

Resource Family Approval

PowerPoint Slides w/Notes

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Resource Family Approval Training

Day 1: Overview of RFA

Version 6.0 | August 1, 2019

Purpose of this Training

- To provide County staff with information on the Resource Family Approval (RFA) program.
- This program directly impacts counties and foster family agencies by creating a new foster caregiver approval process that replaces the previous processes of licensing or certifying foster homes and approving relatives and prospective adoptive parents and guardians.

Learning Objectives

- Learning Objective Ice Breaker Activity



Day 1 Training Overview

- Goals and Objectives of RFA
- Review of E-learning
- RFA Key Messages
- Focus on Permanency
- Cultural Humility
- Home Environment



E-Learning Review

- Jeopardy Game



RFA Key Messages

Focuses on Lifelong Relationships & Quality Parenting

- No additional approvals for adoption or guardianship
- Considers ability to meet the needs of vulnerable children

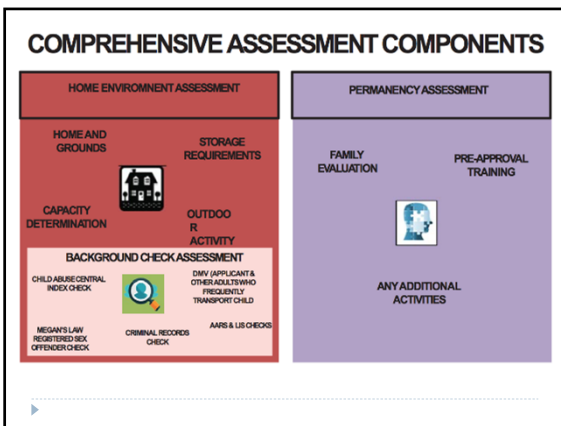
Achieves Results for Children and Families

- Families are better prepared and supported
- Training and support for all families → more stability, fewer moves

Improves Efficiency


- Eliminates duplicative processes



[illegible]

Thinking about Permanency

VIDEO



Madea From The Motion Picture
Tyler Perry's
Madea's Family Reunion
Cameos are just one, Laughs different.

After a decade of making the most powerful African American women in America laugh, Tyler Perry returns with a new film, Madea's Family Reunion. In this heartwarming comedy, Madea (Tyler Perry) returns to her hometown to help her family deal with the challenges of life. The film features a star-studded cast of comedians and actors, including Tyler Perry, Cuba Gooding Jr., and many more. Madea's Family Reunion is a hilarious and heartwarming comedy that will have you laughing out loud.

Watch the trailer for Madea's Family Reunion here: <http://www.madeasfamilyreunion.com>

© 2015 Tyler Perry Studios. All rights reserved. TM & © Tyler Perry Studios. All rights reserved.

Permanency: What is it?

- Reunification
- Adoption
- Guardianship
- Lifelong committed parents
- Lifelong connections
- Mentors



How Does RFA Support Permanency

RFA focuses on quality relationships and lifelong parenting

- Considers ability to meet the needs of vulnerable children
- Ensuring Native American Children are being placed within their tribes via Tribally Specified Homes. (ACL 19-17)
- Families are better prepared and supported
- Training and support for all families = more stability
- No additional approval for adoption or guardianship



Activity: Looking at Engagement

- Role Play: The James Family



Culture Video

VIDEO



Group-Table Activity

➤ Discussion:

- What are some things observed in the video you perceive as culturally bias?
- How might similar biases come up when working with resource families?



Practicing Cultural Humility

- Those who practice cultural humility view others as capable and work to understand their worldview and any oppression or discrimination that they may have experienced as well.
- They use their best communication skills—open-ended questions and reflective listening—to explore their concerns, thoughts, and ideas.

Activity: Engaging around Culture

- Having the Conversation
 - Read June and Jon Sun Scenario (pg. 39-40)
 - How would you engage this family and be culturally sensitive?
 - Complete a role play activity in groups of three.
 - Observer questions:
 - How did you know the Resource Family felt heard?
 - What were some examples of engagement?

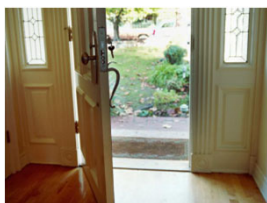


RFA Application

- An Applicant must be 18 years of age
- An Applicant must be in good physical and mental health
- RFA Application (RFA 01)
- Supporting Documents
 - Proof of ID
 - Consent to a DMV Record check
 - Health Questionnaire (RFA 07)
 - Verification of current employment
 - Verification of income
 - Verification that an applicant owns, rents, or written permission to reside in home.
 - History as an approved, licensed, or certified family home or as an employee in a license facility.

Home Environment

- Home Environment Assessment is conducted



Capacity Determination

- There cannot be more than six (6) children in the home, including bio, adoptive, and guardianship children, unless there is a sibling group placed.
 - Sibling groups may exceed six (6) children when the home is sufficient in size and each child's social worker has determined their needs will be met.
- When capacity determination is less than applicant's request, County must provide justification in writing to applicant, including a right to request a review of the decision.
- See WD 10-04 for additional reasons.



Home and Grounds

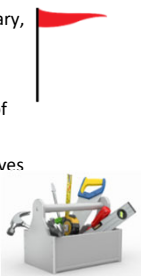
- Outdoor Activity Space
- Storage Requirements
- Emergency Procedures
- Reporting Requirements
- Records for Children and Non-Minor Dependents
- Personal Rights
- Telephones
- Transportation
- Food and Nutrition
- Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard
- Responsibility for Providing Care and Supervision
- Cooperation and Compliance



Flag Activity: Written Directives

Homes and Grounds:

- Home and grounds are clean, safe, sanitary, and in good repair
- Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detector
- Indoor and Outdoor Passageways clear of obstruction
- Fireplaces, open faced heaters, woodstoves are safe
- Adequate lighting



Group Discussion

- What does clean, safe, sanitary, and in good repair mean to us?
- How long would it take you to learn and implement all of the components of clean, safe, sanitary, and in good repair **as defined by the Written Directives**?



Flag Activity: Written Directives

Bedroom Requirements are discussed:

- How to evaluate what is considered “in the best interest of the child”
- No more than four children OR non-minor dependents (NMD) OR one child and one NMD per room
- No more than two infants sharing the room with a Resource Family
- **changes to the age requirements**
- A bedroom cannot be a room that is commonly used for other purposes WD 11-01(b)(2)



Documented Alternative Plan (DAP)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The County may approve a Documented Alternative Plan (DAP): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ On a case-by-case basis ➤ Bedroom area only ➤ DAPs now include for a child to share a room with an adult and for adults sleeping in a common area such as the living room WD 10-03 ➤ Applicable to all Resource Family homes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The County must ensure that the (DAP): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provides an alternative plan that meets the same standards in terms of safety, sanitation, and personal rights of each child and nonminor dependent in the home. ➤ Is not detrimental to the child's health and safety ➤ A written request with supporting evidences is submitted by the program staff for approval by the County. |
|--|--|

Group Discussion

- How will it be different for the RFA worker having up to four (4) children in a bedroom?
- Will the assessment look different between relatives/NREFM and unrelated homes?
- What might be some examples of assessment questions an RFA worker would use to determine appropriate room capacity?



Home and Grounds

VIDEO

Why Moms Get Nothing Done!



Flag Activity: Written Directives

Outdoor Activity Space:

- If there is a yard or activity space, must be free of hazards
- For Resource Families with a swimming pool or hot tub or other bodies of water applying for children under age 10 and/or developmentally, mentally, or physically disabled
 - Must be fenced or covered
 - There must be an adult who knows how to swim and provides continual supervision.



Flag Activity: Written Directives

Storage Requirements:

- Poisons and firearms must be locked.
 - Resource Family may use trigger locks, cable locks, or other firearm safety devices.
 - Ammunitions shall be stored and locked separately from firearms.
- Medicines, disinfectants, and cleaning solutions must be inaccessible (Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standard - RPPS).



Flag Activity: Written Directives

Emergency Procedures:

- 2 telephone numbers and, if available, two email addresses as 24-hour contact information to the County, including contact information for alternative caregivers and place in a prominent location
- Resource Family will need to discuss with the family Emergency procedures every six (6) months.



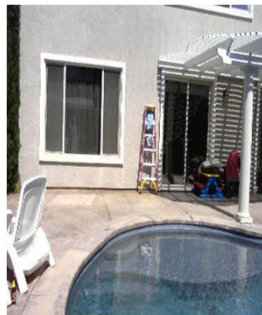
Telephones

- Telephone service includes cellular, internet, or landline.
- If cellular phone is being used, RFA staff shall ensure there is access to telephone service at all times.

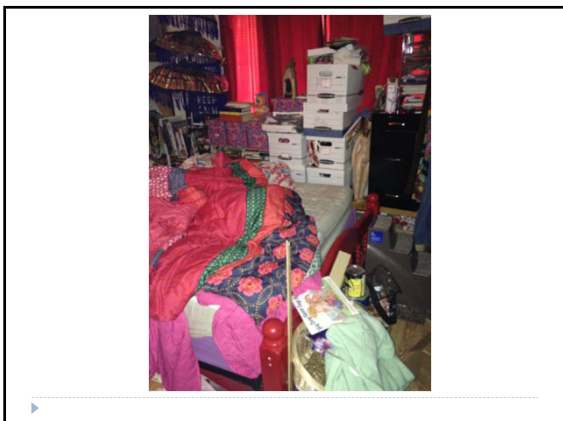


Deficiency Exercise









Flag Activity: Written Directives

Background Check

- W & I Code 16519.5(d)
 - All adults residing or regularly present in the home.
 - Criminal records check
 - Child Abuse Central Index check
 - Megan's Law check
 - DMV
 - AARS System (Administrative Action Records System)
 - Licensing Information System
 - Rap back
 - [Background Assessment Guide \(BAG\)](#)



Flag Activity: Written Directives

Exemption Criteria

- **WD 6-03B**
 - **Review BAG**
 - Consider factors for evidence of good character and rehabilitation.
- Certain crimes cannot be exempted.
- The county may place conditions on the approval.
- Ability to transfer exemptions.



Discussing a Criminal Record

- The nature of the findings
- Time frames
- Circumstances surrounding the findings
- Activities since the findings
- Character references
- Pardons
- Court certification of rehab
- Other



Flag Activity: Written Directives

Confidentiality

- "W & I code section 10850"
All applications and records
concerning any individual
made or kept by any public
officer or agency.....relating
to any form of Social
Services.....shall be
confidential....



Confidentiality



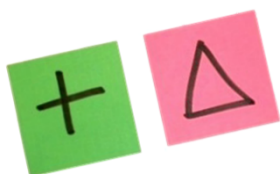
The Resource Family File Requirements

- Maintain a central RFA file for each applicant.
- Records shall be maintained securely for at least 5 years following the date of application withdrawal, denial, recession, approval, criminal record exemption denial or recession, exclusion or forfeiture or surrender of approval. (WD-10-05)
- Please see WD 10-05 for the list of items to remain in the confidential section of the Resource Family file.

▶ 40

Wrap up

- What have you learned?
- What questions do you still have?



▶

Just Stop It!!

- *Coping with your worries!*
<https://vimeo.com/10880189>



▶

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Resource Family Approval Training

Day 2: Approval Process

Version 6.0 | August 1, 2019

Day 2 Training Overview

- Permanency Assessment Written Directives review
- Family Evaluation
- Interviewing Skills
- Written Report
- Placement Prior to Approval
- CWS/CMS



Learning Objectives

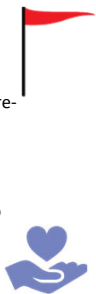
- Learning Objective Ice Breaker Activity



Flag Activity: Written Directives

Permanency Assessment

- A Resource Family permanency assessment shall include all of the following:
 1. Verification that each applicant completed pre-approval training
 2. A Family Evaluation of each applicant(s)
 3. Verification of the completion of any other activities related to each applicant's ability to achieve permanency with the child



Focus of Permanency Assessments

- Willingness to Maintain Connections
- Successful Coping with Challenges
- Expectations



Flag Activity: Written Directives

Family Evaluation

- Analysis of family structures, values, discipline, practices, parenting style, coping strategies, and current relationships.
 - Minimum of 2 interviews
 - If 2 applicants, one separate and one joint



Family Evaluation and the RFA Process

- This assessment is **one** piece of the RFA process.
- It is a contributing element to the overall assessment of the applicants.
- This assessment will **not** approve or deny a family solely based on the responses received.
- It will be used as a **tool** to do an overall evaluation of the family to see where additional support may need to be added or to determine if the applicants may not be an appropriate Resource Family.



Why Are They Intrusive?

It's personal!



Personal
Personal
Personal
Personal
Personal
Personal



Rollercoaster



Solution Focused Inquiry

Solution Focused Inquiry is a practice of using questions and having conversations that strengthen an individual or family's capacity to achieve their *own best judgment in difficult times* by surfacing and making visible:

- People's past and present capacities (how they survived trauma).
- Achievements, assets, networks of support, resources they bring, unexplored potentials, innovations, strengths, high-point moments.
- Expressions of wisdom, values, traditions, stories and visions of valued and possible futures.



Solution Focused Questions

- Solution Focused Questions "Try On" handout
- Coaching and Supervision Tips



Practice Activity

- For each category, individually write a question.
- Put them in the center of the table.
- Read and discuss as a table group.
- Pick the one you would like to "try on."
- Ask your question and see how the person reacts to your question.



Goals of the Family Evaluation

- Develop a clear understanding of how an individual's life experiences have impacted their behavior, belief systems and interpersonal relationships.
- **Develop a clear understanding of how past experiences affects current functioning and their ability to parent a child in care**
- The assessment also allows for more appropriate purposeful placement.



Family Evaluation *vs.* Biography or Psychological Evaluation

- Biographies
- Family Evaluation
- Psychological Evaluation



Family Evaluation Components

- Life Experiences
- Risk Assessment
- Current Relationships
- Financial Situation
- Employment
- Motivation
- Background Checks
- Parenting Experiences

Assessment Skills

VIDEO

Dr. Beverly Ford on
Assessment Skills



The Written Report

- A summary and analysis of all information gathered
- Copy given to the Resource Family **even if the family is denied**
- **WD 4-04**



Flag Activity: Written Directives

Written Report:

- Beginning the Process
- **Written Directives Section 6-07**



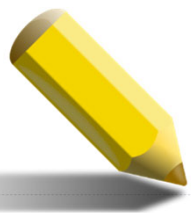
Assessments Take into Account

- The interplay between:
 - Family relationships and functioning
 - Education, employment, and financial status
 - Parenting abilities
 - Physical and mental health status
 - Interest in permanency



Activity: Written Report

- Choose a family that you have worked with in the past to write the practice Written Report.
- The important part of this activity is to practice writing the report.



Flag Activity: Written Directives

Placements Prior to Approval

- Welfare & Institution Code §309 and §361.45
- What is considered a placement prior to approval?
 1. Placement is made with a relative or NREFM on an emergency basis,

OR

 1. There is a compelling reason for the placement based on the needs of the child.



Placement Prior to Approval with a Relative or NREFM

➤ Immediate Steps:

- Criminal Records check (CLETS)
- Child Abuse Central Index check
- Home Environment Inspection for undue risk to the health and safety of the child.

➤ Within 5 business days:

- Fingerprint completion within 5 days of an emergency placement or within 10 days of a CLETS being conducted for each adult residing in the home.
- Ensure receipt of application and RFA 01B (criminal records statement for all adults residing or regularly present and left alone with the children)
- Discuss funding available to a relative or NREFM prior to approval as a Resource Family.
 - Emergency Caregiver Funding
- Initiate a Home Environment Assessment Checklist (RFA-03)



Emergency Placement with a Relative or NREFM (cont'd)

➤ Within 90 calendar days:

- Comprehensive assessment
- Permanency Assessment
- Family Evaluation
- Pre-Approval Training
- Additional activities related to an applicant's ability to achieve permanency with a child or nonminor dependent.
- Complete written report
- The County shall submit to the Department on a monthly basis the number of applications with a placement prior to approval pending 90 days or more and the reason for the delay.



The Critical Communication!

- Between ER staff who do Emergency Placements and RFA staff who follow up on the approvals
 - Get the application referral to the RFA staff as soon as possible
 - Communicating around approval of other potential relatives
 - Emergency placement process has not changed. The role of the RFA worker begins at the time of receiving the application.



Placement Based on Compelling Reason

- A County may place a child or nonminor dependent with an applicant prior to Resource Family Approval based on a compelling reason, pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code section 16519.5(e).
 - A compelling reason may include, but is not limited to the following:
 - The unique needs of a child or nonminor dependent.
 - The best interest of a child or nonminor dependent to maintain his or her family or family-like connections with an applicant.



Placement Based on Compelling Reason Cont.

Prior to placement:

- Complete background checks on applicants and all adults living or regularly present in the home (including any criminal exemptions)
- Complete a Home Health and Safety Assessment using form RFA 03

Within 90 days of placement:

- Comprehensive Assessment
 - Family Evaluation (Permanency and Risk Assessment is included within)
 - Ensure completion of pre-approval training
 - Minimum of 12 hours required
 - Other activities associated with the comprehensive assessment not already complete
- Complete a Written Report



Flag Activity: Written Directives

- Pre-Approval Training
 - A minimum of 12 hours of pre-approval training is required
 - CPR and First-Aid training is now required within 90 days post approval
 - An individual may begin pre-approval training no more than 60 days prior to submitting an application.
 - Completed within 90 days of emergency placement or compelling reason.



Engaging Families

- Interactions about a Resource Parent's involvement in the pre-approval training are an excellent way to begin to engage with Resource Families and to assist them through the process.
- There are many reasons a family might struggle with their participation in the training, and we cannot assume it is resistance or inability to be a Resource Family.



Listen to the Families

- Why?
 - They may have had negative experiences with training.
 - They may be afraid that they don't have the knowledge or skills of others in the training.
 - They may be afraid of being judged.
 - They may feel overwhelmed.
 - They may have fears or reasons for resistance.



Activity: Enhancing Permanency

- Can you think of other areas or issues specific to your County that might be included in training?



Approving the Resource Family

- Once all necessary requirements have been met, Approval Certificate issued to the applicant(s) shall contain the following:
 - The name of the County.
 - The name(s) of the Resource Family and the address of the home.
 - The date of approval.
 - The capacity for which the Resource Family is approved.
 - If applicable, that the approval is for a specific child or nonminor dependent (do not list name(s)).
 - If applicable, that there are conditions placed on the approval pursuant to.



Evaluation Factors

- Evaluate and analyze information
- Look at:
 - The effect on the care provided to children
 - The effect on permanency
 - Capacity and ability rather than willingness



Justification of Approval or Denial

- Approval decision needs to be based on information received during the assessment process and not the **worker's own personal opinion.**
- There could be instances where the County disagrees with the recommendation of an outside agency that conducted the Family Evaluation.
 - If the County is going to go against the recommendation, this needs to be justified and documented in the written report.



Activity: Addressing Barriers

- Scenario 1: The Resource Parent has a diagnosed condition of Major Depression.
- Scenario 2: The financial statements show that the Resource Family does not have a savings or much discretionary funds after paying bills.
- Scenario 3: The Resource Parent has a DUI from 10 years ago.
 - What do you need to know?
 - What are the strengths of this family?
 - Are there any concerns with this family?
 - What needs to happen next?
 - With all this information how would you work with this family.



Group Discussion

- Mitigating Concerns:
- What are available tools to support a worker to address concerns with an applicant?
 - Chart responses



Data Entry Instructions for Resource Family Applicants and Placements into CWS/CMS

- The instructions have been developed to instruct counties on how to enter data into the (CWS) (CMS) (RFA) applicants, placements prior to approval (emergency/compelling reason placements) and placements with an approved Resource Family.



The screenshot displays the 'Personnel Information' window, which is a form for managing employee data. The window is organized into several functional areas:

- Navigation Bar:** Located at the top, it includes tabs for 'Personnel Home', 'Personnel Information', 'Personnel Search', 'Personnel Reports', and 'Personnel Settings'.
- Substitute Case Provider:** This section contains a table with columns for 'Name', 'Assess Start Date', and 'Assess End Date'. It lists 'J.A. Candy' with an 'Assess Start Date' of '12/19/2016'.
- Confidential Attributes:** This section contains a table with columns for 'Attribute', 'Value', and 'Status'. It lists attributes such as 'SSN', 'Phone Number', 'Employment Status', 'Education', and 'High School or Equivalent'.
- Personal Information:** This section contains a table with columns for 'Name', 'Title', 'Email Address', and 'Social Security Number'. It lists 'J.A. Candy' with a 'Title' of 'Candy', an 'Email Address' of 'jenny@personnel.com', and a 'Social Security Number' of '123-45-6789'.
- Residence:** This section contains a table with columns for 'Address' and 'City/State/Zip'. It lists '1234 Main St' with a 'City/State/Zip' of 'Anytown, CA 90210'.
- Employment:** This section contains a table with columns for 'Employer Name' and 'Title'. It lists 'Personnel Home' with a 'Title' of 'Candy'.
- Education:** This section contains a table with columns for 'Degree' and 'Field of Study'. It lists 'Bachelor's Degree' with a 'Field of Study' of 'Business Administration'.
- Licenses:** This section contains a table with columns for 'License Number' and 'Expiration Date'. It lists '123456789' with an 'Expiration Date' of '12/31/2017'.
- Associations:** This section contains a table with columns for 'Association Name' and 'Start Date'. It lists 'Personnel Home' with a 'Start Date' of '12/19/2016'.
- References:** This section contains a table with columns for 'Reference Name' and 'Start Date'. It lists 'Personnel Home' with a 'Start Date' of '12/19/2016'.

The screenshot shows the 'Family' tab of a software application. The top navigation bar includes 'File', 'Edit', 'View', 'Tools', and 'Help'. Below this is a menu bar with options like 'Substitute Case Provider', 'Other Children', 'Other Adults', 'Chap/Phil', 'Liaison Info', 'Comments', 'Special Projects', 'Pages', 'LA Payee', 'Held Status', and 'Background Check'. The main window title is 'Placement Home (Apple: FRACHF Home)'. The form is divided into several sections:

- Identification:**
 - Name: FRACHF Home
 - Type: Foster Family Agency Let Resource / Foster Home
 - License Number: [Empty]
- Age Range:**
 - Placements: Bed/Hall: [Empty], Ad. Cap.: [Empty]
 - From: [Empty] To: [Empty]
 - Primary Phone: [Empty] Ext.: [Empty]
 - Checkboxes: Transitional Housing Placement Program Facility, This home is on hold, Moved to New Address, At Capacity, Adoption Only.
- Backstop Contact:**
 - Name: [Empty] Phone: [Empty] Ext.: [Empty]
 - At Capacity: [Empty] Adoption Only: [Empty]
- Address:**
 - Street Name: [Empty] City: [Empty]
 - State: California ZIP: 95655 Geographic Region: Sacramento County of Location: Sacramento
 - Foreign Country: [Empty] Foreign ZIP: [Empty] Foreign Address Description (Postoffice Name, etc.): [Empty]
- Placement Home End Date:**
 - End Date: [Empty]
 - Reason Type: [Empty]
 - Comments: [Empty]

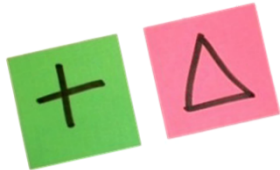
Name	
S-RFH NREFM	
Start Date	End Date
11/19/2016	
County	
Statewide	
Description	
Identify when children in a Resource Family Home RFH are placed with a caregiver who is a Non-Related Extended Family Member.	

[illegible]

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Wrap up

- What have you learned?
- What questions do you still have?



VIDEO

Let Go of the
Day's Stress



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RESOURCE
FAMILY
APPROVAL


Resource Family Approval Training

Day 3: The Approval Process

Version 6.0 | August 1, 2019


Day 3 Training Overview

- Child's and NMD Personal Rights
- Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard (RPPS)
- Conversion
- Portability
- Out of County Protocol
- Support of the Resource Family
- Approval Updates
- Inactive Status



Learning Objectives

Review Learning Objectives



RESOURCE
FAMILY
APPROVAL

Flag Activity: Written Directives

- Child Personal Rights & NMD Personal Rights
 - Check for understanding



Reasonable Prudent Parent Standard (RPPS)

- Provide all children/youth in care with a “normal” life experience.
- Empower the resource family to encourage youth to engage in extracurricular activities that promote child well-being.
- Allow for reasonable parenting decisions to be made by the resource family without waiting to obtain the social worker, probation officer, or Juvenile Court approval.




RPPS for Older Youth

- Access to information on:
 - Vocational and post-secondary educational options including:
 - Admission criteria for universities, colleges, trade, and vocational schools
 - Participating in campus tours
 - Internet research on post-secondary schools
 - Attending post-secondary school-sponsored events
 - Learning how to obtain financial aid



VIDEO

Free-range
Parenting




VIDEO

“Treat me like a normal child”

Conversion Of Existing Home

- Conversion All County Letter (ACL) 17-16
- **County Authorized Respite (ACL) 18-02**
- An approved relative or licensed foster home that had a child in placement during 2017 may be approved as a Resource Family once they have successfully completed a Family Evaluation.
- All existing homes must be converted to RFA by 12/31/2020
- **Webinar available on Conversions located on RFA website**



Conversion

If a home did not have a placement between January to December 2017, the family's license or relative approval **has been** forfeited.

- If this **has happened** and a family wants to take a new placement in the future, they will need to re-apply and be approved under the new RFA process.
- This does not apply to families with approved adoption home studies.



Conversion of Relatives/NREFMs with a current adoption home study

- RFA-00 Release of Information
- Approved adoption home study (youth in care's names redacted)
- SOC 815, 817, 818 (ASFA Approval Forms)
- Criminal Background Check information on all adults
- RFA-05A Resource Family Approval Certificate



Existing Caregiver with Approved Adoptive Home Study

A CAREGIVER IS NOT REQUIRED TO HAVE HAD A PLACEMENT IN 2017 IF:

- Deemed a Resource Family if home study and any updates was completed pursuant to Title 22, Division 2, Adoptions Manual section 35183.1 *prior* to 1/1/18



Conversion of Licensed Foster Homes with a current adoption home study

- RFA-00 Release of Information
- Approved adoption home study (youth in care's names redacted)
- RFA-05A Resource Family Approval Certificate



Portability

- An approved Resource Family can transfer their approval to a subsequent agency (W&I Code 16519.58)
- FFA to County
 - The Resource Family completes the RFA 10-Portability Application and submits to the County.
 - The County sends the RFA 10 to the FFA requesting the RF's file, excluding the CORI. The FFA will have 20 days to file the document.
 - The County will transfer the family's rap back and clearances.
 - The County will complete an update then send the FFA a copy of the approval certificate. The RF's approval is forfeited with the FFA.



Portability cont.

- County to FFA
- Within 20 business days of the County's receipt of the Portability Application:
 - (A) Complete and sign Section III of form RFA 10 – Resource Family Approval – Portability Application. Return the completed form to the subsequent foster family agency.
 - (B) Provide the subsequent foster family agency with a copy of the Resource Family's file, excluding any criminal offender record information documents received directly from the California Department of Justice.



Out of County Protocol



- Host County is the county that is the legal residence of the Resource Family.
- Placing County is the county with jurisdiction for a dependent child or NMD of a California county court.
- Contiguous Counties will complete their own RFA approvals unless there is an agreement in place between counties.



Out Of County Protocol

Whichever county does the approval is then responsible for all subsequent activities related to the supervision and investigation of the Resource Family.

These activities include:

- Criminal clearance and exemption processes
- Approval Updates
- Investigation of complaints
- Receipt of criminal clearance sub-arrest notification and any indicated action.
- Updated home and grounds inspection if the family moves



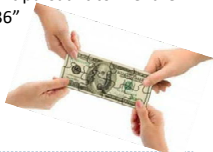
Out Of County Protocol

- If the host county is the approving county, the host county shall notify the placing county of any complaints or sub-arrest notifications and any actions taken against the resource family.
- For further information on the finalized protocol the full version can be located at [RFA out of county approval protocol](#)



Funding

- An applicant is not eligible to receive an Aid to Families with Dependent Children-Foster Care payment on behalf of a child or nonminor dependent until the applicant receives Resource Family Approval and the child or nonminor dependent meets all other eligibility criteria.
- A relative or NREFM shall receive emergency caregiver funding effective the date of placement pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code section 11461.36"



Post Approval Monitoring

- A County shall monitor Resource Families through the following:
 - Approval Updates
 - Periodic evaluations and home assessments as needed
 - Investigating complaints
 - Developing corrective action plans, if necessary.
 - Investigating matches of registered sex offenders
 - CDSS will monitor counties for compliance annually.
 - Provide on-going support



Types of Updates

- Find Approval Updates in Written Directives
- Annual Update
- Significant Change Update
- Relocation of Resource Family Update
- Addition of a Resource Parent Update
- Removal of a Resource Parent



Inactive Status

- To be placed on Inactive Status, a County must receive written or verbal notification by the Resource Family that includes the following information:
 - The date the Inactive Status will begin
 - The reason for the request
 - An anticipated date the Inactive Status will end.
- A Resource Family can not be placed on Inactive Status if a child or nonminor dependent is placed in the home
- A Resource Family must give a 30 day notice to a County to end their Inactive Status. The Resource Family will then be subject to an approval Update
- A period of inactive status may not exceed two years.



Forfeiture of Resource Family Approval

- A Resource Family surrenders their approval to the County
- The sole Resource Parent dies.
- A Resource Family is convicted of an offense for which a County is prohibited from granting a criminal record exemption.
- A Resource Family abandons the approved home.
- A Resource Family fails to cooperate with an annual update within 30 calendar days.
- When RF is approved by another FFA or a county
- WD: 10-01B



Family Friendly / Child Centered Support

Post Approval

- Recruitment
- Development
- Support

Activity:

- Create an Advertisement Include 3 factors (min) using only graphics and "catch phrases"



RFA Support (cont.)

- Engagement
- QPI
- Partnership Plan
- Training Opportunities
- Psychotropic Medications
- Trauma Handouts
- Natural Support Systems



Activity: Success and Accomplishments

- Do you have a way to handle compliments as well as complaints?
- How do you ensure you acknowledge your Resource Families' successes and accomplishments?



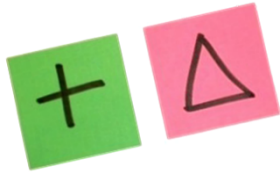
Language Reflects Thinking: Words Matter

- We must change language as our thinking changes.
- Words Matter Activity



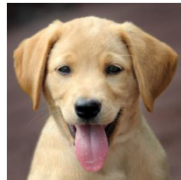
Wrap up

- What have you learned?
- What questions do you still have?



VIDEO

Let Go of the
Day's Stress



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Resource Family Approval Training

Day 4: Post-Approval Process

Version 6.0 | August 1, 2019

Day 4 Training Overview

- Complaint Process
- Post-Investigation Activities and Cross Reporting
- Administrative Actions
- Appeal Proceedings
- Position Statements



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Learning Objectives

Review Learning Objectives



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Flag Activity: Written Directives

- Complaint Process Intake
 - A County shall review any information presented by any person concerning a Resource Family to determine whether or not the Resource Family may not have met or may not be meeting the requirements of one or more of the Written Directives or any applicable law, regardless of whether or not the information is presented in the form of an allegation.



Complaint Process Intake

- Complaints can come to the County in any form (telephone, in person, mail/email).
- Identify all allegations not meeting Written Directives or applicable law.
- When in doubt, consult with the supervisor or the Department's RFA Liaison.



Complaint and Investigations Forms

- RFA 802- Complaint Intake Form
 - Documents the complaint, findings, and next steps.
- RFA 9099- Investigation Report
 - Documents the allegations and investigation findings. Provided to the RF upon completion of investigation.
- RFA 9099C- Investigation Report cont.
 - Documents substantiated allegations that require a CAP.
- RFA 812- Detail Supportive Information
 - Optional form used to document interviews in more detail.
- RFA 811- Confidential Names
 - Optional form used to include the names associated with the complaint.

Complaint Intake Report RFA 802

- The RFA 802 should contain complete information about the allegations, complainant, victim(s), witnesses, and suspects.
- If the complaint is received by mail, CPS Referral, or email, attach the document to the RFA 802.
- The RFA 802 will be updated with the findings from the complaint investigation.



Complaint Intake

- Capture the who, what, when, where, why, and/or how.
- Ask for clarification.
- Use paraphrasing to determine if their meaning is compatible to your understanding.
- Use your tone of voice to suggest interest and courtesy.
- Notify Department by close of the next business day of the serious complaint.
- If dual program, notify FCCH or Regional Center.



Mandated Reporter

- For abuse allegations, the complainant must be asked if an abuse report was filed.
- If no report has been filed, RFA staff are required to report the abuse.
 - When required, the RFA staff must complete an SS 8572 "Suspected Child Abuse Report."
 - A copy of this form is to be submitted to law enforcement and Child Protective Services.



Documenting Allegations

- Write allegations separately regardless of the type; do not combine.
- Keep the allegation basic/general and include all details on RFA 802 page 2.
- Do not include names in the allegation; names should be kept confidential and documented on a confidential form.



Activity: Documenting Allegations

- Documenting Allegations on RFA 802



Identified/Anonymous Callers

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Confidentiality/Disclosure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Let the complainant know that the information is confidential; ➤ However, it may be disclosed if case should go to hearing. ➤ Investigator may contact them for additional information prior to visit. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If possible, give the reluctant caller: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Name and telephone number of the Investigator if assigned, or explain the investigation process. |
|--|---|



Suspected Harassment

- If the complaint appears to be part of a pattern and practice of harassment, consider:
 - Motivation
 - When was the RF home last assessed?
 - History and the probability that the violation exists
- A decision not to investigate an allegation shall be **documented and** approved by a supervisor.



Establishing Controls

The Resource Family visit must be made within **10 calendar days**

- The day it is received is **NOT** counted.
- The due date is counted as the 10th day, unless it is a weekend or official holiday.
- Attempted visits do not meet the requirement. However, do document all attempts.



Determining Due Dates

➤ Calendar Days

➤ **Thursday Complaint Received**

- | | |
|-------------|------------------|
| ➤ Friday | Day 1 |
| ➤ Saturday | Day 2 |
| ➤ Sunday | Day 3 |
| ➤ Monday | Day 4 |
| ➤ Tuesday | Day 5 |
| ➤ Wednesday | Day 6 |
| ➤ Thursday | Day 7 |
| ➤ Friday | Day 8 |
| ➤ Saturday | Day 9 |
| ➤ Sunday | Day 10 |
| ➤ Monday | Holiday |
| ➤ Tuesday | Day 10-Visit Due |

Saturday, Sunday, and holidays are counted, **unless** they fall on the 10th day!!!



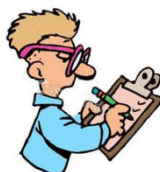
Delaying the 10-Day Visit

- The 10-day visit may be delayed **ONLY IF**:
- Law enforcement requests the visit be delayed.
- Visit would endanger the health and safety of placements.
- Evidence could be destroyed.



Remember

- Timeframes are mandatory and must be monitored by the supervisor.
- Record information on the control log.



Planning the Investigation

- Investigating worker may not be SW of any child in the home, anyone with a conflict of interest or direct relationship with Resource Family.
- Outline a Plan:
 - Interview Complainant.
 - Decide who to interview, where, and in what order.
 - Coordinate visits/interviews with agencies when possible.
 - Obtain and review reports from experts/witnesses
 - Review RFA file.
- Plan the complaint visit.



Complaint Visits Are Unannounced

- The initial 10-day complaint visit shall be unannounced to the Resource Family home upon receipt of a complaint. If two attempted visits were unsuccessful, the visit may be scheduled with supervisory approval.
- When scheduling the visit do not jeopardize the integrity of the investigation or the safety of children/NMD.
 - Each attempt must be documented on the log.
 - Investigator should not disclose complaint when scheduling visit.

The Complaint Visit

- Assessing the situation
 - Home environment
 - Interviews
 - Records review
 - Observations
 - Health/ medical checks
 - Conversation with caregiver/youth about the process of your response



Interviewing Tips...

- Prepare questions
- Take time to build rapport
- Private area (i.e., school)
- No leading questions
- If a forensic interview is to occur, request to observe the interview
- Open-ended questions
 - Listening skills
 - Sensitivity to age, culture, gender
- Document



Additional Allegations in the Course of an Investigation

- When interviewing a victim and/or witness, additional allegations may be made.
- Allegations must be treated as a new complaint and documented on an RFA 802 with a new complaint number.
- Received date for the complaint would be the date the allegation was disclosed in the interview.

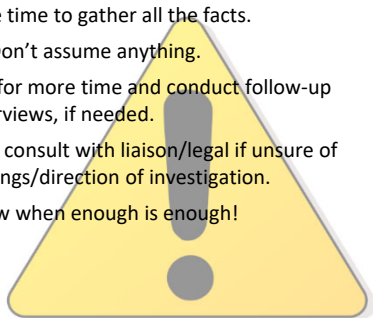


Additional Information Discovered

- If during the course of an investigation, the County discovers or receives information that a RF may not be conforming to applicable laws and/or the WDs, unrelated to the current investigation, the County shall take appropriate action in response.
- When at the home investigating a complaint, the worker notices that the cleaning supplies have been left out and are accessible to small children.
 - How should an RFA Social Worker respond?

Caution!

- Take time to gather all the facts.
 - Don't assume anything.
- Ask for more time and conduct follow-up interviews, if needed.
- May consult with liaison/legal if unsure of findings/direction of investigation.
- Know when enough is enough!



Documenting Complaint Visit RFA 9099

- RFA 9099 is always used to:
 - Document initial and subsequent complaint investigation visits
 - Document findings for all allegations
 - Document who was interviewed, purpose of visit, who was present. Do not use names of RF or children.



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Important Reminders

- Each complaint visit must be documented on an RFA 9099 with the "Needs Further Investigation" box checked until a findings is reached.
- Be thorough.
 - All details relevant to the investigation must be documented.
- Each allegation must have a finding.
- Evidence must support findings.



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Also Remember

- All documents, including those confidential, are discoverable if the case goes to hearing.
 - This includes email, text messages, or any other correspondences regarding the case.
 - It is vital to always be professional and never include opinion or assumptions in complaint documents!



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Weighing the Evidence

- Do witnesses' statements
 - corroborate each other?
- Have you considered experts' statements?
 - Are caregiver's statements consistent with injuries?
- Have you considered all physical evidence?
- Reviewed all reports prepared by other agencies?
- Does evidence support findings?
- Does it prove a different violation?



Findings

- **Substantiated** – A finding that the complaint is substantiated means that the allegation is valid because the preponderance of the evidence standard has been met.
- **Inconclusive** - A finding that the complaint is inconclusive means that although the allegation may have happened or is valid, there is not a preponderance of the evidence to prove that the alleged violation occurred.
- **Unfounded** - A finding that the complaint is unfounded means that the allegation is false, could not have happened, and/or is without a reasonable basis.

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Investigative Finding RFA 9099 & RFA 9099C

- Upon completion of investigation, provide brief summary:
 - i.e., interviews conducted with pertinent individuals and medical reports obtained; based on investigation and evidence obtained, this allegation is substantiated
 - No children/NMDs names
- Develop a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) by using the RFA 9099C to address a deficiency.
- A copy of the 9099 and 9099C (if applicable) must be given to the Resource Family.

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Complaint Investigation Report

- Best practice: Document allegation verbatim as documented on the RFA 802.
- Allegations with the same findings can be documented on one RFA 9099.



Abuse Complaints

- Best Practice:
 - For physical and sexual abuse allegations that appear to have Inconclusive or Unfounded findings, the County may consult with the Department's Legal Division prior to delivering the findings to the Resource Family.



Finish It Up!

- Document all interviews and contacts. (**Confidential documents must never be provided to Resource Families!!!**)
- Best practice: Complete documentation within 72 hours of conducting interview.
- Provide all investigation reports and supporting documentation to supervisor for approval.
- Substantiated and Inconclusive findings are public.
- Everything else is confidential.



Cross Reporting

- County must notify CDSS of the disposition of the investigation of serious complaint or incidents.
- When substantiated, a copy of the RFA 9099 and RFA 9099C must be provided to:
 - Placement Agency
 - CCLD Child Care Office, if home is dual-program Regional Center, when applicable



Complaint Activity

Write up an RFA 9099.



Post-Investigation: Completing RFA 802

- Post-investigative contact with complainant
 - Best Practice: Contact before and after investigation
- Includes:
 - Summary of ALL contacts
 - Dates and documentation
 - Table of Contents for complaint reports
 - Follow-up/Comments, i.e. , Legal Consult or Conformance Conference



Reporting Requirements

- The County shall notify the Department of a serious complaint or serious incident report by the close of the next business day.
- RFA Inbox (rfa@dss.ca.gov)
- Cc to Department RFA Liaison



Activity: Complaints

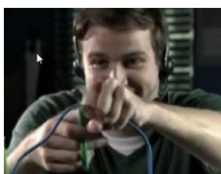
- How would it feel for you to have someone come out to your home to respond to a complaint about the level of your care of your child?



Complaints

VIDEO

5 Tactics for Handling Complaints Effectively



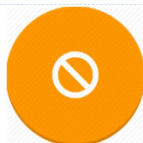
Flag Activity: Written Directives

- Due Process
- Administrative Actions
- Types of Actions



Types of Actions

- Denial of application
- Rescission of approval
- Exclusion of an adult in the home
 - Immediate and non-immediate
- Denial or rescission of a criminal record exemption



Denying Approval of Resource Family (1 of 2)

- A violation of any applicable law or Written Directives
- Aiding, abetting, or permitting the serious violation of any applicable law or Written Directives
- Non-exemptible crime or failure to receive an exemption



Denying an Application

- Legal Consult with Department attorney is required prior to denying the application to ensure evidentiary requirements are met to support the denial if appealed
- Written notification with reason for denial must be sent to applicant (Notice of Action)
- Letter must include appeal process



Rescinding Approval

- "Rescind" means an administrative action by a County to revoke approval of a Resource Family due to a serious or chronic violations or the Resource Family no longer meets the approval standards
- A Resource Family maintains approval status unless rescinded by the County
- Reasons for rescinding mirror those for initial denial
- Violations of the Written Directives
- Legal Consult prior to rescinding an approval.



Issuance of Notice of Action (NOA)

- If a County is taking an action for denial of an application or rescission of Resource Family approval, or denial or rescission of a criminal record exemption, a NOA shall be served on the individual.

Appealing a NOA

- An individual who has been served a NOA can appeal the County's decision by submitting a written appeal to the County.
 - An individual must appeal within 90 calendar days from the date the NOA was served if appealing a denial.
 - An individual must appeal within 25 calendar days from the date the NOA was served if appealing a rescission.
- After receipt of an appeal, the County must date stamp the appeal and document the status in the NOA database.
- The County must then prepare for the Hearing

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CDSS Legal Division and the County

- If the County has a current contract with CDSS Legal Division, the CDSS Legal Division may have specific forms and documents required for the County to complete as part of attorney-client privilege.
- The County's attorney and liaison will help prepare the County for the hearing.

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Statement of Facts (SOF)

- The SOF is a confidential internal document protected by the attorney-client privilege between CDSS Legal Division and a County.
- County must submit a SOF to the Department if the County has a contract with CDSS Legal Division.
- SOF is written by RFA Worker, reviewed by Supervisor, signed/approved by Director or designee.

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Preparing for the Hearing (1 of 2)

- **State Hearings Division (SHD)**
 - Forward the appeal and case file documents to the Legal Division
 - After documentation is forwarded to the Legal Division, the County shall forward the appeal to the SHD no later than 10 days after receiving the appeal.
- **Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH)**
 - Serve an acknowledgement of appeal to the individual
 - The county shall forward the appeal and originals of all documents to the CDSS County Liaison for the Legal Division.

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Preparing for the Hearing (2 of 2)

- **SHD**
 - The SHD shall set a prehearing conference and hearing dates upon receipt of an appeal.
 - The SHD shall serve all parties with a notice of the hearing
- **OAH**
 - A County or the County's legal representative shall request a hearing date for the OAH.
 - The County shall serve the individual with a notice of the hearing.

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Position Statement and Statement of Issues

- **Position Statement**
 - For hearings heard by the SHD
 - Includes: a summary of the facts and issues in a case, citations to applicable statutory or WDs authority, a list of witnesses and documentary evidence which the County intends to use during the hearing with copies attached.
- **Statement of Issues**
 - For hearings heard by the OAH
 - A written statement filed by the County regarding grounds for denial specifying the statutes and rules with which an individual must show compliance.

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Filing the Hearing Documents

- **SHD**
 - The County must prepare and file a position statement with the SHD.
 - Serve the position statement to the individual no later than 2 days prior to a hearing.
- **OAH**
 - The County must prepare and file and Accusation or Statement of Issues.

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Collaboration

How can RFA and other task areas within Child Welfare and Probation work together to benefit the child/youth?

Ex: Licensing and Adoptions



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Short- and Long-Term Benefits

- **Short term:**
 - Ensures child's safety by supporting the safety plan.
 - Communicates information about the child's safety, permanency, and court time frames.
 - Establishes the child and family's team and creates shared agreements about the child's safety.
 - Helps to identify family's underlying needs, how they define the problem, and what success looks like.
 - Team defines what "normal" is in the family and its culture, community, or Tribe.

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Short- and Long-Term Benefits

- Long term:
 - Emphasizes the importance of the family's support team including probation, even after the child welfare agency ends involvement.
 - Helps a circle of support for the child and family.
 - Ensures safety plans are followed and/or modified as needed in the future.



Wrap up

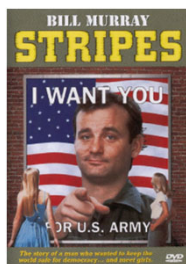
- What have you learned?
- What questions do you still have?



Congratulations!

VIDEO

Graduation Day



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