

BUTLER COUNTY CHILDREN SERVICES

POLICY NO.: 3.1	SUBJECT: RELATIVE/NONRELATIVE PLACEMENT REQUEST AND APPROVAL
OAC: 5101:2-42-05, 2-42-18	EFFECTIVE DATE: 8/27/02
	REVISION DATE: 12/16/03, 9/26/06, 11/07, 1/11
	REVIEW DATE: 9/26/06, 11/07, 8/09, 1/11

PURPOSE: To ensure that substitute care placements with relative/non-relatives are assessed for appropriateness and safety.

Butler County Children Services believes it is in the child's best interest to utilize kinship placements. This helps reduce the stress and trauma and aid in increasing support to the child and family. Appropriate assessment of the relative/non-relative home is paramount to insuring the child's safety in the environment where the child will reside.

POLICY:

3.1.1 The agency may approve placement with substitute caregivers pursuant to considerations required by OAC 5101:2-42-05 (Selection of a Placement Setting) and OAC 5101: 2-42-18 (Approval of Placement with Relative and Non-relative Substitute Caregivers) if the placement is determined to be in the child's best interest and if the prospective substitute caregivers prefer not to be certified through ODJFS. See definitions of relative/non-relative on page 5.

PROCEDURE:

1. If a placement of a child with a relative/non-relative is being pursued prior to the approval of a home study, the placing worker must complete the following:
 - Screen for the caregiver's willingness and ability to care for the child;
 - Collect the identifying information listed on the home study referral form;
 - View the home and assess for safety concerns using the Initial Home study Checklist attached;
 - Screen BCCS child abuse and neglect records. Substantiated or indicated allegations of abuse and/or neglect will result in the child not being placed in the home of the relative/non-relative until further assessment by the home study unit is completed;

- Conduct an initial screen of all adult members of the household for criminal background. If there is any felony or misdemeanor on the relative/non-relative, the placing worker must consult with a home study specialist, placement supervisor or an administrator prior to placement;
- Submit the home study referral form to the home study unit within 24 hours of the placement in order for the procedures below to be fully initiated.
- Attach the Kinship placement history form to the request to track the placement. Any subsequent changes in placement must be updated on the form.

Failure to submit the request for a home study within 24 hours will result in the placing worker completing the safety audit within 5 days of the placement and the caregiver agreement signed.

2. When court orders a parent home study, the worker requesting the home study must attach a copy of the court order with the request.
3. The home study specialist shall adhere to the following procedures and document its actions in approving the placement setting:
 - (A) Initiate a criminal background check on the prospective relative or non-relative caregiver and all adults residing within the home with the BCII. If any such person does not have proof that he or she has been a resident of Ohio for the past five years and a criminal records check with the FBI has not been conducted within the past year, request BCII to obtain this information. The required criminal record check must be completed prior to the agency approving the prospective relative or non-relative placement.
 - (B) Collect identifying information (first name, last name, maiden name, aliases, social security number, address, telephone number, place of employment) on the prospective caregiver and others residing in the home.
 - (C) Check the BCCS child abuse/neglect records for prospective caregiver and others residing in the home and request a check of the Central Registry through ODJFS.
 - (D) Assess the safety of the home using the JFS1348 "Safety Audit of a Foster Home".
 - (E) Provide the prospective caregiver with known information regarding educational, medical, child care, and special needs of the child including information on how to access support services to meet the needs of the child.
 - (F) Provide the prospective caregiver with the following information:
 - (1) How to apply for Ohio Works First (OWF) child-only financial assistance and Medicaid coverage;
 - (2) How to apply for certification as a foster caregiver;
 - (3) The requirements for foster caregiver certification;
 - (4) The difference in payment between an OWF child-only payment and the foster care per diem; and
 - (5) The difference in the eligibility for supportive services.

- (G) Assess the prospective caregiver's ability and willingness to provide care and supervision of the child and to provide a safe and appropriate placement for the child.
- (H) Require the prospective caregiver to submit written notification if a person at least twelve years of age residing within the home of the prospective caregiver has been convicted of or plead guilty to any offenses described in Section 5101:0319 of the Revised Code, (Aggravated murder, Murder, Voluntary Manslaughter, Involuntary Manslaughter, Felonious Assault, Assault, Rape, Sexual Battery, Gross Sexual Imposition, Conspiracy Involving an Attempt to Commit Aggravated Murder or Murder), or has been adjudicated to be a delinquent child for committing an act that if committed by an adult would have constituted such a violation.
4. When a child must be removed from his or her home immediately, the agency may place the child with the prospective relative or non-relative caregiver and initiate the assessments required above no later than the next business day. All activities listed in this policy must be completed no later than five days from the date the child was placed.
 5. The agency shall approve or deny the relative or non-relative placement and provide the applicant with written notification of the approval or denial no later than thirty days from the date the assessment was initiated, or the child was placed, whichever comes first.
 6. The agency shall not approve the placement when the relative or non-relative has had his or her parental rights involuntarily terminated or if the relative or non-relative or other adults residing within the home have been convicted of or plead guilty to any offenses identified in paragraphs (J1) and (J2) of rule 5101:2-7-02 of the Administrative Code unless he or she meets the conditions of paragraphs (I)(1) to (I)(4) of rule 5101:2-7-02 of the Administrative Code.
 7. If the agency disapproves of a court-ordered placement of a child, it shall notify the court in writing of its findings and recommend a suitable substitute care placement. The agency shall continue to notify the court in writing of its findings and recommended substitute care placement at least every six months.
 8. The agency shall maintain written documentation within the family file of all assessments and findings in approving or disapproving the placement.
 9. The agency shall re-evaluate the placement annually to assure that the placement continues to meet the requirements of this policy for approval of placement. The child's worker must submit an updated home study request to the home study unit following the 9 month case review.
 10. Relative home studies are not necessary for the purpose of supervising visits, however, the family's worker must perform the following activities:
 - Visual safety check of environment if visits take place in the relative's home;
 - Document reason for needed supervision and the relative's willingness to provide;
 - Criminal background checks;

- SACWIS, CSB View and microfilm check to determine present and past involvement with the agency.

Definition:

“Relative”:

- (1) Individuals related by blood or adoption:
 - (a) Parents, grandparents, including grandparents with the prefix “great,” “great-great,” “grand,” or “great-grand”;
 - (b) Siblings;
 - (c) Aunts, uncles, nephews, and nieces, including such relative with the prefix “great,” “great-great,” or “great-grand”;
 - (d) First cousins and first cousins once removed.
- (2) Stepparents and stepsiblings;
- (3) Spouses and former spouses of individuals named in paragraph (1) of this definition.

“Non-Relative” for the purposes of selecting a substitute care setting for the placement of a child:

- (a) An individual identified by the current custodial caretaker or child as having a familiar and longstanding relationship with the child or family.



Jeff Centers, Executive Director