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**Notes and
References**

PLACEMENT PROTOCOL

I. General

- A. When considering out-of-home placement for a youth, the least restrictive setting that is consistent with the minor’s treatment needs and the safety of the public are to be primary considerations. Unless extraordinary circumstances exist, the permanent plan should be family reunification.
- B. This policy addresses the process a Deputy Probation Officer (DPO) must follow when considering out-of- home placement for a youth.

II. Preliminary Determinations:

A. Citizenship

- 1. Assigned Deputy Probation Officer (DPO) will determine if the youth is a U.S. citizen and document accordingly.
- 2. If a youth is not a U.S. citizen, the assigned DPO will attempt to determine if he or she possess documentation to reside in the United States as a non-citizen.
- 3. A youth’s citizenship is not a factor in determining to place him or her. Determining citizenship is necessary to receive Federal funding in support of a placement.
- 4. Officers and staff are not authorized to consult with Federal authorities in determining citizenship.

B. Residency

- 1. If parents are separated or divorced, determine whether custody of the youth has been legally designated. This will be part of any marriage dissolution order.
- 2. Guardianship may have been granted to someone other than a parent and documentation indicating such is to be obtained whenever possible.

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- 3. Youth’s legal residence is wherever the parent or guardian who has legal custody resides.
- 4. Out-of-home placements for non-county residents may occur only under extraordinary circumstances and after staffing with supervisor.

C. Payment for Extra-Parental Placement

It should be determined whether the youth is receiving or is eligible to receive Social Security or Veterans Administration benefits, or has a trust account of any kind. To assist the Department of Social Services offset the costs of placement, these benefits must be identified. The placement Administrative Office Professional (AOP) must be notified immediately once these benefits are identified. The AOP confirms the status of Social Security benefits via Department of Social Services and Social Security Administration.

III. Psychological Evaluations

If needed, a Court-ordered psychological evaluation may be requested by the assigned officer with SPO approval. An evaluation may assist with placement determination and treatment options in particularly complex cases.

IV. Child and Family Teams (CFTs)

A. CFT Model and Legal Authority

The CFT is an integral part of family engagement and service planning and is designed to empower the youth and the parent(s) so they can be fully informed and involved in the placement and case plan decisions. It is important to prepare the youth, family as well as professionals with an explanation of the purpose, people involved, and how the structure of the meeting should occur. Typically, the placing agency facilitates the CFT meeting. The role of the facilitator is one that helps to identify needed contact, builds consensus within the team around collaborative plans, actively supports the agenda, and ensures that the family voice and choice is heard throughout the entire team process.

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B. Prior to the DPO making a placement recommendation to the court a CFT shall be convened. The team will consider the need for placement for the youth in a family relative, non-related family member or any other family type setting, a Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Program (STRTP) or foster care setting.

C. Members

The CFT composition always includes the youth, family members, the current caregiver, a representative from the placing agency, and other individuals identified by the family as being important. A CFT shall also include a representative from the youth's tribe or Indian custodian, Behavioral Wellness staff, foster family agency social worker, or STRTP representative when applicable.

V. Interagency Placement Committee (IPC)

All cases considered for placement in a STRTP must be presented at IPC.

A. Purpose/Goals and Legal Authority

The purpose of the IPC is to review all cases that meet STRTP criteria and are being recommended by the CFT. IPC members should review all available assessments of the youth and make an informed decision through the IPC process and strongly consider the recommendations of the CFT. The IPC may also serve as a multi-disciplinary committee to guide delivery of services for youth with significant behavioral, emotional, medical, and/or developmental needs.

B. Members

The IPC is made up of Juvenile Supervising Probation Officers, lead staff/representatives of the Department of Behavioral Wellness, Child Welfare Services, County/City Schools, Public Health, Tri-Counties Regional Center, and any other appropriate agency representatives.

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- C. Functions
 - 1. Review and approve recommendations for STRTPs.
 - 2. Review and request a Department of Behavioral Wellness certification for youth who meet STRTP criteria.
 - 3. Review those cases in which youth remain in STRTPs lasting longer than 6 months.

VI. IPC Case Preparation

- A. Staff case thoroughly with Supervisor or DPO Senior.
- B. Explore the use of a combination of community-based treatment alternatives.
- C. Explore placement with ALL other relatives. Submit a Home Connection Finders Request to Child Welfare Services if this has not already been completed.
- D. Determine if a mental health assessment has been completed which supports placement in an STRTP. Specifically, “youth meets medical necessity criteria for Medi-Cal Specialty Mental Health Services,” which is determined by a licensed mental health professional.
- E. Prepare and email an IPC Initial Screening form to the IPC Chair and assigned AOP. Confirm the case is placed on the Agenda. The assigned officer or SPO presents case to IPC.

Information to be provided/ available at IPC consists of:

- 1. Youth’s current needs and plan
- 2. A current Psychological Evaluation/mental health assessment.
- 3. Social History Information

Refer to
Manual
Section 1604

Pro-237
Pro-241

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4. Current Individual Education Plan, educational needs
5. Plan whether Presumptive Transfer or Waiver is appropriate.
6. A Recommendation, including reunification/permanency and case plan goals
7. Release of information signed by legal guardian.

VII. Placing Probation Officer’s Responsibilities

When a youth is approved for placement, the placing officer must complete the following tasks:

- A. Advise the Placement Unit Administrative Office Professional (AOP) of placement approval within 48 hours.
- B. Obtain placement packet and complete forms within the prescribed time:
 1. Complete Foster Youth Service Form and return to the regional placement AOP within 24 hours. This will be facsimiled to County Office of Education. They will provide the youth’s educational information for the disposition report, case plan and Health & Education Passport (HEP).
 2. If the youth is detained, obtain a copy of the medical exam report from the Juvenile Hall. This will be incorporated within the HEP.
 3. Complete the remaining forms in the placement packet and return to the regional placement AOP five (5) days prior to the date of placement.
 4. Complete the Status of Youth in Placement document (Pro-292) and send to regional placement AOP on the date of youth’s placement.

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Pro 292

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5. Placement of undocumented youth will require all placement protocols as a youth who are United States citizens, such as Foster Service form, HEP, and medical exam report. Permanent Residence Under the Color of the Law (PRUCOL) is not recognized by the alien status by the united States citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). A PRUCOL response from USCIS is for entitlement purposes only. Thus no immigration benefits result from it. For a youth considered PRUCOL, the USCIS must be aware of the youth's presence in the United States and USCIS must not be actively seeking removal of the youth from the United States. In order to claim state funds for PRUCOL cases under State Only Foster Care youth, the county must complete the G-845 Supplemental Questionnaire and G-845 Supplemental form. The DPO is responsible for completing these forms along with the placement packet.

C. Determine Social Security Benefits- SSI or Other Social Security Benefits

When a youth has been approved for placement by the Department or the Court has indicated its intent to place, the following steps should be taken to determine if the youth is receiving SSI or Other Social Security Benefits:

1. DPO is to check the Juvenile Worksheet and/or interview the youth's parents/guardians to determine if and what kind of benefits the youth is receiving.
2. DPO is to provide regional placement AOP with the youth's (and each of his/her parents') names and Social Security numbers. The placement AOP will send a facsimile to the regional Social Security Office, to determine if it is known that the youth is receiving SSI or other Social Security Benefits.
3. If a youth is receiving Social Security Benefits the regional placement AOP will provide the information to DSS.

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VIII. Health and Education Passport

- A. The Health and Education Passport (HEP) is a binder that travels with the youth going into placement. It contains health and education information pertinent to the care of the youth while in placement. Included within the HEP are the Case Plan, Birth Certificate, Social Security Card, CHDP/Medical Exam report, Immunization Card, school information, and IEP.
- B. The HEP is required to travel with the youth to and from placement. The following procedure will assure timely delivery.
 - 1. The placing DPO will make transportation arrangements once the departure date is determined.
 - 2. The DPO will insure the HEP binder is delivered to the Juvenile Hall within 24 hours of transportation.
- C. Maintaining Passport
 - 1. The placement staff will be required to update and maintain the health and education information within the passport with a copy forwarded to the DPO.
 - 2. Updated information will be kept in the youth's case file.
 - 3. The DPO will review the passport during placement visits to monitor compliance by placement staff.
 - 4. Upon the youth's release or discharge from placement, the DPO or the transportation officer will retrieve the HEP during a monthly visit or at the time of removal from placement.

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IX. School Notification

Whenever a youth is withdrawn from his/her school district due to a court commitment, i.e. camp or out-of-county placement, the superintendent of the youth's current school district must be informed.

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X. Status of Youth in Placement

- A. A Status of Youth in Placement document (Pro-292) is used to monitor the activity of all youth in and out of placement and to monitor the Department's financial obligation to the placement.
- B. A completed Pro-292 must be emailed to the regional placement AOP the day the youth enters placement and on every subsequent removal or return or change of placement.
- C. Completed Pro-292s are maintained in the youth's placement file.

Pro 292

XI. New Placements

The DPO should make every attempt to place in a suitable placement already known and approved by the Probation Department. Should a need arise to place in a new placement or a placement that has not been used for one year, the following protocol must be followed:

- A. Contact the Probation Department in the same county as the new placement to determine their experience with the facility and if they use the facility.
- B. Contact Community Care Licensing to determine the current status of the facility, i.e., is the license current, are there any pending violations or open investigations. Those continuing to operate as group homes under the Rate Classification Level system are not to be considered.

CCL Website

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C. Make an onsite visit.

A Probation Officer must either:

1. Visit the placement prior to placing; or
2. The placing officer or designee must transport the youth to the placement and conduct a site visit at that time.

XII. Out-of-County Placement

While efforts should be made to place a youth as near his or her family as reasonably possible, it is sometimes necessary to place a youth in another California county. Unless placed with a relative or non-relative extended family member, the steps identified in XI, above, are to be followed.

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XIII. Out-of-State Placements

When it becomes necessary to pursue an out-of-state placement for a youth and it becomes ordered by the Juvenile Court, the following steps are to be followed.

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- A. All pre-placement considerations have been met.
- B. Convene a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) meeting. The MDT must at a minimum include County Department of Social Services, County Probation, County Superintendent of Schools, Alcohol Drug and Mental Health Services, and other members as determined by the county.
- C. A written Multi-Disciplinary Team child and placement assessment shall be required prior to placing a child in out-of-state placement.
- D. Complete paperwork for Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) requesting approval for out-of-state placement.

DIV 31
Family Code
7911 and
ICPC 100A
and 100B

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E. Specific court orders must include:

1. The Court finds that in-state facilities or programs have been determined to be unavailable or inadequate to meet the needs of the youth.
2. The Court finds that the facility is licensed or certified by the State of California and the facility is certified by CDSS according to the standards of F.C. 7911.1.

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