



NH Department of Health & Human Services
Division for Children, Youth & Families

DCYF Standard Operating Procedure


1625.4 RELATIVE CONSIDERATIONS

Policy Directive: **20-36**

Approved:

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This SOP defines how relatives are considered in identifying appropriate permanency goals for children in placement.

Procedure

The following information is to support the implementation of the above referenced policy. This document shall not preclude staff from using their professional judgement based on individual circumstances, consistent with the requirements of the policy.

- I. Permanency planning will take into consideration the availability of both maternal and paternal relatives to provide support and ongoing placement for children in out-of-home care.
- II. CPSWs and JPPOs are expected to make concerted efforts to identify appropriate family for possible placement when applicable. These efforts should include:
 - A. Early identification of relatives;
 - B. Notification of placement to relatives; and
 - C. Engaging relatives around their ability to be an ongoing resource to the child until permanency is achieved.
- III. When a relative has expressed a desire to be an ongoing resource to a child, CPSWs/JPPOs will explore this with the relative, consider them as a placement or other resource, and provide feedback to the relative as to the plan regarding their role.
- IV. When considering relatives, it is important to take into account:
 - A. Their ability and willingness to meet the safety and well-being needs of the child, including shielding the child from future harm and meeting the child's supervision, housing, medical/mental health, and educational needs;
 - B. What resources are available to support the family in areas of identified need relative to the safety and well-being of the child; and
 - C. The relative's ability to maintain important connections for the child.

1. This includes being willing and able to work with the parents towards reunification when that is the permanency goal.
- V. Circumstances which may exclude relatives from being part of a child's permanency goal may include, but are not limited to:
 - A. Significant risk to the child (e.g. history of being a perpetrator of abuse or neglect, unwillingness or inability to shield the child from future harm, etc.);
 - B. An inability to provide for the child's physical or emotional needs long-term; or
 - C. An unwillingness to work with the parents towards reunification.
 - VI. When it appears that a relative is not an option for permanency planning due to circumstances other than presenting as a risk to the child, there will be exploration of barriers and potential services/resources to overcome those barriers.
 - VII. When it is determined that a child's best interest is served with a concurrent permanency goal that does not include a relative, there must be continued consideration of relatives (both paternal and maternal) until permanency is achieved.
 - VIII. All efforts to engage relatives in permanency planning are documented in the case record and DCYF electronic information system (as a collateral contact with a selected purpose of permanency planning).

Applicable Forms

Form	Title
1552	Child/Youth Information Sheet
1515	Relative Notification Letter
1516	Relative Contact Follow-Up Log

Frequently Asked Questions

Q1. Do I need a release to contact relatives and make them aware of placement?

- A** No, a release is not needed to contact a relative about being a potential placement or resource to a child who has entered placement. RSA 170-G allows for the sharing of information in the case record, so long as sharing the information is not harmful to the child, when disclosure is necessary for the provision of services to the child or family.

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