



STATE OF GEORGIA
Division of Family and Children Services

Nathan Deal
Governor

Bobby D. Cagle
Director

June 19, 2017

Child Welfare Services Manual Transmittal No. 2017-06

To: County Departments of Family and Children Services
DFCS Regional Directors
State Office Staff

From: Bobby D. Cagle, Director
Georgia Division of Family and Children Services

Re: Child Welfare Policy Manual:

Chapter 10: Foster Care

10.8 Financial and Non-Financial Supports for Children in Foster Care or Who Have Achieved Permanency

Chapter 14: Resource Development

14.09 Continued Parent Development
14.12 Family Evaluation for Relative Adoptions
14.13 Family Re-evaluation
14.14 Family Evaluation Addendums
14.15 Household Approval Status
14.19 Home Safety

Purpose

The purpose of this Child Welfare Services Manual Transmittal (CWSMT) is to announce revisions to the Foster Care and Resource Development chapters in the Child Welfare Policy Manual.

Discussion

The Georgia Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) strives to continuously improve the quality of care being provided to children in foster care and ensure that supports are available to provide for the needs of children in foster care and those who achieve permanency. The following policy sections have updated provisions for policy and practice.

1. Policy 10.8 Foster Care: Financial and Non-Financial Supports for Children in Foster Care or Who Have Achieved Permanency, clarifies that:

- a. The child must be a United States (U.S.) citizen or legal permanent resident to be eligible for Subsidized Guardianship (SG) or Non-Relative Subsidized Guardianship (NRSG).
 - b. If the child is undocumented, the relative must be a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident to be eligible for Enhanced Relative Rate (ERR) subsidy.
 - c. The child's wages should be excluded when calculating the child's monthly income to determine eligibility for the SG, NRSG, and ERR subsidy programs.
NOTE: The child's wages should be reported to the appropriate agencies as it may impact the child's eligibility for programs such as Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income, etc.
2. Policy 14.09 Resource Development: Continued Parent Development:
 - a. Removes the reference to a 30-day grace period as there is no longer a "30-Day Grace" approval status for family foster homes;
 - b. Assigns a policy violation to caregivers who do not obtain the required CPD by the end of the calendar year, and removes the responsibility to make up the CPD hours that were not obtained.
 3. Policy 14.12 Resource Development: Family Evaluation for Relative Adoptions:
 - a. Removes the requirement for an additional drug screening for the purpose of adoption since relatives submit to drug screening as part of the Relative Care Assessment.
 - b. This change brings this policy section into alignment with policy related to the Adoption Consideration Evaluation and the adoption study process.
 4. Policy 14.13 Resource Development: Family Re-Evaluation:
 - a. Eliminates the "30-Day Grace" approval status for a family foster home to meet Title IV-E provisions.
 - b. Changes the terminology 'Supplemental Supervision' to Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS).
 5. Policy 14.14 Resource Development: Family Evaluation Addendums adds procedures to highlight the need for supervisory oversight when deciding whether changes in the circumstances of an approved foster home should be captured using an addendum to the most recent Family Evaluation, or if a Family Re-evaluation is warranted.
 6. Policy 14.15 Resource Development: Household Approval Status eliminates the '30-Day Grace' status and revises the list of Household Approval Statuses accordingly.
 7. Policy 14.19 Resource Development: Home Safety:
 - a. Incorporates the use of a written Water Safety Assessment as part of the evaluation of placement resources in recognition that out-of-home placements need to remain hazard free environments.
 - b. Clarifies safety guidelines for caregivers with pools.

Implementation

This policy update is effective upon the release of this manual transmittal and is available on the Online Directives Information System (ODIS) at <http://odis.dhs.ga.gov/>.

Regional and County Leadership shall provide opportunities for staff to review and discuss the updated policy to ensure implementation. Please refer to policy **1.3 Administration: Access**,

[Distribution and Review of Child Welfare Policies](#) for the applicable requirements and procedures for policy review.

Questions regarding this policy release may be directed to the Field Program Specialist in your region. Regional staff may submit questions to the Policy and Regulations Unit at PPPDUnit@dhs.ga.gov.