

4. Placement in foster care

Sometimes the circumstances of the crisis and the need for an immediate substitute care placement do not permit a search for and assessment of relatives or other adults known to the child, or the search and assessment are not successful. If there are no identified relatives or other adults known to the child, a family foster home is the least restrictive placement option.

Procedure

- In these cases, make a substitute care placement with a family already certified through child welfare. Local offices have various systems for emergency foster care placement. Each branch maintains a list of available foster homes, and certifiers can provide information regarding specific strengths and skills of the foster family, or any current limitations or other concerns. You also may want to check the FACIS provider screen, in the Notes tab, to see if there is any documentation on the certified family. Since resources and procedures vary, it is important to be aware of the branch-specific system for emergency placement in certified foster homes. Some branches have staff assigned to the task of securing an emergency placement. Others have resources such as short-term emergency shelter homes, receiving centers or foster homes available for emergencies. In these situations, consult with the supervisor for the local office procedure.



The Supervisor's Role

When a child is placed in any substitute care placement, the supervisor:

- Ensures that the diligent search for relatives was initiated and continues;
- Reviews documentation, data entry, appropriate documentation and records filing; and
- Conducts routine and scheduled support and consultation sessions with the caseworker.

When a child is placed in a child-specific placement with a relative or adult known to the child:

- **The Permanency, CPS or Certification supervisor:**
 1. Ensures that any relative applicant who is 18, 19 or 20 years of age has been approved by the district manager or designee.
 2. Consults with the certifier on any relative applicant who has any criminal history and ensures the appropriate management review and approval is obtained prior to certification and placement of a child in a relative's home.
 3. Consults with the certifier on any relative applicant who has any abuse/neglect history. The supervisor reviews the history, makes an informed judgment as to whether the family can provide a safe environment for the child, and advises the caseworker on proceeding with the assessment process.

- **The Certification supervisor:**
 1. Reviews all assessment information obtained during the assessment of a relative for certification.
 2. Ensures that an emergency criminal history check has been completed.
 3. Reviews and approves or ensures appropriate management approval of criminal history exceptions prior to certification. Many crimes require approval by the child welfare program manager, district manager or the DHS assistant director for CAF. If the worker cannot access management to have a criminal history exception request reviewed and approved, the child-specific certification cannot proceed.
 4. Reviews and approves or ensures appropriate management approval of child abuse history background checks prior to certification.
 5. Approves the home for placement of the child.
 6. Ensures receipt of all documentation and assessment information for ongoing assessment.
- When the child is placed in regular foster care, the supervisor reviews and approves the decisions of the caseworker in the placement of the child.



Have child-specific certification packets available to you when you contact a relative or other unrelated adult known to the child:

*Include a supply of the following **forms** in the packets:*

SCF 0447 Relative Information

SCF 1260A Application for Approval to Care for a Child in the Custody of DHS

SCF 1011F Consent for Criminal Records and Fingerprint Check

SCF 1255 Applicant Reference

SCF 979 Safety Assessment – Home and Surroundings

SCF 261 DHS Child Welfare Placement Information Form

Bags to transport the child's personal belongings.

Business cards to provide the child and the placement resource with contact information.

Some communities support local child welfare systems by providing teddy bears, blankets or other comforting articles for children placed in protective custody. If your community provides these kinds of supports, have a supply available as you make placements.