

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

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Issue 21-06

Date: 04/08/21

PLACEMENT PRIOR TO RESOURCE FAMILY APPROVAL

This is to provide staff with additional information pending revision of Procedural Guide [0100-520.05](#), Placement Prior to Resource Family Approval especially regarding “compelling reason” placements. A “compelling reason” placement can support a child or nonminor dependent (NMD) in maintaining family connections. A “compelling reason” placement can also ensure a child is able to reside in the least-restrictive placement that can meet their needs. If a child or NMD is not placed with a relative or NREFM on an emergency basis, and a Resource Family Approval (RFA) assessment has been initiated for a relative or NREFM wanting placement, on-going consideration should be given to making a “compelling reason” placement and concerted efforts be made to meet the requirements.

Placement of a child or NMD may be made prior to the Resource Family Approval, at any time during the child's case, including pre or post disposition, if either of the following situations apply:

1. The placement is made with a relative or NREFM on an emergency basis or;
2. There is a “compelling reason” for the placement based on the needs of the child or NMD. A “compelling reason” may include but is not limited to the following:
 - The unique needs of the child or NMD or;
 - The best interest of the child or NMD to maintain his or her family or family-like connections with a relative or NREFM.
 - In the case of an Indian child, compliance with placement preference requirements set forth in Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) Section 361.31 and the federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) of 1978 (25 U.S.C. Section 1901 et seq.).

Prior to placing a child or NMD with an RFA applicant for a “compelling reason”, RFA staff must complete the following:

1. A health and safety assessment of the home and grounds, outdoor activity space, and storage areas of the home has been completed and documented on form [RFA-03](#), Resource Family Home Health and Safety Assessment Checklist, and that a capacity determination has been completed, as specified in Section 10-04 of the [RFA Written Directives](#).
2. A background check of the applicant and all adults residing or regularly present in the home has been completed as specified in Section 6-03A of the [RFA Written Directives](#) and if necessary, any criminal record exemptions have been approved pursuant to Section 6-03B of the [RFA Written Directives](#).

“Compelling reason” placements support timely placement with relatives and NREFMs, especially if emergency placement did not occur because of possible concerns (home environment standards or more information is needed regarding a criminal background). Through casework teaming, the Primary CSW, RFA CSW and their supervisors should discuss if a “compelling reason” placement is applicable. The RFA CSW and SCSW should share updates on the anticipated timeframe and status of completion of the [RFA-03](#) and/or background checks, including the criminal exemption, as needed.

For specific information regarding placing out-of-county, please refer to [FYI 21-01](#), Out of County (OCC) Emergency Placement for Relatives/NREFMs.



If you have any questions regarding this release, please e-mail your question to:

Policy@dcfs.lacounty.gov

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