

CHILD AND FAMILY PERMANENCY TEAMING

Permanency Planning Teams: Family Selection

21-2-2 Page 1 of 5

Policy

All children and youth need enduring, positive relationships with adults who can provide necessary supports.

Children and youth in the care of the Department require timely permanency planning.

Preferred Permanency Goals are:

- Reunification;
- Termination of Parental Rights and Adoption; and
- Transfer of Guardianship.

Permanency Planning Team Responsibilities

The Permanency Planning Team (PPT) is the decision making group for:

- selection of an adoptive family unrelated to the child; and
- approval of relative adoptions/guardianships for children in placement less than six (6) months, assuring that relevant policy and licensing requirements have been met.

The team may also be utilized for other functions at the discretion of the Area Director or Area Office Program Director.

Multidisciplinary Membership

The PPT shall consist of a multidisciplinary membership to ensure that the necessary expertise is available to best inform the discussion and decision of the team.

Team Composition

The Permanency Planning Team shall include the following persons:

- child's social worker and social work supervisor;
- adoption resource specialist;
- Foster and Adoption Services (OFAS) social worker;
- CAFAP or adoptive parent representative;
- an Area Office Program Supervisor;
- a member of the Regional Resource Group (RRG); and
- others as deemed appropriate, including those who are knowledgeable and experienced in selecting adoptive placements or who are informed about the child and their specific needs/challenges.

Alternates shall be identified to participate as necessary.

Racial and Ethnic Make Up of the Team

Every effort shall be made to ensure that the racial and ethnic make-up of the team at large represents the population served by the Area Office.

CHILD AND FAMILY PERMANENCY TEAMING

Permanency Planning Teams: Family Selection

21-2-2 Page 2 of 5

Case Criteria For Team Review

The following types of cases may be reviewed by the PPT:

- proposed non-relative adoption placement;
- proposed foster parent adoption as determined by the social worker and social work supervisor;
- proposed legal risk adoptive placement; and
- approval of relative adoptions/guardianships for children in placement less than six (6) months, assuring that relevant policy and licensing requirements have been met.

The PPT may be utilized at the discretion of the Area Office Managers for use in other case circumstances, such as:

- development of permanency plan;
- assistance with concurrent planning;
- provision of adoption readiness consultation to identify and ensure that the necessary preparation work is being done with the child, such as Life Book work or developing a visitation and placement plan; and
- a proposed relative placement or relative guardianship.

The PPT may also be utilized when suggested by the ACR reviewers for review and discussion or development of a permanency plan.

Foster Care Adoption

Siblings placed separately must be considered when determining the adoptive placement plan. All consideration must be given to reunification of the siblings in placement and/or maintaining a relationship that best meets the needs of the children.

If a foster family is interested in adopting the foster child, then teaming is optional at the discretion of the Social Worker and the Social Work Supervisor.

If a non-relative foster family is interested in adopting the foster child, but is not approved for adoptive placement for the foster child, then the reasons shall be documented and another team meeting shall be scheduled to consider non-related adoption. Consideration of the impact to the child by disrupting such placement is mandatory, including separation from foster siblings, relatives, and community.

Role of Adoption Resource Specialist

The Adoption Resource Specialist liaison shall:

- provide consultation on adoption practice and placement issues;
 - submit all available home studies to the child's Social Worker for review;
 - update family availability;
 - attend and participate in all PPT meetings;
 - continue with all activities for helping to identify resources for the child (e.g., photo listing, Thursday's Child, other exchanges) until the child's placement plans are concrete; and
 - place a hold on the family selected by the team.
-

CHILD AND FAMILY PERMANENCY TEAMING

Permanency Planning Teams: Family Selection

21-2-2 Page 3 of 5

Information for Referral

Prior to the meeting the Social Worker shall:

- review all the home studies received from the Adoption Resource Specialist;
- discuss the studies with his/her supervisor;
- submit the names of the families for consideration to the team Chairperson;
- complete the following forms:
 - DCF-2043, "Permanency Planning Team Referral Form"
 - DCF-2044, "Child Teaming Pre-Questionnaire"
 - DCF-2039, "Child Assessment"
 - DCF-337B and DCF-338B, "Genetic Parent information forms";
- submit the above forms to the team Chairperson; and
- notify FASU and private agency worker(s) whose families are being considered of the meeting date and time and invite them to attend, or be available by phone.

If the Social Worker and Supervisor receive more than five (5) studies for consideration, then the Social Worker and Supervisor shall select no more than five (5) for review.

If the Social Worker and Supervisor receive four (4) or fewer studies, then the Social Worker and Supervisor shall review all four (4) studies.

The studies, along with the child's referral packet, shall be distributed to each team member for review at least five (5) working days prior to the meeting date. Team members shall read the home studies and be prepared to participate in the discussions and decision.

Responsibilities of Chairperson

The Permanency Planning Team Chairperson has the following responsibilities in relation to PPT meetings.

The Chairperson may also convene special team meetings, as needed.

Prior to the meeting the Chairperson shall:

- arrange for meeting time and location as well as notification to members;
- obtain the names of home studies to be reviewed;
- ensure that required information is provided to team members prior to the meeting, inclusive of home studies, child assessment forms, and information regarding the child.

During the meeting the Chairperson shall:

- complete the DCF-2045, "Permanency Planning Team Report";
- maintain the Family Selection Sheets and indicate the selected family resources; and
- record the minutes of the meeting.

After the meeting the Chairperson shall:

- maintain a monthly log of all team reviews on the DCF-2078, "Permanency Planning Team Log"; and
- maintain logs and the individual team reports (DCF-2045) for each review.

CHILD AND FAMILY PERMANENCY TEAMING

Permanency Planning Teams: Family Selection

21-2-2 Page 4 of 5

Selection Meeting

During the meeting the Social Worker shall:

- present information and respond to all questions from the team about the child; and
- indicate his/her choice of family(ies) resources for the child(ren) and the reasons for the decision.

The FASU Social Worker whose family(ies) are being considered shall be present at the team meeting or available by phone to present the family and answer questions of the team.

The team review process will include an opportunity for team members to raise questions about the child(ren). Each family will then be discussed individually.

The selection of a family resource shall be based on a comprehensive discussion of the history and needs of the child(ren), both present and anticipated, in concert with the history, experience, present circumstances and the child profile outlined by the prospective families.

Selection System

To select the family that appears to be best able to meet the child's needs, the following numerical rating system will be used.

(The numbers 3 and 4 have been eliminated to avoid "middle of the road" comparisons).

Rating	Description
1	Not Appropriate
2	A possibility after some consultation has been done
5	Some good points for this child
6	A close second. The family has many strengths
7	Most appropriate family on paper for this child

Selection Process

Each team member including the child's Social Worker or supervisor will rate the families and give reasons supporting their rating. Each member of the team has one (1) vote.

Rating sheets will be given to the Chairperson during the meeting.

Ratings will be tallied using the DCF-2048, "Rating Sheet" and averaged with an average rating of five (5.0) or better required in order to proceed with consideration of a family.

The family with the highest average rating of five or above is the family selected for the placement.

(continued next page)

CHILD AND FAMILY PERMANENCY TEAMING

Permanency Planning Teams: Family Selection

21-2-2 Page 5 of 5

Selection Process (continued)

Each team member including the child's Social Worker or supervisor will rate the families and give reasons supporting their rating. Each member of the team has one (1) vote.

Rating sheets will be given to the Chairperson during the meeting.

Ratings will be tallied using the DCF-2048, "Rating Sheet" and averaged with an average rating of five (5.0) or better required in order to proceed with consideration of a family.

The family with the highest average rating of five or above is the family selected for the placement.

A second and third choice should also be identified if the most appropriate family cannot be used as an adoptive placement resource.

In the event of a tie, the Chairperson's decision shall be final.

The minimum number of committee members who must be present in order to select a family for a child is seven (7) in the larger offices and five (5) in the smaller offices.

Written Record

For each child reviewed by the team, a written record shall be maintained on the DCF-2045, "Permanency Planning Team Report", which shall identify the names of prospective adoptive families.

The reason(s) why each family was not selected for that particular child shall be noted on the DCF-431, "Report of Non-Use of Adoptive Home" by the adoption resource specialist. The reason(s) must be substantive and shall be reviewed by the OFAS Social Worker responsible for that family.

A log of the children and families reviewed shall be maintained by the PPT chairperson.

Review of Families Not Selected

If a family has been identified as a prospective placement resource on six (6) different occasions, but has not been selected for any child, the home study shall be reviewed by the assigned FASU and adoption resource specialist workers to identify areas of concern and determine if and how they can be addressed.

Appeal of Decision

The social worker and/or the social work supervisor may appeal the decision of the Permanency Planning Team to the Area Director within 48 hours.

The written appeal must clearly demonstrate the reasons why the worker/ supervisor disagree with the team's decision.

Appeals from any other party will be reviewed by the Area Director, at his or her discretion.
