

Section 9. Placement in another county

Finding a substitute caregiver as close as possible to a child's parents, so the child can stay in the same school and community, usually is in the child's best interest. Occasionally placement in a county other than the county that has jurisdiction of the case is in the best interest of the child.

There can be a number of reasons for the decision to place in another county – the most appropriate relative lives in another county, a child's special needs can be met by a specific caregiver, the special circumstances of the case plan make an out-of-county placement the best viable option for substitute care, or other reasons specific to the child or the family.

Procedure

- Notify the receiving county that a child will be placed in that county whether or not that office will be asked to provide courtesy supervision.
- Send advance notification to the receiving branch office unless an immediate placement precludes the caseworker's ability to do so. In those instances, the receiving branch office is notified the next working day.
- Send notification to the child welfare program manager. (Some child welfare offices have a designated caseworker who is the liaison for out-of-county placements. In those offices the child welfare program manager will forward the information.)
- Notification includes, but is not limited to, the following information: the ongoing safety plan, child welfare case plan, current action agreement, current petition and court order, CANS screening results and any related supervision plan, whether the child will need personal care services, and any other relevant information (e.g., a psychological evaluation) that may be helpful to the receiving county.
- Consult with the supervisor before making a request for courtesy supervision.
- Prior to making the request for courtesy supervision from the receiving branch office consider the needs of, and services provided to, the child, as well as the importance of consistent contact, needs of the substitute caregiver, and child welfare responsibilities identified in the case plan.
- Prepare a packet for the receiving county's child welfare program manager that includes the following information when requesting courtesy supervision:
 1. The child's name and case number;
 2. The substitute caregiver's name, address and phone number;
 3. The name and contact information for the sending branch caseworker and supervisor;
 4. The ongoing safety plan;
 5. Cans screening results and any supervision plan;

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6. The Child Welfare Case Plan (the most recent 0333a);
 7. Current action agreement;
 8. Current petition and court order;
 9. Relevant child-specific information such as psychological evaluation, IEP or medical condition, including whether the child needs personal care services; and
 10. The proposed plan for the child including any after-care plan when the child is in a residential treatment placement.
- The child’s caseworker (from the sending county) retains the case planning and responsibility for ensuring reimbursement for specialized services, SOC-funded services and transportation.
 - The receiving county will notify the sending branch office of the receipt of the packet and will document receipt of information in case notes. The receiving county will contact the caseworker within 14 days to:
 1. Identify the assigned caseworker;
 2. Clarify roles and responsibilities;
 3. Discuss the frequency of communication between caseworkers; and
 4. Develop a plan to provide court-ordered services in counties where those services may not be available.
 - The receiving county’s caseworker assumes responsibility for required face-to-face contact. All other responsibilities will be negotiated.
 - Notification is not required when placing child a in a residential treatment program, except when a child has developmental disabilities. In those instances the sending caseworker must provide written notification to the Developmental Disabilities case manager in the receiving county that a child has been placed within the service area.
 - In situations where it is necessary to study or certify a home out-of-county, the caseworker makes a request to the receiving county to provide certification or adoptive home study services. If the receiving county’s timelines cannot meet the needs of the child, the sending county may request permission to certify/study the home in the receiving county. The receiving county approves out-of-county placements and child-specific certifications unless there is a county-to-county agreement that has been approved by the district managers of the respective counties. If, after conducting an assessment or home study, the receiving county determines the family cannot be certified, the caseworkers in both the sending and receiving counties will collaborate around how they will notify the family of the findings. If there is disagreement between the caseworkers or certifiers in the counties, the caseworkers contact their respective supervisors to resolve the issue. If the issue cannot be resolved at the supervisory level, supervisors take the matter to the child welfare program managers, then to the Foster Care manager for resolution.
 - For more information, see Appendix 3.12, “Inter-County Case Responsibilities, Requirements, and Oversight Procedure.”