

Alternative Caregiver Arrangement

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Policy

In recognizing the importance of using family and community members in our safety planning efforts, the Department of Children and Families (DCF) will adopt an Alternative Caregiver Arrangement (ACA) policy and practice.

As of September 1, 2023, an alternative caregiver arrangement formerly known as a family arrangement will not exceed ten calendar days.

Definition

An alternative caregiver arrangement is a voluntary, immediate safety intervention designed to temporarily address safety concerns while DCF continues to assess and engage the family in planning. It is time-limited and utilized in emergent situations to safeguard a child.

Assessment

Within ten days of the alternative caregiver arrangement, DCF will complete a comprehensive assessment to include:

- multidisciplinary assessment, inclusive of the following entities as applicable:
 - legal
 - foster care services
 - regional resource group (RRG), (e.g., substance use, mental health, intimate partner violence, educational and nursing)

- A CR-CFTM shall be held.

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DCF/Policy/Chapters/21-2-1.pdf>

Assessment Conclusion

At the conclusion of the assessment, DCF shall decide whether to:

- end the alternative caregiver arrangement if safety factors have been sufficiently addressed
- invoke an administrative hold
- pursue an order of temporary custody
- assess the viability of vesting the order of temporary custody with the alternative caregiver or
- file neglect petitions and end the alternative caregiver arrangement.

No extensions will be approved.

Temporary Living Arrangement

If the family has made their own arrangement for a child 14 years of age or older and:

- there are no safety factors identified following DCF's assessment
- all parties agree with the plan to have the child live elsewhere

This would **not** be considered an alternative caregiver arrangement. These arrangements **must** be vetted and approved at the level of the program supervisor or above.