



New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families Policy Manual

1625 PERMANENCY PLANNING

Chapter: **Out-Of-Home Placements**

Section: **Permanency**

Approved:

Joseph E. Ribsam, Jr., DCYF Director

Policy Directive: **21-51**

Effective Date: **December 2021**

References Of Note

Federal Authority: [42 USC 671](#), [42 USC 675](#), and [45 CFR 1356.21](#)

Statutes: [RSA 169-B](#), [RSA 169-C](#), [RSA 169-D](#); and [RSA 170-C](#)

Administrative Rules:

Case Law:

This policy addresses permanency planning for children and youth who are placed in out-of-home care through the Court.

Required Practices

Any deviations to the following information must be documented with Supervisory Approval.

- I. DCYF will make reasonable efforts to maintain the family unit and prevent unnecessary removal of a child from their home whenever possible through family engagement, active case planning, and the provision of services as appropriate.
- II. When a child cannot be safely maintained with their family of origin, permanency planning must begin as soon as the child enters placement.
 - A. The permanency plan must include the establishment of both a permanency goal and a concurrent goal within 60 days of removal.
 - B. These goals include:
 1. Reunification;
 2. Adoption (youth age 14 and older must consent to adoption);
 3. Legal Guardianship by a fit and willing relative or another appropriate party; or
 4. Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) as applicable (age 16 or over).
- III. A child involved with both Child Protective Services (CPS) and Juvenile Justice Services (JJS) will have the same permanency plan in both cases.

- IV. Concerted efforts (frequent and sustained attention) must be made to actively plan for, and work on, both the permanency and concurrent goals simultaneously, until permanency is achieved. To include:
 - A. Ongoing assessment of both goals, with a focus on concerted efforts at achieving the permanency goal, and active concurrent planning; and
 - B. Providing services funded by DHHS and making referrals to community services as appropriate to achieve the goals in a timely manner.

- V. Efforts to achieve timely permanency must be ongoing and must include:
 - A. Meaningful and planned engagement with parents/guardians and children, including active pursuit of identifying, locating, and engaging missing parents as outlined in policy 1501 Family Engagement During a Case;
 - B. Ongoing exploration of relatives and other family supports as potential placement options and ongoing connections for the child, as well as notification of placement to identified relatives;
 - C. Active and timely identification and engagement of individuals identified as potential adoptive parents, guardians, or Primary Caring Adults (PCAs);
 - D. Thoughtful and timely case planning with the family that identifies the needs of all family members, the family's natural supports, and appropriate services to meet family needs;
 - E. Authorization of services (as appropriate) determined to contribute to achieving the permanency plan, and referrals for parents/guardians to community services and other supports as necessary;
 - F. Consideration as to the appropriateness of recommending to the Court scheduling an early permanency hearing for children placed under RSA 169-C (CPS specific) who have been in care at least 6 months when:
 - 1. Both parents, or one (1) parent when the other parent is deceased or not identified, have made no or only negligible efforts to comply with the dispositional orders or there is another compelling reason to review the permanency plan early; and
 - 2. It is highly unlikely the parents will be able to satisfy the standard of return under RSA 169-C:23 at the 12-month permanency hearing.
 - G. Consideration as to the appropriateness of recommending an extension of up to 90 days (CPS specific) only when:
 - 1. The parents are in substantial compliance with the dispositional orders;

2. The parents are diligently working towards reunification, which is expected to occur within 90 days;
 3. It is probable the parents will be able to demonstrate, after the extension and at a subsequent permanency hearing, that they have met the 3 requirements of RSA 169-C:23; and
 4. The extension is in the best interest of the child.
- VI. When it is determined the permanency goal is no longer appropriate, the Division will recommend to the Court that efforts to achieve the permanency goal cease and the identified concurrent goal become the new permanency goal.
- A. The initial permanency goal must be end dated in the DCYF electronic information system upon order of the Court to adopt the concurrent goal.
 - B. No new concurrent goal needs to be identified.
 - C. Recommendations to adopt the concurrent goal, and the reasoning for the recommendation, must be recorded in the case record.
- VII. Concerted efforts to achieve both goals will continue, along with ongoing review regarding proposed changes to the permanency plan, when the Court grants the parents/guardians a permanency hearing extension or denies a motion for an early permanency hearing.
- VIII. When the Court grants an extension upon determining that the parents/guardians have met the standard for return (CPS specific), but that the unique needs of the child warrant continued placement, the permanency goal will remain reunification.
- A. Concerted efforts to support reunification and active concurrent planning must continue.
 - B. Ongoing review as to the appropriateness of maintaining the goal of reunification must occur at least every 90 days, and include the parents continued compliance with the court orders and case plan.
- IX. When siblings enter placement, the unique needs of each child must be taken into consideration in regards to permanency planning.
- A. Any permanency goal that includes adoption of one (1) sibling and not the other, or which includes siblings being adopted separately, must be discussed with the Permanency Planning Team (PPT) and approved by a Field Administrator.
- X. All efforts around permanency planning must be documented in the case record and reported to the Court as appropriate.

Standard Operating Procedures		
SOP	Title	Applicable Disciplines
1625.1	Identifying Appropriate Permanency Goals	CPS and JJS
1625.2	Concerted Efforts to Achieve Permanency	CPS and JJS
1625.3	Sibling Considerations	CPS and JJS
1625.4	Relative Considerations	CPS and JJS

Glossary and Document Specific Definitions

A - B C - D E - F G - I J - L M - N O - Q R - S T - V W - Z

Document Change Log

PD	Modification Made	Approved	Date
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