Action Plan helps the child with asthma and the family understand how best to keep asthma under control, what the health care provider says to do if the asthma becomes out of control and when to seek help.

Medications. Medications for asthma are categorized into two general classes: long-term control medications and quick-relief medications. Long-term control medications are used daily to achieve and maintain control of persistent asthma. The most effective long-term medications are those that address the underlying inflammation characteristic of asthma. Quick-relief medications are used to treat acute symptoms and exacerbations. The type, amount and scheduling of medications is determined by the level of asthma severity or asthma control.

Medical equipment. Medical equipment for a child with asthma may include items such as an inhaler, spacer, nebulizer, humidifier, peak flow meter or oxygen. An inhaler holds medicine that is breathed into the lungs. A spacer is placed on the end of the inhaler and helps more of the medication reach the lungs. A nebulizer also helps the medication reach the lungs.

Environmental adjustments. The child's caregiver is required to eliminate allergens, pollutants or irritants from the home environment that may cause an asthma attack and compromise the child's life and well-being. Examples include: tobacco or wood smoke in or outside of the home, pet dander, cleaning products, dust, perfumes or strong odors.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 14, 2009 – P.T. 2009.16

Life-style changes. Managing a child's asthma may require changes in the child or caregiver's day to day activities, including changes in such things as food preparation procedures and eating habits, and stress reduction. The caregiver and child should work with the child's health care provider to identify known or suspected allergens, irritants, pollutants, triggers and stimuli, and reduce or eliminate the child's exposure to these items.

5) **How is asthma addressed while the child is at school?**

Children with asthma are permitted to carry asthma medication with them and use this medication at school, at school-sponsored activities, while away from school under the supervision of school personnel, and at before- or after-school activities on school property.

To meet the requirements of the School Code for the self-administration of medication, the caseworker must:

- provide written authorization for the child's self-administration of medication; and
- provide a written statement from the child's health care provider containing the name and purpose of the medication, the prescribed dosage, and the times that, or the special circumstances under which, the medication is to be administered.

The caseworker shall ensure that the child's health care provider and the school nurse develop an Individual Health Care Plan that details the preventative steps the school will take to help protect a child with asthma, and an Emergency Action Plan that details how the school officials will respond when the child faces a potentially life threatening emergency.

The caseworker shall also ensure that a **504 Plan (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973)** is developed, if appropriate, with input from the child's health care provider that identifies the child's needs while in the school environment and the actions required of school officials to meet those needs. The caseworker shall ensure that the 504 Plan is on file with the child's school.

The 504 plan will describe:

- the child's disabling condition;
- the major life function affected by the condition in the school setting;
- how the major life activity within the school setting is limited; and

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 14, 2009 – P.T. 2009.16

- the services to be provided by the school district to meet the needs identified. A 504 Plan may, for example, require the school to provide alternate activities when a child has asthma symptoms and cannot participate in gym, or require the school to eliminate triggers from the school environment such as animals with fur or strong odors.

The 504 Plan should specify that service provided by the school district will include a medication administration and monitoring program (when appropriate).

Additional Information on 504 Plans is available at the following website: http://www.foodallergyinitiative.org/section_home.cfm?section_id=8&sub_section_id=3

If the child's asthma contributes to learning difficulties, then an Individualized Education Plan/Program (IEP) may also be required.

b) Guidelines for workers

1) Initial Health Screening

When a child is known to have asthma, the investigation specialist shall inform IHS staff of that fact and review the IHS Encounter form **before** leaving the site to ensure that the examining physician documented an asthma diagnosis, asthma severity classification and medications. The investigation specialist shall obtain a temporary Asthma Action Plan at the IHS and ensure that the physician prescribes a rescue medication in case the child's asthma flares up.

The investigation specialist shall prepare and fax a **CFS 691, Identification of a Child Diagnosed with Asthma** to the Division of Service Intervention - Health Services as directed on the form, and place a copy in the child's record.

2) Referral to Regional Nurse

Any child brought into the system with known **moderate persistent to severe persistent asthma, uncontrolled asthma or with severe exacerbations** shall be referred to the DCFS Regional Nurse. Included with the referral should be as much history and medical documentation as can be obtained.

Any child newly diagnosed with **moderate persistent to severe persistent asthma, uncontrolled asthma or with severe exacerbations** shall be referred to the DCFS Regional Nurse for assessment recommendations, and potential follow-up with a health care provider or specialist regarding the caregiver's knowledge and comfort in handling the child's asthma.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 14, 2009 – P.T. 2009.16

Any child currently diagnosed with **moderate persistent to severe persistent asthma, uncontrolled asthma or with severe exacerbations** who is to be moved to a new foster or relative care setting shall be referred to the DCFS Regional Nurse to assess the home environment and caregiver's knowledge, and assist the new caregiver as necessary regarding the medical needs of the child.

As a general rule, any child who suffers **two emergency room visits or one hospital admission during a year** due to the child's asthma problems will require a referral of the case to the DCFS Regional Nurse. As a part of the referral, the caseworker shall provide copies of the child's Asthma Action Plan, Unusual Incident Reports related to asthma exacerbations, HealthWorks medical records and/or other health documentation and the updated Health Passport information.

Any concerns about the control management of asthma for any child, despite the severity of the condition, shall be referred to a DCFS Regional Nurse. **The following are examples of asthma that is poorly controlled** that require a DCFS nursing consultation and/or referral.

- two emergency room visits for asthma in a year's time;
- one hospitalization for asthma in a year's time;
- intubation (insertion of a breathing tube) for asthma;
- prior asthma admission to a hospital Intensive Care Unit;
- frequent and consistent absences from school due to asthma attacks;
- hospitalization or emergency room visit for asthma within the past month;
- any severity of asthma and a cardiopulmonary medical condition;
- a health care provider's statement that the child's asthma is not controlled;
or
- frequent use of rescue albuterol inhaler.

Note: DCFS Regional Nurse Referral instructions are set out in Procedures 302-Appendix O.

3) **Placement requirements for children with asthma**

When selecting placement for a child with asthma, the caseworker shall rely on the environmental and treatment recommendations of the child's physician for eliminating allergens, pollutants, or irritants (such as smoke, animals, or others)

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 14, 2009 – P.T. 2009.16

from the child's environment that the child may react to and that may compromise the child's life and well-being. These recommendations shall be documented in the SACWIS health information section and the child's case record and followed with the urgency indicated by the child's physician.

The child shall not be placed with, or be allowed to remain in a placement with, a caregiver who is unable or unwilling to adhere to the Asthma Action Plan and the health care provider's environmental or treatment recommendations. If a caregiver is unable or unwilling to follow these recommendations, the investigator or caseworker must immediately seek another placement. When time is not of the essence, the caregiver should be given an opportunity to make necessary changes or obtain training that would allow for the child's health needs to be met.

If a child must be moved to a different placement, the caseworker must ensure that medications, medical equipment, the Asthma Action Plan, and other environmental aids for the child's asthma are moved with the child. The caseworker shall also provide the new caregiver with the child's list of known or suspected allergens, irritants, pollutants, triggers, and stimuli.

4) Follow-up worker's responsibilities

- A) If the child is diagnosed with asthma at the IHS, the investigation specialist or caseworker (if no protective custody was taken) shall ensure that the Division of Service Intervention-Health Services is notified by faxing a **CFS 691, Identification of a Child Diagnosed with Asthma**. The investigation specialist shall also document the diagnosis in SACWIS.
- B) If a child currently diagnosed with asthma does not have an Asthma Action Plan, the caseworker shall ensure that the caregiver takes the child to a health care provider to have an Asthma Action Plan developed. The caseworker will share with the caregiver the list of known or suspected allergens, pollutants, irritants, triggers, and stimuli.

The caseworker shall ensure that the health care provider has prescribed appropriate maintenance medication and a rescue medication, and that the rescue medication is available in case the child's asthma flares up.

The caseworker shall place a copy of the Asthma Action Plan in the child's case record, and ensure that the caregiver distributes the Asthma Action Plan to the child's school, day care or preschool. If the child is school age and is involved in extracurricular activities, the caregiver shall ensure that the Asthma Action Plan is given to the adult supervising that activity.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 14, 2009 – P.T. 2009.16

- C) The caseworker shall regularly reinforce the necessity of the caregiver taking the Asthma Action Plan to every health care provider visit so it can be reviewed and revised as needed and also informing the health care provider of all medicines taken by the child (prescribed and over the counter), all diagnoses, and all equipment used.
- D) The caseworker shall ensure that the caregiver has been advised by the health care provider of the impairment, risk, and category of severity of the child's asthma (intermittent, mild persistent, moderate persistent or severe persistent). The health care provider should be consulted about whether the child may receive or benefit from the annual flu vaccination.
- E) The caseworker shall also ensure that that the caregiver has been advised on recognizing the early signs, symptoms, and peak flow expiratory flow measures, if a peak flow meter has been prescribed, that indicate worsening asthma.
- F) The caseworker shall ensure that the caregiver requests a peak flow meter from the health care provider, especially if the child has moderate or severe persistent asthma or has a history of severe exacerbations, or takes daily asthma medication. If the health care provider has prescribed a peak flow meter, the caseworker shall reinforce the need for the caregiver to review the readings with the health care provider.
- G) In addition to seeing their health care provider, children who have had difficulties with maintaining control of asthma, or recurrent exacerbations and children with moderate persistent and severe persistent asthma should be referred to a specialist, such as an allergist, immunologist or pulmonologist for evaluation and/or co-management of the disease.
- H) The caseworker shall ensure that the caregiver takes measures that reduce or eliminate the child's exposure to allergens. For example, the caregiver may need to encase the child's mattress and/or pillow with an allergy barrier cover, or many need to reduce or eliminate the child's exposure to tobacco or wood smoke in or outside of the home or to irritants like perfume, cleaning products, dust, or vapors.
- I) The caseworker shall ensure that placement and service guidelines related to management of the child's asthma are placed in child section of SACWIS Service Plan.

5) Reunification

Before finalizing reunification of children with asthma with their parents, the caseworker must document that the parents have demonstrated to the child's health care provider a level of proficiency in their knowledge about their child's

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 14, 2009 – P.T. 2009.16

asthma and asthma care. All of the child's medications, medical equipment, the Asthma Action Plan, other environmental aids for the child's asthma, and copies of the child's health information shall go with the child upon reunification.

c) Role of the DCFS Regional Nurse

Upon receiving a referral, the DCFS Regional Nurse shall contact the caregiver, caseworker and/or health care provider to determine what actions are needed. When a child with severe persistent asthma is referred, the DCFS Regional Nurse shall schedule a site visit. The child's caseworker shall accompany the Regional Nurse during the site visit.

The DCFS Regional Nurse shall assess and reinforce knowledge the child and caregiver have received from the health care provider, treating physician and/or hospital discharge instructions regarding:

- medications (proper dosage, times, side effects);
- proper use of an inhaler, spacer, and nebulizer. If these items were not prescribed, the DCFS Regional Nurse shall contact the physician or specialist to obtain a prescription for the needed equipment (if appropriate); and
- use and care of the peak flow meter. The Regional Nurse shall encourage the caregiver to request the doctor to prescribe a peak flow meter for each child with moderate persistent or severe persistent asthma.

If the DCFS Regional Nurse determines that the caregiver needs additional training to care for the child, the Regional Nurse shall recommend that the caregiver contact the child's health care provider to arrange for the needed training.

The DCFS Regional Nurse shall assess the environment to identify environmental triggers that could precipitate an attack (e.g., pollutants, allergens, insects, etc.) and make recommendations as needed based on the assessment.

The Regional Nurse shall ensure that all children with moderate persistent or severe persistent asthma are referred to an allergist, immunologist or pulmonologist.

d) Guidelines for children

- 1) A child with asthma shall follow the recommendations of his/her health care provider. This may include following the Asthma Action Plan, using a preventative inhaler on a daily basis, using nasal medication, receiving ongoing allergy shots, etc.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 14, 2009 – P.T. 2009.16

- 2) A child with asthma should learn to identify the early signs and symptoms that indicated that his/her asthma is becoming worse, and be able to identify the steps that he/she should take when these signs and symptoms occur. The child should keep his/her rescue inhaler handy and accessible at all times, and know what to do if his/her asthma reaches a crisis level (e.g., call 911).
- 3) The child should be able to identify the list of known or suspected allergens, irritants, pollutants, and stimuli that triggers his/her asthma and avoid exposure to these items.

e) Guidelines for caregivers

- 1) If a child is suspected of having asthma because of breathing problems, the caregiver should contact the child's health care provider as soon as possible for an appointment, or, in the event of an emergency, take the child to the emergency room for immediate medical care.
- 2) The caregiver shall obtain information from the health care provider about the impairment, risk, and category of severity of the child's asthma (intermittent, mild persistent, moderate persistent or severe persistent). The health care provider should be consulted about whether the child may receive or benefit from the annual flu vaccination.
- 3) If a child currently diagnosed with asthma does not have an Asthma Action Plan, the caregiver shall ask the child's health care provider to develop one.
- 4) The caregiver shall provide a copy of the Asthma Action Plan to the child's day care provider, preschool or school nurse. Each time the Asthma Action Plan is revised, the caregiver shall give a copy of the revised plan to the day care provider, preschool or school nurse. The caregiver shall give the day care provider, preschool or school nurse a sufficient supply of the child's prescribed rescue medication, and shall refill the medication when requested.
- 5) The caregiver shall be able to recognize the early signs, symptoms, and peak flow expiratory flow measures (if a peak flow meter has been prescribed) that indicate worsening asthma. The caregiver shall ensure that the child's maintenance medication is up-to-date and being taken as prescribed, and that the child's rescue medication is always immediately accessible in case the child's asthma flares up.
- 6) The caregiver shall request a peak flow meter from the health care provider, especially if the child has moderate or severe persistent asthma or has a history of severe exacerbations, or takes maintenance medication. If the health care provider has prescribed a peak flow meter, the caregiver shall review the readings with the health care provider at each visit.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 14, 2009 – P.T. 2009.16

- 7) The caregiver shall remove potential allergens, pollutants, irritants, triggers, and stimuli from the home, and shall take measures that reduce or eliminate the child's exposure to them. For example, the caregiver may need to encase the child's mattress and/or pillow with an allergy barrier cover, or many need to reduce or eliminate the child's exposure to tobacco or wood smoke in or outside of the home or to irritants like perfume, cleaning products, dust, or vapors.
- 8) The caregiver shall take the Asthma Action Plan to every health care provider visit so it can be reviewed and revised as needed, and shall also inform the health care provider of all medicines taken by the child (prescribed and over the counter), all diagnoses, and all equipment used.
- 9) The caregiver shall cooperate with requests made by the DCFS Regional Nurse with regard to the child. If the DCFS Regional Nurse determines that the caregiver needs additional training to care for the child, the caregiver shall contact the child's primary care or treating physician for assistance in obtaining the needed training.
- 10) The caregiver shall comply with the Asthma Action Plan and the health care provider's recommendations. **If a caregiver is unable or unwilling to adhere to a health care provider's environmental or treatment recommendations or Asthma Action Plan, the investigation specialist or caseworker must immediately seek another placement.** When time is not of the essence, the caregiver should be given an opportunity to make necessary changes or obtain training that would allow for the child's health needs to be met.
- 11) The caregiver shall complete all caregiver activities identified in the child's service plan.

f) Additional information

- American Academy of Pediatrics, Children's Health Topics - Asthma and Allergies: <http://www.aap.org/healthtopics/asthma.cfm>
- Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America: <http://www.aafa.org/>
 - General food and drug allergy information:
<http://www.aafa.org/display.cfm?id=9&sub=20>
 - Information on how the Americans with Disabilities Act protects the rights of those with allergies and asthma:
<http://www.aafa.org/display.cfm?id=9&sub=20&cont=280>
- National Institutes of Health (NIH), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: <http://health.nih.gov/result.asp/265/29> and <http://kids.niehs.nih.gov/asthma.htm>

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

September 14, 2009 – P.T. 2009.16

- Mayo Clinic: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/asthma/AS99999>
- http://www.asthmaactionamerica.org/media/asthma_control_made_simple.pdf
- The American Lung Association:
<http://www.lungusa.org/site/c.dvLUK9O0E/b.33276/>
- National Heart Lung and Blood Institute:
http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/dci/Diseases/Asthma/Asthma_WhatIs.html
- U.S. National Library of Medicine:
<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/asthma.html>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <http://www.cdc.gov/asthma/>

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT
September 14, 2009 – P.T. 2009.16

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CASE OPENING PROTOCOL
March 13, 2020 – P.T. 2020.01

APPENDIX R: CASE OPENING PROTOCOL

| | |
|--|-----------|
| a) Definitions..... | 1 |
| b) Identifying Families Appropriate For Services..... | 2 |
| c) Intact Family Cases..... | 2 |
| d) Placement Cases | 5 |
| e) Future Date Cases/Filing a Petition..... | 10 |
| f) Placement Case Opening Procedures..... | 11 |
| g) Resolving Case Opening Problems with Open Post Adoption Cases..... | 15 |

a) Definitions

“Hand-Off staffing/Supervisory Conference” is the meeting that takes place between the investigation specialist and/or the investigation supervisor and the placement worker or intact specialist and/or supervisor. Assessment of safety factors shall be comprehensive and ongoing with the primary assigned investigator having responsibility for safety during the entire investigation process. Once the case has been fully transferred to a placement worker or intact specialist, the safety assessment will be a collaborative assessment between the investigator specialist and the assigned placement worker or intact specialist until the completion of the child abuse/neglect report. Referral documents provided by the investigation specialist shall include:

- SACWIS Intake Report;
- Referral Form for Formal Intact Family Services;
- CFS 1000-1, Hispanic Client Language Determination Form (if applicable);
- SACWIS case notes and service referral information;
- Child Endangerment Risk Assessment, approved by the child protection supervisor;
- SACWIS Risk Assessment Summary;
- CFS 440-5, Adult Substance Abuse Screen;
- SACWIS/CANTS 17A-DV, Domestic Violence Screen;
- Paramour Checklist (if applicable);
- Law Enforcement Agency Data System (LEADS) information; and
- Any available applicable records (e.g., medical, school, etc.).

CASE OPENING PROTOCOL
March 13, 2020 – P.T. 2020.01

“Transitional visit (TV).” The placement worker or intact specialist assigned to provide services to the family is introduced during the transitional visit. The following issues shall be addressed during the transitional visit:

- Identified safety and risk concerns;
- Service needs;
- How the Department will be involved with the family (schools, doctors, family meetings, etc.); and
- Worker’s contact information, initial consents for information, etc.

b) Identifying Families Appropriate For Services

In consultation with the investigation specialist, the investigation supervisor makes the critical decision that a family can benefit from Department services. Additionally, certain situations mandate opening a family and/or child case in order to document a legal relationship such as protective custody. In each instance, the supervisor must ensure that all required steps for case opening are completed to facilitate the delivery of services to the child and family.

c) Intact Family Cases

- 1) When the investigation supervisor and investigation specialist determine an intact family case needs to be opened, the supervisor shall ensure that the following steps are completed:
 - A) The investigation specialist and/or supervisor shall submit a fully and comprehensively completed **CFS 2040**, Intact Family Services Case Referral and Assignment Form to the Investigation Manager, who has the authority to make final decisions regarding case openings for services pertaining to investigations. If the Investigation Manager supports the recommendation for case opening, the Manager will ensure that the assigned investigation specialist has fully and comprehensively discussed the case opening plan with the family and has documented the case opening plan. The investigation specialist shall advise the family regarding their rights, inform them that the intact specialist will hold a more comprehensive discussion with the family regarding their rights, and discuss available dates for the Transitional Visit.
 - B) If the Investigation Manager supports opening the family case, the **CFS 2040** is sent to the Intact Manager for assignment to an intact team. The investigation supervisor will ensure that the documents for case opening required in Procedures 302.388 are submitted immediately to the identified intact team supervisor.

CASE OPENING PROTOCOL

March 13, 2020 – P.T. 2020.01

- C) **All internal DCFS Intact Case Assignments:** Within 48 hours (excluding holidays and weekends) of selection of an intact family team, the investigation supervisor must conduct a supervisory conference/**handoff meeting** with the intact team supervisor. Prior to or at the handoff meeting, the assigned intact specialist will be identified. The sending and receiving workers must also be present at the meeting, unless a worker's presence has been waived by his/her supervisor. These supervisory conference/handoff meetings should never be waived. **At the conclusion of the meeting, the case will be immediately (same day) opened in SACWIS for service in the name of the intact specialist.** Required documents for Case Assignment Payment Unit (CAPU) are to be completed, checked by the supervisor for completeness and accuracy and forwarded to CAPU **by the fastest and safest means of delivery.**

All POS Intact Case Assignments: Within 48 hours (excluding holidays and weekends) of selection of a POS agency referral, the investigation supervisor must conduct a supervisory conference/handoff meeting with the receiving POS agency staff. If the receiving worker has been identified, he/she is expected to be present at the handoff meeting along with the investigator unless waived by his/her supervisor. Due to the varying complexities of referrals to POS agencies, the SACWIS intact case will be opened on the day of the Transitional Visit. All delays beyond the timeframes cited below should be approved by the Investigation Manager.

- D) The Transitional Visit (TV) shall be scheduled at the supervisory conference/handoff meeting and that visit must occur within **48 hours** (excluding holidays and weekends) of the handoff meeting. The investigation specialist shall contact the family during or immediately following the supervisory/handoff meeting to provide the date and time for the TV and shall request that all involved family members attend (including a paramour, when applicable). Scheduling an appointment is more likely to ensure that the family (including extended family stakeholders) is available and will be present at the TV. Unscheduled contacts are discouraged. If the worker learns at the time of the supervisory conference/handoff meeting that the family's head of household is unavailable to participate in the TV because he/she is resistant to accepting service, or is missing or is "unavailable" for the foreseeable future, the supervisory conference/handoff meeting participants must fully discuss the barriers to case opening for services. The investigation supervisor will alert the Investigation Manager and both Intact and Investigation Managers will discuss the pros and cons of opening a case or obtaining a protective order from the Juvenile Court (if applicable) within 24 hours. If there is disagreement, the Assistant Regional Administrator or Regional Administrator will make a final determination. If a determination is made to open a case, it shall be

CASE OPENING PROTOCOL
March 13, 2020 – P.T. 2020.01

opened within 24 hours. If a decision is made to close the case, the Investigation Manager will document the decision in a SACWIS Contact note from the service case.

- E) When meeting with the family, the investigation and intact specialists shall:
- **Explain the family's right of self determination** as defined in the DCFS Code of Ethics and Handbook pertaining to services, and **ensure that the family's head of household understand the family's rights.** Both workers must fully document this conversation in a Case Contact Note.
 - **Provide full disclosure of the services to be offered and ensure that the adult family members have given informed consent for those services** according to the DCFS Code of Ethics and Handbook. Both workers must fully document these disclosures in a Case Contact Note.
 - **If the family's head of household refuses to accept services after full disclosure and an explanation of the family's rights, the investigation specialist and supervisor shall notify the Investigation Manager within 24 hours.** If the Investigation Manager determines that the Department should request the State's Attorney to file petition in Juvenile Court seeking court-ordered services for the family, the investigation specialist will contact the State's Attorney's Office within 24 hours of the decision. If the court orders the family to accept services, a family case will be opened immediately, if not already opened, in accordance with the court order and in compliance with Department policy.
 - The investigation specialist shall review and complete the applicable sections of the **CFS 496, Client Rights and Responsibilities** with the family's head of household. The Investigation specialist shall circle each of the applicable bullet points reviewed with the head of household, and ask him/her to check the applicable boxes and sign the form. This form documents that the head of household understands his/her rights and confirms his/her interest in receiving intact family services.
- F) If the TV did not occur, the investigation and intact specialists shall schedule another visit to the home immediately. The visit shall occur within 24 to 48 hours of the failed visit.
- G) If attempts to conduct a TV are unsuccessful, the investigation supervisor shall consult with the Investigation Manager who, after consultation with the Intact Manager, will decide whether the workers should attempt

CASE OPENING PROTOCOL
March 13, 2020 – P.T. 2020.01

additional visits, or whether to request the State's Attorney's office to file a petition in Juvenile Court. The Investigation Manager shall enter a Contact Note in the SACWIS service case, documenting the final decision.

- 2) **Intact Case Opening Requirements** (case opening requirements from investigations to intact family services).

The investigation supervisor shall ensure that the following steps are completed:

- Create the case in SACWIS. (**Note: A case must be opened in SACWIS before it can be opened in CYCIS.**)
- From the SACWIS "Create Case" window, select "Create a Family Case."
- Update family relationship and address information, making sure to end date ALL duplicate and obsolete addresses.
- Verify all current CYCIS household members by selecting **Yes** or **No**.
- Forward the **SACWIS CFS 1410, Registration/Case Opening** and the **CFS 1425, Change of Status** as attachments to the CAPU Distribution Group (Cook County) or the Downstate CAPU Distribution Group (Downstate) in order to complete the opening process.
- Both the sending and receiving sides of the **CFS 1425** must be thoroughly completed.
- In the subject line of the e-mail, identify if the case is **Norman** or **Intact**.
- The assigned intact specialist and the manager must be copied in the e-mail.

CAPU is responsible for completing the following steps:

- **Norman cases** – open the family case in CYCIS to the investigation specialist within 24 hours.
- **Intact cases** – open the family case in CYCIS and transfer to the identified intact specialist within 24 hours.

d) Placement Cases

All traditional placement case assignments are based upon a child's school catchment area. For each child attending school, the worker must include the child's school name and address when contacting CAPU for case assignment/opening.

CASE OPENING PROTOCOL
March 13, 2020 – P.T. 2020.01

Protective Custody in Open Intact Cases

When an investigation involves children from an open intact family case, the investigation specialist or supervisor shall immediately notify the intact specialist and/or supervisor. Both workers and their supervisors should have a brief staffing to discuss the family and nature of the current investigation before the initial contact is made. Ideally, the workers should make a joint visit to initiate the investigation; however, the investigation specialist must not delay initiating the investigation if the intact specialist is unavailable.

If the investigation specialist determines that the children must be taken into protective custody to ensure their safety, the intact specialist is responsible for physically placing the children. The investigation specialist is responsible for completing the court screening packet. While the investigation specialist is expected to take the lead during screening with the State's Attorney's Office, both workers are expected to be present and participate in the screening. The current after-hours process will continue in both Cook County and Downstate Regions.

For a child taken into protective custody that presents with special needs, the investigation specialist shall complete the **CFS 418-J, Checklist for Children at Initial Placement** and shall e-mail the **CFS 418-J** with supporting documentation identifying the special needs of the child to DCFS.SpecFosterCare. The investigation specialist should do this as early into the investigation as possible so the child can be properly assessed, eliminating the chance the case gets assigned to an inappropriate agency that cannot meet the child's needs. If a specialized foster care home is needed, the Specialized Foster Care Unit will work with the Investigation specialist to match the child with a specialized foster care agency for placement.

If the Department is granted temporary custody of the child by the Juvenile court, the Investigation specialist shall complete the **CFS 1425-L, Legal History Maintenance Form**. The **CFS 1425-L** must be sent via e-mail or fax to CAPU. Fax numbers for CAPU are 312-808-4315 (Cook County) and 312-808-4335 (Downstate).

If temporary custody is not granted, the investigation specialist shall close all child cases, but shall leave the family case open for intact services if the family agrees to comply with these services or if services are court ordered.

Intact cases remain the responsibility of the intact specialist until the court grants the Department temporary custody of the child.

Case Opening Requirements for Protective Custody in Open Intact Cases:

- 1) The investigation supervisor shall ensure that the following steps are completed:
 - If traditional foster care is required, the investigation specialist shall contact CAPU at 312-808-5160 (select option 2) for an agency assignment or page 312-250-5625 (Cook County) or 888-609-0052 (Downstate).

CASE OPENING PROTOCOL

March 13, 2020 – P.T. 2020.01

- Create the child case in SACWIS from the open investigation, or from the open family case. The child case can only be created from the investigation when the investigation is properly linked to the case with the same family group numbers. When a case is assigned to a POS agency, it shall be opened by the investigation supervisor. In non-POS situations, the case can be created by the CWS worker and/or supervisor.
 - From the SACWIS “Create Case” window from the open/pending investigation, select “Create Child Case.”
 - Check the CYCIS Family Member indicator “yes” for **each child case** to be opened in CYCIS.
 - Update family relationship and address information.
 - Verify all current household members by selecting **yes** or **no**.
 - Forward the **SACWIS CFS 1410, Registration/Case Opening** by e-mail as an attachment and the **CFS 418-J, Checklist for Children at Initial Placement** to the CAPU Distribution Group (Cook County) or the Downstate CAPU Distribution Group (Downstate). **The CFS 418-J must also be e-mailed to DCFS.SpecFosterCare if any item other than “none” is selected on the form.**
 - The subject line of the e-mail must identify the case name and CYCIS ID number.
 - **For each child attending school, the worker must include in the e-mail the child’s school name and address.**
 - The placing worker must e-mail the **CFS 906** (with Placement Clearance number) to the CAPU Distribution Group (Cook County) or the Downstate CAPU Distribution Group (Downstate).
 - The **CFS 458-A, Affidavit of Relationship** must accompany the **CFS 906** for all HMR placements.
 - The investigation specialist shall complete all other activities as required in Rule and Procedures 300, or as instructed by the investigation supervisor.
- 2) CAPU is responsible for completing the following steps:
- A) **Traditional Placements:** To locate a placement and assign the case, CAPU needs the following information during the call-in process:
- Screening date/time

CASE OPENING PROTOCOL

March 13, 2020 – P.T. 2020.01

- Child's current location
- School name/address
- Investigation specialist/supervisor name and phone number
- SACWIS Family Group ID#
- CYCIS case ID#
- Protective custody date/time
- Head of household's name, address, date of birth, language, race, SACWIS person ID#
- Child's name, date of birth, race, sex, SACWIS person ID#

CAPU will use **School Minder** software and the Statewide Case Assignment system to assign the case. School Minder is used to retrieve a listing of available foster homes in the youngest child's school catchment area. School Minder groups the identified foster homes based upon their proximity to the child's school. If the school address is unknown, the head of household address is used.

School Minder Groupings = In district; 1 mile; 1-5 miles; 5-10 miles; 10-20 miles

The following information is entered into School Minder to obtain the groupings:

- Cook or Downstate
- School or head of household address
- Age of children
- Language

CAPU also uses the Statewide Case Assignment (SCA) system to determine the case assignment for new intake and completes the following steps:

- Paste the appropriate grouping of foster homes in SCA to determine which foster home's supervising agency will be contacted for the placement referral. SCA ranks the agencies according to their traditional Percentage of Referral Opportunities (PROs);

CASE OPENING PROTOCOL

March 13, 2020 – P.T. 2020.01

- Contact the designated licensing staff (DCFS) or Intake Liaison (POS) for the first three agencies within the first grouping informing them of their ranking on the call list. The grouping/contact process continues until an appropriate placement is located;
- CAPU and licensing staff inform the investigation specialist of the assigned agency/foster home;
- CAPU opens the case in CYCIS to the investigation specialist and transfers to an Unassigned Team ID# (DCFS) or an Agency Intake ID# (POS); and
- CAPU faxes case assignment information to the identified Intake Liaisons (DCFS/POS).

B) HMR Cases: The SCA system is used to identify a receiving agency.

- SCA ranks the agencies according to their HMR PROs. CAPU contacts the first three agencies identified and this process continues until an agency accepts the HMR referral.
- CAPU opens the case in CYCIS to the investigation specialist and transfers to an Unassigned Team ID# (DCFS) or an Intake ID# (POS).
- CAPU faxes case assignment information to the identified Intake Liaisons (DCFS/POS).
- CAPU informs the investigation specialist of the assigned agency/foster home.

C) Downstate Only: After 4:00 p.m., workers shall use the after hours referral process for traditional placement cases. CAPU will assign the case to the agency selected using the After Hours protocol.

Placement Cases Converting from Protective Custody to Intact Family Services

When protective custody of a child lapses during an investigation and intact family services are required, the investigation specialist shall:

- E-mail a final **CFS 906** for each child in protective custody to CAPU; and
- E-mail a **CFS 1425** to CAPU, closing each child's case and transferring the family case to an intact team.

Note: The “receiving” side of the **CFS 1425** must include the receiving intact team's region/site/field, worker ID and date of transfer.

CASE OPENING PROTOCOL
March 13, 2020 – P.T. 2020.01

e) Future Date Cases/Filing a Petition

This section applies to investigation and intact specialists who must screen cases when there is an active intact family case or a pending investigation and no active intact family case.

- The investigation specialist acquires a temporary custody hearing date (Cook County) or a screening date for filing the petition (Downstate).
- If a family case is not currently open, a family case must be created in SACWIS.
- The investigation specialist shall send the **SACWIS CFS 1410, Registration/Case Opening** via e-mail as an attachment to CAPU. The **SACWIS CFS 1410** shall identify the date and time of the temporary custody hearing. **For each child attending school, the worker must include the child's school name and address when contacting CAPU for case assignment/opening.**
- CAPU will assign the case to a DCFS permanency team or POS agency and inform them of the temporary custody hearing date and time.
- Downstate - Cases will be created in SACWIS after the court decides whether the children will be placed with DCFS.
- If temporary custody is granted, the permanency worker will access the case record on the SACWIS desktop (not the investigative file for Child Protection Staff), and open the child case.
- CAPU will open and transfer the child case to the permanency team or private agency that was assigned the family.
- If temporary custody is not granted and intact family services are needed, the investigation specialist will follow the process for opening a case for intact family services if the family agrees to comply with services or if services have been court ordered.

Future Date Cases/Filing a Petition - Case Opening Requirements:

- 1) If temporary custody is granted, the investigation supervisor shall ensure that the following steps are completed:
 - Create the child case in SACWIS.
 - From the SACWIS Create Case Window, select “Create Child Case.”
 - Check the CYCIS Family Member indicator “yes” for **each child case** to be opened in CYCIS.

CASE OPENING PROTOCOL

March 13, 2020 – P.T. 2020.01

- Update the family relationship and address information.
 - Verify all current household members by selecting **yes** or **no**.
 - Forward the **SACWIS CFS 1410, Registration/Case Opening** by e-mail as an attachment and the **CFS 418-J, Checklist for Children at Initial Placement** to the CAPU Distribution Group (Cook County) or the Downstate CAPU Distribution Group (Downstate). **The CFS 418-J must also be e-mailed to DCFS.SpecFosterCare, if any item other than “none” is selected on the form.**
 - The subject line of the e-mail must identify the case name and CYCIS ID number. **For each child attending school, the worker must include the child’s school name and address when contacting CAPU for case assignment /opening.**
 - The placing worker must e-mail the **CFS 906** (with Placement Clearance number) to CAPU.
- 2) CAPU is responsible for completing the following steps:
- Follow the guidelines used for making a traditional/HMR case assignment.
 - Open the family case in CYCIS to the screening worker and transfer the case to an Unassigned Team ID# (DCFS) or and Intake ID# (POS).
 - Inform the assigned agency of the scheduled temporary custody hearing date/time.
 - If temporary custody is granted, open the child case in CYCIS to the screening worker and transfer to an Unassigned Team ID# (DCFS) or an Intake ID# (POS).

f) Placement Case Opening Procedures

When protective custody is taken, the investigation specialist creates in SACWIS a case for each child taken into protective custody and a family case.

If a traditional foster care placement is needed, the investigation specialist must call CAPU intake personnel to request an assignment.

- Cook County - The assigned investigation specialist or supervisor must contact CAPU prior to screening the case with the Assistant State’s Attorney to determine and document the assigned agency.
- The **SACWIS CFS 1410, Registration/Case Opening** must be sent by e-mail as an attachment to CAPU. The **SACWIS CFS 1410** must be sent to CAPU by noon the day prior to the legal screening (Cook County only).

CASE OPENING PROTOCOL

March 13, 2020 – P.T. 2020.01

- If the child is initially placed at ERC or in a hospital, the investigation specialist must also e-mail the **CFS 906** to CAPU.
- If a POS worker initially places the child, the worker must complete the **CFS 906** and e-mail it to CAPU.
- **For each child attending school, the worker must include the child's school name and address when contacting CAPU for case assignment/opening.**

If the child is placed in the home of a relative (HMR), the investigation specialist is not required to call CAPU. The investigation specialist must e-mail the **SACWIS CFS 1410** and **CFS 906** to CAPU. CAPU will assign the case to a DCFS or POS Permanency team. CAPU shall immediately notify the investigation and permanency teams of the assignment.

The **CFS 1425-L, Legal History Maintenance Form** must be e-mailed or faxed to CAPU immediately following the shelter care hearing.

If temporary custody was not granted but protective custody was taken, investigation specialist **must** complete a **CFS 1425, Change of Status Form** and a final **CFS 906** to close each child case. The family case shall be open for intact services, when appropriate.

Placement Case Opening Requirements:

- 1) The investigation supervisor shall ensure that the following steps are completed:
 - If traditional foster care is required, the investigation specialist shall contact CAPU at 312-808-5160 (select option 2) for an agency assignment or page 312-250-5625 (Cook County) or 888-609-0052 (Downstate).
 - Create the family case and corresponding child cases in SACWIS.
 - Access the Create Case Window by clicking on the “Create Case” hyperlink from the investigation
 - From the SACWIS Create Case Window, select the radio button “Create Family and Child Case(s)”
 - Add a row to the Child Cases table and select the children for which the cases are to be created
 - Select Opening Reason
 - Select Opening Date
 - Check the CYCIS Family Member indicator **yes** for **each child case** to be opened in CYCIS
 - Update family relationship and address information.
 - Verify all current household members by selecting **yes** or **no**

CASE OPENING PROTOCOL
March 13, 2020 – P.T. 2020.01

- Forward the **SACWIS CFS-1410, Registration/Case Opening** by e-mail as an attachment and the **CFS 418-J, Checklist for Children at Initial Placement** to the CAPU Distribution Group (Cook County) or the Downstate CAPU Distribution Group (Downstate). **The CFS 418-J must also be e-mailed to DCFS.SpecFosterCare if any item other than “none” is selected on the form.**
- The subject line of the e-mail must identify the case name and CYCIS ID number.
- The placing worker must e-mail the **CFS 906** (with Placement Clearance number) to CAPU.
- The investigation specialist shall complete all other activities as required in Rule and Procedures 300, or as instructed by the investigation supervisor.

2) CAPU is responsible for completing the following steps:

A) **Traditional Placements:** To locate a placement and assign the case, CAPU needs the following information during the call-in process:

- Screening date/time
- Child’s current location
- School name/address
- Investigation specialist/supervisor name and phone number
- SACWIS Family Group ID#
- CYCIS case ID#
- Protective custody date/time
- Head of household’s name, address, date of birth, language, race, SACWIS person ID#
- Child’s name, date of birth, race, sex, SACWIS person ID#

CAPU will use **School Minder** software and the Statewide Case Assignment system to assign the case. School Minder is used to retrieve a listing of available foster homes in the youngest child’s school catchment area. School Minder groups the identified foster homes based upon their proximity to the child’s school. If the school address is unknown, the head of household address is used.

CASE OPENING PROTOCOL
March 13, 2020 – P.T. 2020.01

School Minder Groupings = In district; 1 mile; 1-5 miles; 5-10 miles; 10-20 miles

The following information is entered into School Minder to obtain the groupings:

- Cook or Downstate
- School or head of household address
- Age of children
- Language

CAPU also uses the Statewide Case Assignment (SCA) system to determine the case assignment for new intake and completes the following steps:

- Paste the appropriate grouping of foster homes in SCA to determine which foster home's supervising agency will be contacted for the placement referral. SCA ranks the agencies according to their traditional Percentage of Referral Opportunities (PROs);
- Contact the designated licensing staff (DCFS) or Intake Liaison (POS) for the first three agencies within the first grouping informing them of their ranking on the call list. The grouping/contact process continues until an appropriate placement is located;
- CAPU and licensing staff inform the investigation specialist of the assigned agency/foster home;
- CAPU opens the case in CYCIS to the investigation specialist and transfer to an Unassigned Team ID# (DCFS) or an Agency Intake ID# (POS);
- CAPU faxes case assignment information to the identified Intake Liaisons (DCFS/POS); and
- CAPU informs the investigation specialist of the assigned agency/foster home.

B) **HMR Cases:** The SCA system is used to identify a receiving agency.

- SCA ranks the agencies according to their HMR PROs. CAPU contacts the first three agencies identified and this process continues until an agency accepts the HMR referral.

CASE OPENING PROTOCOL

March 13, 2020 – P.T. 2020.01

- CAPU opens the case in CYCIS to the investigation specialist and transfer to an Unassigned Team ID# (DCFS) or an Intake ID# (POS).
 - CAPU faxes case assignment information to the identified Intake Liaisons (DCFS/POS).
 - CAPU informs the investigation specialist of the assigned agency/foster home.
- C) **Downstate Only:** After 4:00 p.m., workers shall use the after hours referral process for traditional placement cases. CAPU will assign the case to the agency selected using the After Hours protocol.

Note: All cases opened in CYCIS will initially reflect the assigned investigation specialist before being transferred to a DCFS or POS permanency team.

Special Case Opening Add-Ons to Open Placement Cases

These procedures are for open placement cases when the Department receives legal custody or guardianship of an additional child as part of an already open family case, which also has an open child case.

Note: Case assignment will be directed to the agency providing services to the sibling.

- **Department placement cases.** The placement worker and supervisor are responsible for making the case opening decision and completing the case opening in SACWIS.
- **POS placement cases.** The POS placement worker and supervisor must contact the Cook County Child Welfare Intake team for all POS placement cases with add-ons (statewide). The Cook County Child Welfare Intake staff will be responsible for completing the case opening in SACWIS and submitting the opening packet to CAPU.

After Hours Placements:

The current after hour process for placing children will continue in Cook County and Downstate. Downstate staff will begin using the after hour process at 4:00 p.m. Case opening information must be sent to CAPU the following business day.

g) Resolving Case Opening Problems with Open Post Adoption Cases

This section includes:

- Pending Investigations: protective custody and/or court custody.

CASE OPENING PROTOCOL
March 13, 2020 – P.T. 2020.01

- Open DCP Intact Cases: protective custody and/or court custody.
- Child Welfare: protective custody and/or court custody, change of guardianship, and return home.

Before a post-adoption case can be opened for protective custody, temporary custody, or guardianship, the case must first be closed in CYCIS and then in SACWIS. To close the post-adoption case the worker must contact the post-adoption unit by e-mail only. The requesting worker must include the child's name, CYCIS number, date of new custody and type of custody, and include a **CFS 1425-L, Legal History Maintenance Form** as an attachment in the e-mail for the child whose case is be closed.

Post-adoption staff will immediately close out the child's case in CYCIS for the day before the new custody. After the overnight interface between CYCIS and SACWIS, the CYCIS closure will be appear in SACWIS as "closed in CYCIS." Post-adoption staff will then be able to close the case in SACWIS.

After the CYCIS and SACWIS case is closed, the requesting worker will then be able to open the new case with the new custody date.

Contact for Post-Adoption Cases:

For Cook County cases, e-mail requests to Legertha Barner or Warren Kunstler. Include the **CFS 1425-L**.

Outside of Cook County, e-mail requests to the assigned worker as shown on the CM-06 screen in CYCIS. Include the **CFS 1425-L**.

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

Distribution: X and Z

POLICY GUIDE 2013.02

CREATING AND OPENING INTACT FAMILY AND PAYMENT ONLY CASES

RELEASE DATE: June 13, 2013

TO: Rules and Procedures Bookholders, DCFS Child Protection Staff, DCFS Child Welfare Staff, and DCFS Clerical Support/CYCIS Data Entry Staff

FROM: Richard H. Calica, Director



EFFECTIVE: Immediately

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy guide is to issue instructions to Field Office Clerical Support staff who perform the functions of creating and opening Intact Family Services and Payment Only cases in SACWIS and CYCIS. Comprehensive revisions to Procedures 302, Appendix R, Case Opening Protocol will be issued in the near future.

II. PRIMARY USERS

Primary users of this policy guide are DCFS child welfare and child protection workers, supervisors, and clerical support/CYCIS data entry staff.

III. BACKGROUND

In order to streamline and more effectively manage case opening functions the Department is returning some case opening data entry responsibilities back to the field. Specifically, effective May 15, DCFS field clerical statewide are responsible for opening Intact Family cases (DCFS “high risk” and POS) and “payment only” cases (e.g. Norman). On June 1st, CAPU will no longer accept documents to open intact family and payment only cases and any received at CAPU will be returned to the sender. Placement cases will continue to be opened at CAPU.

Each local field office has identified clerical staff who will perform case opening data entry functions. Identified clerical staff have been given access to add/delete/update/change data entry capability for some CYCIS screens, and SACWIS “read only” access in order to complete the case opening process. Please refer to Policy Guide 2006.02, Creating and Opening Cases in SACWIS for specific case opening instructions.



IV. PROCEDURES

a) Creating New Intact Family Service (IFS) Cases in SACWIS

The following steps must be completed to open a new IFS case:

- A data check must be completed;
- A new family case must be created in SACWIS from the CA/N investigation or CWS intake;
- A **SACWIS 1410**, Case registration/Opening Form must be generated in SACWIS;
- A **CFS 1425**, Change of Status Form, must be completed; including completion of both sides of the “Transfer” section (i.e. the sending and receiving agency and worker must be entered);
- An email to which is attached the **SACWIS 1410** and the **CFS 1425** must be addressed and sent to the appropriate regional clerical person who will open the case in CYCIS.

Note: The IFS case opening date in SACWIS must be the date of when the Transitional Visit occurs.

If a new intact family case is opened as the result of an investigation of a report of abuse or neglect so the family may receive “Norman services”, the assigned child protection specialist is responsible for completing the required procedures listed above.

If the new intact family service case is being opened due to a lapsed protective custody, the assigned child protection specialist is responsible for completing the procedures list above. The child protection specialist must ALSO complete a **CFS 1425**, Change of Status Form, to close the child’s placement case.

If a new intact family case is opened as the result of a child welfare service intake evaluation by Department staff, the assigned intact family service/high risk specialist is responsible for completing the procedures listed above.

If a court orders a family to cooperate with services provided by the Department, the intact family service/high risk specialist assigned to the family is responsible for completing the procedures listed above.

b) Opening Intact Family Cases in CYCIS

Designated Department clerical staff in each region will, upon receipt of correct, complete information, open all intact family cases in CYCIS. Regional clerical staff will enter all required information into CYCIS. Regional clerical staff will also notify by e-mail all of the following staff of the case opening information and, as applicable, case assignment information: the staff who submitted the information; each person listed as a “Cc” (carbon copy) on the original e-mail submitting the information; and the DCFS or POS agency caseworker to which a case has been assigned.

c) Submittal of Intact Family and Payment Only Case Opening Forms

All forms required for opening new intact family cases, payment only cases, including but not limited to Norman cases, or other payment only intact family cases, must be submitted as attachments to an e-mail addressed to clerical staff authorized to open cases in CYCIS in each Department region. The subject line of the e-mail must always include the type of case being opened (i.e., New Family Case) the last name of the case being opened and the CYCIS number of the case as listed on the **SACWIS 1410**, Registration/Opening form. Further, the supervisor of the staff submitting the e-mail should always be included as "Cc" (carbon copy) recipient of the e-mail.

For the purpose of these procedures, the following situations are considered to be a new intact family case, for which all required case opening forms must be submitted to authorized regional clerical staff:

- A new intact family service case resulting from an investigation of a report of abuse or neglect and no child subject in the report was taken into protective custody and placed in substitute care; or
- A new intact family service case resulting from an order by a court that a family cooperate with services, but the court does not award custody or guardianship of a child member of the family to the Department; or
- A new intact family service case resulting from a child welfare services intake evaluation; or
- A new intact family service case is required to make a payment to or on behalf of a family (e.g. a Norman program cash assistance payment.)

Conversely, the following are **NOT** considered to be new intact family service cases because each involves the establishment of a legal relationship between a child and the Department.

- An intact family service case that results from a lapsed protective custody; or
- A court awards the Department custody or guardianship of a child, but orders the child(ren) to remain at home.

Forms and other information required to open a new case(s) in either of these situations must be submitted to the Case Assignment Placement Unit (CAPU).

d) Resolving Problems Related to Creating Cases in SACWIS or Opening Cases in CYCIS

1) Resolving Problems Related to Creating Cases in SACWIS

To report and receive assistance in resolving *computer related* problems with creating cases in SACWIS and/or Opening Cases in CYCIS staff should contact the **OITS Help Desk** via email or call (800) 610-2089.

To receive assistance with investigation merges and person merges, staff should go to the D-Net, OITS, Request Services, SACWIS/SCR Request Forms and/or contact the SCR Mailbox.

2) Procedures for Regional Clerical Staff Resolving Problems with Intact Family Service Case Openings

If regional clerical staff identifies a problem with information submitted for a new intact family service case opening, clerical staff will immediately e-mail the staff who submitted the information and all staff included as a “Cc” on the original e-mail submitting the information. Clerical staff will explain in the e-mail what problem must be corrected before the case may be opened.

Within 1 working day of being notified by regional clerical staff of a problem with a requested intact family service case opening, the supervisor of the staff who originally submitted the forms will direct the staff to create a corrected version of the problematic form and re-submit the corrected form(s) to regional clerical staff.

V. QUESTIONS

Questions about the new case opening process may be directed to the following individuals who have been identified as the regional clerical liaisons:

- Cook: Katherine Bonner (Maywood FO: 708-338-6727)
- Northern: Sandra Rodebeck (Elgin FO: 847-888-7651)
- Central: Faith Stutsman (Champaign FO: 309-828-0022)
- Southern: Theresa Ile (Mount Vernon FO: 618-244-8400)

Questions regarding this Policy Guide may also be directed to the Office of Child and Family Policy at 217-524-1983 or via Outlook at OCFP – Mailbox. Non Outlook users may e-mail questions to cfpolicy@idcfs.state.il.us.

VI. FILING INSTRUCTIONS

File this Policy Guide immediately following Procedures 302, Appendix R, Case Opening Protocol.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

March 26, 2015 – PT 2015.05

302.Appendix S – Education and Training Voucher Program

[Moved to Procedures 314.75, Post High School Education Programs]

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT
March 26, 2015 – PT 2015.05

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SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

October 24, 2024 – PT 2024.18

APPENDIX T – SERVICES FOR CLIENTS WHO ARE BLIND OR HAVE VISION LOSS

The purpose of Appendix T is to provide staff with direction to protect the best interest of children cared for and children who could be cared for or parented by individuals who are blind or have vision loss. These procedures also address the standard of care for youth who are blind/vision loss. Furthermore, it establishes requirements for child protection and child welfare workers to ensure that requirements in the Americans with Disabilities Act are met. This includes respect for the due process and equal protection rights of parents or prospective parents that are blind or have vision loss, in the context of child welfare, foster care, family law, and/or adoption.

a) Definitions

“Audio Text” means the transmission, reception, or reproduction of text into sound.

“Auxiliary Aids” Appropriate auxiliary aids and services are required by the ADA to ensure effective communication. Appropriate auxiliary aids and services may include but are not limited to *readers; taped texts; audio recordings; Braille materials and displays; screen reader software; magnification software; optical readers; secondary auditory programs; large print materials; accessible information and communication technology; or other effective methods of making visually delivered materials available to individuals who are blind or have vision loss.* (45 CFR 92.102)

“Blindness” means *central visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye with the use of a correcting lens. An eye that has a limitation in the field of vision so that the widest diameter of the visual field subtends an angle no greater than 20 degrees is considered to have a central visual acuity of 20/200 or less.* [750 ILCS 85/15]

“Braille” means a form of written language for people who are blind, in which characters are represented by patterns of raised dots that are felt with the fingertips.

“Child Welfare Contributing Agency” or “Contributing Agency” means a public or private entity that, by contract or agreement with the Title IV–E agency, provides child abuse and neglect investigations, placement, or child welfare case management (or any combination of these) to children and families, formerly referred to as “Purchase of Service” or “Private” agencies.

“Department” or “DCFS” means the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services.

“Large Print” (also **large-type** or **large-font**) means the formatting of a book or other text document in which the typeface (or font), and sometimes the medium, are considerably larger than usual, to accommodate people who have poor vision.

“Qualified Reader” means *someone who is able to read effectively, accurately and impartially using any necessary specialized vocabulary.*

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

October 24, 2024 – PT 2024.18

“Supportive Parenting Services” means services that assist a person with blindness in the effective use of non-visual techniques and other alternative methods to enable the person to discharge parental responsibilities as successfully as a person who does not have blindness. [750 ILCS 85/15]

“Vision loss” for the purpose of these procedures, means a *degenerative condition that reasonably can be expected to result in blindness.* [750 ILCS 85/15]

b) Accessibility of Services to All Persons

Regardless of the person’s *race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, marital status, order of protection status, disability, military status, sexual orientation, pregnancy, or unfavorable discharge from military service*, all individuals have the same right to be referred for DCFS services. [775 ILCS 5/1-103]

In accordance with Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Acts of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 793 and 794); the U.S. Constitution; the 1970 Illinois Constitution; and applicable state and federal laws, regulations or court orders the Department to comply and forbids discrimination in providing services to a DCFS clients who are blind or have vision loss. For this reason, the following apply:

- 1) *A person’s blindness or vision loss shall not serve as a basis for denial or restriction of parenting time or the allocation of parental responsibilities if the parenting time or the allocation of parental responsibilities is determined to be otherwise in the best interests of the child;*
- 2) *A person’s blindness or vision loss shall not serve as a basis for denial of participation in public or private adoption when the adoption is determined to be otherwise in the best interests of the child;*
- 3) *A person’s blindness or vision loss shall not serve as a basis for denial of foster care or guardianship when the appointment is determined to be otherwise in the best interests of the child;*
- 4) *The Department of Children and Family Services shall develop and implement procedures that ensure and provide equal access to child welfare services, programs, and activities in a nondiscriminatory manner. Services, programs, and activities include, but are not limited to, investigations, assessment, provision of in-home services, out-of-home placements, case planning and service planning, visitation, guardianship, adoption, foster care, and reunification services. Such services, program, and activities may also extend to proceedings under the Juvenile Court Act and proceedings to terminate parental rights; and*

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

October 24, 2024 – PT 2024.18

- 5) *Provide training to child welfare investigators and caseworkers any worker providing direct service child welfare professionals such as but not limited to child protection specialist/investigator, child welfare worker, intact, placement and supervisor staff on these procedures.*

If the court determines that the right of a person with blindness or vision loss to the allocation of parental responsibilities, parenting time, foster care, guardianship, or adoption should be denied or limited in any manner, the court shall make specific written findings stating the basis for such a determination and why supportive parenting services cannot prevent the denial or limitation. [750 ILCS 85/20]

c) **Specialized Interventions and Services for Individuals with Blindness or Vision Loss**

- 1) Requirements for DCFS and Child Welfare Contributing Agency (Contributing Agency) workers

The DCFS Agency Performance Team (APT) is the division that monitors Contributing Agency workers and DCFS employees are monitored by their supervisors to ensure that compliance with the following take place:

A) Initial Contact and Case Hand-off

The DCFS or Contributing Agency worker making an initial contact and the worker who is responsible for the case hand-off shall ensure that persons with blindness or vision loss are identified. The mode of communication they use shall be documented.

The DCFS or Contributing Agency worker is responsible for providing the client with the CFS 496-4, Notice of Client Rights for Individuals who are Blind or Have Vision Loss. This document shall be provided and read to the client by the DCFS/Contributing Agency worker or by a paid reader. The Department will provide a qualified reader, large print, braille, or electronic reader device upon the client's request. If the braille document is used, the client shall sign at the bottom of the document with a signature guide card. The worker shall record the date next to the signature. The completed CFS 496-4 shall be added to the client file. A braille copy of the notice shall be left with the client. The worker shall document these activities on the case notes.

The DCFS or Contributing Agency worker shall notify the Statewide Deaf and Blind Services Coordinator of the client via Outlook mailbox at DCFS.DeafBlindClientNotification@illinois.gov.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

October 24, 2024 – PT 2024.18

B) Auxiliary Aids

Auxiliary aids and services for clients who are blind or have vision loss, can be provided at no cost to the client. Listed below are auxiliary materials/devices available to clients who are blind or have vision loss that will aid in making their environment safer for themselves and their families. Auxiliary aids and services include, but are not limited to:

Note: The Department will assist in the appropriate referrals to obtain the following provisions.

- a qualified reader (person or an electronic device);
- information in large print;
- taped texts;
- audio texts (an audio recording of printed information);
- screen reader software;
- magnification software;
- optical readers;
- secondary auditory programs;
- accessible information and communication technology;
- acquisition or modification of equipment aids (electronically for use with a computer screen-reading program);
- braille materials (all investigation notices, DCFS brochures and case documents will be provided in braille, when requested); or
- other effective methods of making visually delivered materials available to individuals who are blind or have vision loss.

2) Assessments and/or Screening

The therapist, psychologist, or other clinician conducting an assessment/screening shall have knowledge of blindness/vision loss and the cultural implications.

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

October 24, 2024 – PT 2024.18

3) Services

A) Communication Requirements

All services shall be made available in a manner which can be understood by the client with special communication needs, such as those who have limited or no English-speaking ability or who are blind/vision loss. It is the DCFS and Contributing Agency worker's/Supervisor's responsibility to identify needs early in the life of the case in order to provide proper services such as; suitable staff that can communicate with the client, notice, letters, forms and other text translated into the clients preferred method (braille, large print, audio recording of printed material).

B) Specialized Parenting Services

Evaluations of the ability to care for a child by a caretaker who is blind or has vision loss must be individualized and not based on someone's disability. Auxiliary aids and modern technology that can be utilized to assist in the caring of their children are, but not limited to:

- baby monitors;
- alerts;
- parenting classes/education;
- advocacy; and
- counseling.

Note: Parent coaching on the use of auxiliary devices should be provided by the program providing it or the agency that made the recommendation (e.g. school, light house, 0 - 3 program). For assistance on this the worker or supervisor can contact the Statewide Deaf and Blind Services Coordinator via Outlook mailbox at DCFS.DeafBlindClientNotification@illinois.gov.

4) Placement Considerations for Children Who are Blind or Have Vision Loss

The Department and Contributing Agencies will prioritize placing a child who is blind or has significant vision loss into a home that is knowledgeable about the special needs related to vision loss. In the event there is not currently a viable home with this knowledge, the Department will provide resources and training through the Deaf and Blind Services Coordinator.

Note: If the worker or client has any questions about obtaining these services or require more information, they can contact:

Statewide Deaf and Blind Services Coordinator

Video Phone: (312) 957-4817

Phone: (217) 785-2651

E-mail: DCFS.DeafBlindClientNotification@Illinois.gov

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

October 24, 2024 – PT 2024.18

IF THE WORKER OR CLIENT FEELS THAT THE CLIENT’S NEEDS HAVE NOT BEEN MET BY DCFS, THEY CAN CONTACT:

Advocacy Office

Phone: (217) 524-2029 or (800) 232-3798

Fax: (217) 557-7278

E-mail: dcfs.advocacy@illinois.gov

d) Education

Education and training sessions, in a group setting or individually, can be requested by contacting the Statewide Deaf and Blind Services Coordinator. Topics that can be discussed during educational sessions include, but are not limited to:

- 1) concerns that biological parents, caregivers or adoptive parents who are blind or have vision loss may have;
- 2) cultural issues and uniqueness;
- 3) referencing rules, procedures, and regulations related to resources available for clients who are blind or have vision loss and assisting workers in accessing this information; and
- 4) provide information on “alternative techniques” that are specific to parents/care givers who are blind or have vision loss.

Note: To arrange in-service education regarding service provision, contact the Statewide Deaf and Blind Services Coordinator via Outlook mailbox at:

DCFS.DeafBlindClientNotification@illinois.gov

e) Freedom from Discrimination

If any individual seeking or receiving Department services has reason to believe that they have been discriminated against they shall be directed to file a complaint with the Department's Deaf and Blind Services Coordinator:

Department of Children and Family Services
Deaf and Blind Services Coordinator
406 E Monroe St.
Springfield, IL 62701
Voice (217) 785-2651
Video Phone (312) 957-4817
DCFS.DeafBlindClientNotification@illinois.gov

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

October 24, 2024 – PT 2024.18

A complaint can be initiated verbally or in writing but must be filed within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory act. The individual will be asked to complete the complaint form, **CFS 766-1 Discrimination Complaint Form for Non-employees**, which are to be sent to the above address. Staff will assist individuals in obtaining and/or completing the form, if assistance is needed.

The Statewide Deaf and Blind Services Coordinator will conduct an internal investigation and make a recommendation within 30 working days to appropriate management personnel regarding whether there is substantial evidence to support the charge. If there is substantial evidence finding, conciliation will be recommended. If there is a lack of substantial evidence finding, reconciliation will not be recommended. The complainant will be notified of the results of the investigation.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the results of the investigation, the complaint can also be filed with any of the following agencies:

Illinois Department of Human Rights

| | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 555 W Monroe, STE 700 | 524 S. 2nd St. STE 300 |
| Chicago, IL 60661 | Springfield, Illinois 62701 |
| Tel: (312) 814-6200 | Tel: (217) 785-5100 |
| TTY: (866) 740-3953 | TTY: (866) 740-395 |
| Fax: (312) 814-6251 | Fax: (217) 785-5106 |

Email: IDHR.ReportSH@illinois.gov or IDHR.Intake@illinois.gov

Email: idhr.webmail@illinois.gov
Website: Human Rights (illinois.gov)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office for Civil Rights (OCR)

200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Room 509F HHH Building
Washington, D.C. 20201
Tel: (800) 368-1019
TDD: (800) 537-7697

Website: www.hhs.gov/ocr or
[OCR Home | HHS.gov](http://OCR.Home|HHS.gov)

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

October 24, 2024 – PT 2024.18

RESOURCES

The list below of additional resources for clients who are blind or have vision loss can also be found at <https://www.icbonline.org/resources>.

- 1) Chicago Lighthouse for People Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired
<https://chicagolighthouse.org/>
- 2) Center for Sight & Hearing (Rockford)
<https://www.cshni.org/#>
- 3) Horizons for the Blind (Crystal Lake)
<http://www.horizons-blind.org/>
- 4) Central Illinois Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired (Peoria)
<http://cicbvi.org/>
- 5) Illinois Assistive Technology Program (Springfield)
<https://www.iltech.org/>
- 6) Spectrios Institute for Low Vision (Wheaton)
<https://spectrios.org/>
- 7) Blind Service Association (Chicago)
<http://www.blindserviceassociation.org/>
- 8) Second Sense |Beyond Vision Loss (Chicago)
<https://www.second-sense.org/>
- 9) Resources and Information for Individuals Who Are Deaf and/or Blind in Chicago
www.chicagohearingssociety.org/chs-deafblind-program/