EFFECTIVE

Immediately upon receipt.

SUBJECTS

1. Foster care Departmental Ward Medicaid standard of promptness.
2. DHS-197, Relative Caregiver Home Study Outline.
3. Relative licensing waiver.
4. Placement outside of a 75-mile radius.
5. Residential placement exception requests.
6. Placement exception requests.
7. Supervisory oversight of assessments and service plans.
8. Parenting time exceptions.
9. Sibling visits.
10. Court reports.
11. Case closing.
12. 90-Day Discharge Meeting.
13. Semi-Annual Transition Meeting.
14. Relative licensing certification process.
15. Permanency planning conferences.
16. Social work contacts.
17. Foster home licensing benchmarks and expectations.

1) FOSTER CARE DEPARTMENTAL WARD MEDICAID STANDARD OF PROMPTNESS

FOM 722-1, Foster Care - Entry into Foster Care

FOM 914, Placement Resources: Monitoring Worker Responsibilities

Foster Care Departmental Ward Medicaid (MA-FCDW) must be opened on SWSS FAJ, for all eligible children, within 14 calendar days of case acceptance.

Reason: Foster Care Program Office recommendation.

2) DHS-197, RELATIVE CAREGIVER HOME STUDY OUTLINE

FOM 722-3, Foster Care - Placement/Replacement

The DHS-197, Relative Caregiver Home Study Outline, is obsolete and has been replaced with the DHS-3130-A, Children's Foster Care Relative Placement Home Study.

Reason: Foster Care Program Office recommendation.

3) RELATIVE LICENSING WAIVER

Waiver Process for DHS

The foster care worker must discuss the benefits of licensure with the relative caregiver utilizing the DHS-972, Foster Home Licensing Requirements for Relative Caregivers. The relative caregiver must sign the DHS-972.

If the relative caregiver requests to forgo licensure, the foster care worker and relative complete the DHS-875, Relative Caregiver Waiver of Licensure.

The foster care worker must forward the following forms to the foster care supervisor for approval and signature:

- The DHS-3130-A, Children's Foster Care Relative Placement Home Study.
- The DHS-875, Relative Caregiver Waiver of Licensure.
- The signed DHS-972, Foster Home Licensing Requirements for Relative Caregivers.

If approved, the foster care supervisor must forward the DHS-875 and DHS-3130-A, to one of the following for final approval:

- In a designated county, the Child Welfare Director. Designated counties include:
  - Wayne.
  - Oakland.
  - Genessee.
  - Macomb.
  - Kent.
  - Ingham.
- In any other county, the County Director.

The waiver must be approved within 30 calendars days of the request date.

The waiver must be kept in the child's case record and signed by the relative caregiver annually. The foster care worker must document the approval date and waiver reason in the Placement Module in SWSS FAJ.

Waiver Process for Placement Agency Foster Care

The Placement Agency Foster Care (PAFC) worker must discuss the benefits of licensure with the relative caregiver utilizing the DHS-972,

Foster Home Licensing Requirements for Relative Caregivers. The relative caregiver must sign the DHS-972.

If the relative caregiver requests to forgo licensure, the PAFC worker and relative complete the DHS-875, Relative Caregiver Waiver of Licensure.

The PAFC worker must forward the following forms to the PAFC supervisor and director for approval and signature:

- The DHS-3130-A, Children's Foster Care Relative Placement Home Study.
- The DHS-875, Relative Caregiver Waiver of Licensure.
- The signed DHS-972, Foster Home Licensing Requirements for Relative Caregivers.

If approved, the PAFC supervisor forwards the DHS-875 and DHS-3130-A to one of the following for final approval:

- In a designated county, the Child Welfare Director.
- In any other county, the County Director.

The waiver must be approved within 30 calendars days of the request date.

The waiver must be returned to the assigned DHS monitor, who will document the approval date and waiver reason in SWSS FAJ, and send a copy to the PAFC provider.

The waiver must be kept in the child's case record and signed by the relative caregiver annually.

Process for Replacement

If the waiver is not approved, the relative caregiver's home must become a licensed foster home, or the child must be moved within 30 calendar days. If the child must be placed in another home, the replacement process is as follows:

- The decision to move a child must be reviewed by the assigned foster care supervisor and the second line supervisor/program manager.
- If the child is an MCI/state ward and the current foster parent/relative caregiver expresses either a verbal or written interest in adopting the child, the MCI Superintendent must be consulted prior to the replacement.
- If the decision to move the child is approved, the assigned foster care worker must locate another placement for the child.

- The assigned foster care worker must request a permanency planning conference to explore alternate placement options.
- The assigned foster care worker must notify the appropriate persons with the DHS-30, Foster Parent Notification of Move and DHS-31, Foster Care Placement Decision Notice.
- The assigned foster care worker must follow the replacement policy outlined in FOM 722-3, Foster Care Placement/Replacement.

Note: After the placement change, the assigned foster care worker must have at least two home visits with the child within the first 30 calendar days, to assess the child's adjustment in the new home.

Reason: Dwayne B. v Snyder, et al. settlement agreement.

4) PLACEMENT OUTSIDE A 75-MILE RADIUS

Children must not be placed outside of a 75-mile radius of the home from which the child entered custody, unless one of the following exceptional circumstances arise:

- The child's needs are so exceptional that they cannot be met by a family or facility within a 75-mile radius.
- The child needs replacement and the child's permanency goal is reunification with his/her parents who at that time reside outside of the 75-mile radius.
- The child is to be placed with a relative/sibling outside of the 75-mile radius.
- The child is to be placed in an appropriate pre-adoptive or adoptive home that is outside of the 75-mile radius.

If the child is placed outside the 75-mile radius a DHS-399, Foster Care Placement Exception Request is required; see Placement Exception Requests in this item.

Reason: Dwayne B. v Snyder, et al. settlement agreement.

5) RESIDENTIAL PLACEMENT EXCEPTION REQUESTS

Residential treatment may be considered after the following criteria have been met.

- The child's needs cannot be met by any other type of placement.
- The child's needs can be met in the specific facility requested.
- All community resources have been exhausted.

- The facility is the least restrictive placement to meet the child's needs.

Prior to a child entering residential treatment, a Change Of Placement Permanency Planning Conference (PPC) must be held to address why residential treatment is being recommended. At the PPC, in addition to the mandatory participants, other key individuals must be included:

- All mental health providers for the child.
- A representative from the child's educational program (if applicable).
- Supportive individuals from the involved community resources.
- A representative from the local Community Mental Health (CMH), even if case services are not currently involving CMH.

Information that must be documented in the child's case file includes:

- A description of the services available in the facility to address the individual child's needs.
- All DHS-396, Residential Placement Exception Request(s).

The need for a residential placement must be reassessed every 90 calendar days. Initial placement and placements that exceed six months must be requested on a DHS-396, Residential Placement Exception Request, and approved by the following:

- In a Designated County, the Child Welfare Director.
- In any other county, the County Director.

Placements that exceed 12 months must be requested on a DHS-396, Residential Placement Exception Request, and approved by Child Welfare Field Operations. The DHS-396, Residential Placement Exception Request, must be submitted for re-approval every six months thereafter.

Pre-Ten Approvals must be requested on a DHS-396, Residential Placement Exception Request, and approved by Child Welfare Field Operations.

Reason: Dwayne B. v Snyder, et al. settlement agreement.

6) PLACEMENT EXCEPTION REQUESTS

When any other placement exception request is needed, the following exception approval process is required:

- The foster care worker must complete the DHS-399, Foster Care Placement Exception Request.
- The DHS-399 is submitted to the foster care supervisor for approval.
- Exceptions receiving approval by the foster care supervisor are forwarded for additional approval to one of the following:
  - In a designated county, the Child Welfare Director.
  - In any other county, the County Director.

If exception approval is not received by the child welfare director or county director, placement cannot be made. All approvals must be filed in the child's case file and in the foster home licensing file with copies to the Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing.

Reason: Dwayne B. v Snyder, et al. settlement agreement.

7) SUPERVISORY OVERSIGHT OF ASSESSMENTS AND SERVICE PLANS

FOM 722-6, Foster Care - Developing the Service Plan

The foster care worker must meet with the foster care supervisor at least monthly to review the status and progress of each case on the worker's case load.

Supervisors must review and approve each service plan. The plan can not be approved until the supervisor has a face-to-face meeting with the foster care worker, which can be the monthly case consultation.

All case consultation meetings between the foster care worker and supervisor are required documentation in the social work contact section of the respective case service plan.

Reason: Dwayne B. v Snyder, et al. settlement agreement.

8) PARENTING TIME EXCEPTIONS

All reasonable efforts must be made to ensure that children in foster care with a goal of reunification have at least weekly visitation with their parents. Reasonable exceptions to this requirement include:

- The court orders less frequent visits.
- The parents are not attending the visits despite the foster care worker taking adequate steps to ensure the parents' ability to visit.
- One or both parents cannot attend the visits due to compelling circumstances such as hospitalization or incarceration.

- The child is above the age of 16 and refuses such visits take place.

All exceptions and reasonable steps to assure that visits take place must be documented in the case plan. If such an exception exists, the foster care worker must review the appropriateness of the child's permanency goal.

Reason: Dwayne B. v Snyder, et al. settlement agreement.

9) SIBLING VISITS

All reasonable efforts must be made to ensure that children in foster care who have siblings in custody, with whom they are not placed, have at least monthly visits with their siblings that are separate from parenting time.

Reason: Foster Care Program Office policy clarification.

10) COURT REPORTS

FOM 722-8, Initial Service Plan

FOM 722-9, Updated Service Plan

FOM 722-9C, Permanent Ward Service Plan

Completion of a court report is required when requested by the court. Court reports are a summarized version of a completed service plan. They are **not** to be completed in lieu of a service plan. The following standardized court report must be used:

- DHS-1280, Initial Court Report.
- DHS-1281, Updated Court Report.
- DHS-665, Permanent Ward Court Report.

Reason: Foster Care Program Office policy clarification.

11) CASE CLOSING

FOM 722-15, Foster Care - Case Closing

In order to initiate case closure, the written court order must be received.

Reason: Foster Care Program Office policy clarification.

12) 90-DAY DISCHARGE MEETING

All foster youth aged 16 or older must have a 90-Day Discharge Meeting. The meeting must be held 90 days prior to a planned discharge from foster care, or within 30 calendar days after an unexpected discharge. The 90-Day Discharge Meeting is held for all youth exiting foster care, regardless of permanency goal (reunification, adoption, guardianship, permanent placement with a fit and willing relative

(PPFWR), Placement in Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA), or APPLA-E.

If the 90-Day Discharge Meeting is held concurrently with any other type of Permanency Planning Conference, all meetings must be registered separately in JJOLT and the appropriate forms completed for each type of meeting.

Reason: Dwayne B. v Snyder, et al. settlement agreement.

13) SEMI-ANNUAL TRANSITION MEETING

Annual transition meetings must occur once every 180 calendar days to discuss a youth's permanency goal and identify supportive adults. The annual transition meeting will now be referred to as a Semi-Annual Transition Meeting.

If a Semi-Annual Transition Meeting is held within 90 days of expected discharge, one meeting may be held to address both the 90-Day Discharge Meeting and the Semi-Annual Transition Meeting. However, both the DHS-901 and the DHS-902 must be completed during the meeting and both meetings must be registered separately in JJOLT.

Reason: Dwayne B. v Snyder, et al. settlement agreement.

14) RELATIVE LICENSING CERTIFICATION PROCESS

FOM 922, Foster Family Home Certification

Certification Process

Upon receipt of the licensing referral the certification worker's responsibilities include:

- Contacting the relative placement within one business day to schedule a home visit.
- Completing two home visits with the relative within 30 calendar days of the referral, and monthly thereafter, until licensure.
- Making active efforts to engage the family in the licensing process. Efforts include but are not limited to the following:
    - Contacting the relative caregiver weekly to assess the progress towards licensure, identifying barriers, and providing assistance with the licensing process.
    - Providing direct assistance to the relative caregiver in overcoming any barriers noted, (such as driving the relative caregiver to get fingerprints as opposed to giving bus tokens; assisting in scheduling medical appoint-

ments; calling references and documenting that the reference was taken via telephone).

- Ensuring the relative is licensed within 180 calendar days of placement of the child(ren) into the relative's home.
- Notifying the assigned foster care worker immediately if the relative is unable to become licensed.

Note: Licensing extensions are no longer accepted.

Reason: Dwayne B. v Snyder, et al. settlement agreement.

15) PERMANENCY PLANNING CONFERENCES (PPC)

FOB 2011-002, Interim Policy Bulletin: Permanency Planning Conferences (PPC)

Child in Care for Six Months

A PPC referral must be made by the assigned foster care worker when a child has been in care for six months with a goal of reunification. The purpose of the PPC is to assess the following:

- Case service plan progress.
- Barriers to progress.
- Re-evaluate service referrals.
- Parent-child visitation plan.
- Permanency planning goal/concurrent planning.

Referral process time frame

The PPC must be held as soon as possible after the six-month mark, but no later than 30 calendar days after this date.

This updates and replaces the Child in Care Nine Months PPC requirement.

Reason: Dwayne B. v Snyder, et al. settlement agreement.

16) SOCIAL WORK CONTACTS

FOM 722-6, Foster Care-Developing the Service Plan

FOM 913-4, Placement Resources-Child Placing Agency Reporting Requirements

All social work contacts must be entered into SWSS FAJ or SWSS Web by the assigned worker. This includes attempted contacts and missed appointments.

Timely documentation of social work contacts into SWSS FAJ/SWSS Web is required.

Within five business days, the assigned worker must enter into SWSS FAJ/SWSS Web all face-to-face contacts. This includes the following:

- Any face-to-face contacts with children, parents, or foster parents/ relative/unrelated caregivers made by any of the following:
  - Foster care worker.
  - CPS worker.
  - Adoption worker.
  - Permanency planning/social services assistant.
- Parent/child face-to-face contacts.
- Sibling/child face-to-face contacts.

All other social work contacts must be entered prior to the report period end date on the applicable service plan.

Reason: Foster Care Program Office policy clarification.

17) FOSTER HOME LICENSING BENCHMARKS AND EXPECTATIONS

FOM 922 Foster Family Home Certification

FOM 922-1 Foster Family Home Development

Per the Modified Settlement Agreement, DHS must license 1,300 new non-relative foster homes by June 30, 2012 and an additional 1,450 by June 30, 2013. To facilitate achievement of these requirements and to establish best practice guidelines for foster home licensing, the following standards and benchmarks are required. For a complete reference, they are detailed fully in the April 30 **CSA Communication Issuance 12-050** and will be published in an upcoming Foster Care Policy release.

Within two business days of an initial inquiry by a prospective foster parent, contact by telephone or face-to-face is required to answer questions and provide dates for orientation.

Within 2 weeks of initial contact, orientation must be provided either in a group or individually. At the conclusion of orientation, licensing staff are expected to:

- Obtain a signed application.
- Obtain references and send out the reference check forms.
- Register the applicant for fingerprinting.
- Provide medical forms.
- Schedule the applicant for the next PRIDE training.

- Check out-of-state Central Registry.
- Submit the application and DHS-1326 to BCAL for enrollment.

Within the first month following application, licensing staff must:

- Conduct two home visits and one telephone call to facilitate the home study, assessment and the completion of forms.
- Connect the applicant with a Foster Parent Navigator.
- Request environmental inspection.
- Follow-up on training and completion of medical statements.
- Schedule future visits.

During the second, third and if necessary subsequent months:

- Conduct at least one home visit and one telephone call each month to facilitate completion of forms and processes.
- Finalize the foster home assessment.
- Meet with the family to review the completed assessment.
- Submit finalized assessment to BCAL.

Reason: Dwayne B. v Snyder, et al. settlement agreement.

MANUAL MAINTENANCE INSTRUCTIONS