

## BUTLER COUNTY CHILDREN SERVICES

POLICY NO.: <b>9.4</b>	SUBJECT: <b>DILIGENT SEARCH &amp; PARENT LOCATOR POLICY</b>
OAC:	EFFECTIVE DATE: 4/22/2003
	REVISION DATE:  12/16/2003
	REVIEW DATE: 3/22/2005, 3/28/2006,12/07, 10/09

### PURPOSE:

This required policy described efforts the agency will make in order to find parents.

### POLICY:

The Parent/Custodian Locator Service assists casework staff in locating parents that the agency does not have a current address for.

1. Prior to a worker filing a complaint of abuse, neglect, or dependency or a motion for temporary, permanent, legal, or planned permanent living arrangement, they shall ask each parent/custodian and if appropriate, each child, questions to assist in locating absent parents/custodians. Workers should ask questions to attempt to obtain the information asked for on the Parent/Custodian Locator Caseworker Checklist. Once workers have asked basic questions regarding the whereabouts of all parents and custodians, the caseworkers should follow up on any leads that result from these inquiries and document all location efforts in the case file. At minimum the caseworker shall do the following:
  - a. Request screener to conduct a CRIS-E check (see parent locator CRIS-E form).
  - b. Complete a check of the city telephone directory.
  - c. Make a home visit to the last known address on record unless determined to be futile by supervisor.
  - d. Make contact and hold conversation with all known relatives in person or by telephone requesting information on whereabouts of parent.

- e. Contact the person's last known employer.
2. If, after completing the steps above, the parent or custodian is not located, the caseworker must complete a Diligent Search Request Form and submit it to the individual responsible for diligent searches along with the results of the CRIS-E search.
3. The individual shall complete the Diligent Search and provide a copy of the BCCS Record of Diligent Search Form to the caseworker. If a probable address for the missing parent/custodian is located as a result of the diligent search, the caseworker shall attempt to verify the address. If the court documents (complaint or motion) have already been filed when the potential address is located, the caseworker shall immediately complete a face sheet for the prosecutor's office requesting that a praecipe for service at the potential address be filed with the court.
4. If the diligent search is unable to locate a potential address for a missing parent/custodian, the caseworker shall complete the purchase order and affidavit for service by publication (advertisement).
5. The casework supervisor may provide the caseworker with additional case specific instructions of how to continue to search for the proper address. If the Diligent Search Form contains specific instructions for the worker on how to proceed on their individual case the worker shall follow the direction of their supervisor. A worker shall not file an affidavit and purchase order for publication until receiving approval from their supervisor.
6. The BCCS record of Diligent Search shall be placed in the Court Section of the Family Case File.
7. Workers shall continually make an effort to locate absent parents/custodians throughout the life of the case.
8. If at any time during the life of the case, the worker becomes aware of an address of an absent parent/custodian, the worker must immediately notify their supervisor and/or the prosecutor assigned to the case.

*Supervisor's approval for not conducting visit to last known address shall only be given if supervisor has adequate information in the file to show that a visit to that address would be futile in assisting to locate the parent... for example: another caseworker has visited in the past, conversation has been held with the persons living at that address etc... A record of returned mail from the address is NOT enough to allow for a waiver of the home visit to the last known address by the supervisor.*

## USE OF PARENT LOCATOR TO FIND RELATIVES

If a caseworker requests, the individual responsible for diligent search will attempt to find the whereabouts of relatives of children with open agency cases. The individual may not use any resources of the CSEA to search for relatives as their resources are strictly to be used to locate Parents/Custodians. All other searches may be conducted to assist with the location of relatives when a caseworker requests such service.

Approval Date:  
10/28/2009

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff Centers", written over a faint horizontal line.

Jeff Centers, Executive Director