

Foster Care Services: Placement of a Child

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1009

Placement of a Child

The removal of a child from his home represents the most extreme alternative the county department can take to assure a child is protected. Typically, a child entering care feels much self-blame for what has happened. Fears are exaggerated in the child's mind. Removal is equated with the loss of family, perhaps even permanently.

The placement process must be carefully managed in order to minimize the impact of separation and loss experienced by the child. Reunification is more likely to occur when frequent and consistent visitation between parent and child occurs. When the child experiences a disruption in placement and must be replaced, careful planning and preparation must again occur to assist the child in getting through another loss. When safety can be assured for the child, reunification should occur. Aftercare services offer support to the reunified family and better assure that the child can be safely maintained in his/her home.

PLACEMENT PLANNING

1009.1

Requirement

When possible, the parent (or other appropriate member of the family) should participate in the actual placement of the child in the foster home/facility.

1009.1 PROCEDURES

In order to help the child adjust to the placement, the following should occur to the extent possible:

1. Have the parent tell the child good-bye, explain that it is O.K. for the child to stay with this family and let the child know when the first parent and child will visit for the first time.
2. If appropriate, encourage the parent to accompany the child to the home/facility.
3. When possible, have the child take clothing, special toys, family photographs/mementos, etc., to help provide a connection to his/her family.
4. Schedule the placement at the time when normal family/facility activities will soon occur and most family members/other children at the home/facility will be present.

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PLACEMENT

1009.2

Requirement

The foster home provider receives the following information in accordance with the specified time frames:

- | | |
|---|---|
| A. Form 40 (Agreement Supplement): | <i>Signed at the time of placement</i> |
| B. Form 469 (Foster Child Information Sheet): | <i>Prior to or at the time of placement</i> |
| C. Medical and Educational Records: | <i>As soon as available</i> |
| D. Current Case Plan – Child Portion: | <i>As soon as available</i> |

1009.2 PRACTICE ISSUES

1. The *Agreement Supplement* provides the foster parent and DFCS with a written and dated confirmation of the child being placed into (or removed from) a foster home. A copy is given to the foster parent (with the original being filed in the child's record). If Form 40 is not provided at the time of placement, ensure that the form is executed and a copy given to the provider on the next business day.
2. The *Foster Child Information Sheet* gives the provider written information concerning the child and his/her needs and/or preferences. If such information is not immediately available, provide what information the county department has at the time. Supplemental information can be obtained and shared at a later date. Document in the case record that the Form 469 was given to the provider (with a copy in the case file). If Form 469 is not provided at the time of placement, ensure that the form is executed and a copy given to the provider on the next business day.
3. It is a federal requirement at the time of initial placement (and each time a child in care moves) that the provider be given updated medical and educational records on the child. Document in the case record that the placement provider received this information.
4. A copy of the most recent Case Plan is always given to the placement provider.

PARENT/CHILD VISITATION AT INITIAL PLACEMENT

1009.3

Requirement

If possible, a child initially placed should have a family visit in the first week following placement. If a visit cannot be arranged, then plans should be made for a telephone or written contact during the first week of placement.

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1009.3 PRACTICE ISSUE

The child's confusion and anxiety can be greatly reduced by arranging some form of contact with birth family as soon as possible following placement. The child is reassured that the parent is still available and concerned about him/her. Another psychological advantage for the child is that he/she senses parental "permission" for being placed away from the parent. This alleviates much of the guilt most children feel when placed. As always, safety of the child is a paramount concern when considering the benefits of parent-child contacts.

WRITTEN PLAN FOR VISITATION

1009.4

Requirement

A plan for parental visitation with the child is part of every Case Plan, a copy of which is provided to the parent. Should the Case Manager and supervisor determine that visits are detrimental to the child, the reasons for ceasing visitation must be well documented in the case record, and, whenever possible, be supported by professional opinion or a court order. The parent must have the reason for ceasing or limiting visits explained verbally and in writing. (See appeal rights of parents through the court or through an Administrative Hearing as outlined in Section 1013 Legal.)

1009.4 PROCEDURES

1. If visitation arrangements are specified in a court-ordered Case Plan, then any modification to the visitation schedule may require the filing of a motion to amend the Plan.
2. If the Case Plan is not incorporated into a court order, then any change in the visitation plan must follow the policy contained in Section 1013 Legal, concerning Administrative Hearings.
3. If the county department is contemplating overnight, unsupervised visits, approval of the court must first be obtained. (See Section 1009.6.)

1009.4 PRACTICE ISSUES

1. It is a right, as well as a responsibility, for the parent to maintain meaningful contact with his/her child while in care. (See Section 1013, Legal regarding the court's consideration of the parent's efforts to maintain contacts and parent-child bonding when a termination of parental rights action is before the court.)
2. Visits represent the most significant means of developing, maintaining or enhancing parent-child attachment.
3. The frequency of visits is the greatest predictor of timely reunification.
4. Generally, the child who is visited makes a more successful adjustment to foster care and experiences a greater sense of well-being than does the child whose parent visits infrequently or not at all.

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5. The county department has the responsibility to reach out to parents and assure that a pattern of regular visitation is established early in placement. Parents may require strong encouragement and support to exercise their visitation rights. The parent who misses visits, shows up late, seems disinterested, etc., may be experiencing great discomfort at having to continually face the reality of having the child taken away. The parent may respond to a better understanding of how important visitation is to the child when encouraged by the Case Manager.
6. For more successful visits, planning with the child, foster parent and parent in advance of the visit may be helpful. If there are difficulties experienced in relating to the child, the Case Manager may need to assist the parent in developing more meaningful ways of interacting with or relating to the child such as activities, games, etc. The parent and child may need assistance in understanding when and how to end a visit and say good-bye. Post-visit discussions with the child, foster parent and parent may assist in planning for the next visit.
7. It is anticipated that face-to-face contacts between a parent and child will be stressful. The reasons for placement and separation will surface, along with the feelings on the part of both the parent and child around those issues. Typically, the child will express his feelings through his behavior prior to or following a visit; e.g., aggressiveness, temper tantrums, bed-wetting, angry outbursts, crying, etc. A child who is particularly upset by visits may need additional assistance and support by the Case Manager and foster parent to verbalize his/her feelings about the parent, the reasons he/she is in care, the purpose and expectations of having visits with his/her family, etc.
8. Visits provide parents with opportunities to practice appropriate parenting behavior and obtain feedback. Parental readiness and capacity for reunification can be assessed and documented in the case record and Case Plan.
9. An incarcerated parent retains visitation rights. It may be necessary for the county department to arrange for or to provide transportation where agency resources permit. Other forms of meaningful contact can include letters, cards, calls, etc.

STANDARD FOR PARENT – CHILD VISITATION

1009.5

Requirement

When agency resources allow, visitation shall be scheduled at two-week intervals, unless the court has specified another visitation arrangement.

1009.5 PRACTICE ISSUES

The following guidelines should be considered when scheduling parent/child visitation:

1. The younger the child, the more frequent visitation is needed for the child to maintain a relationship with the parent.

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- ~~2. Supervised office visits may offer the best opportunity to assess how visitation affects the parent and the child and the quality of the interaction, especially during the first visits after the initial placement.~~
3. Visits should be held in the least restrictive, most relaxed environments possible. Parks, playgrounds, and even the home of the foster parent or parent may offer alternatives to office visits.
4. Visits should be scheduled taking into account:
 - Child's eating, sleeping and activity patterns;
 - Parent's work schedule or other responsibilities;
 - Activities and responsibilities of the home/facility,
5. Ideally, visits should involve parents in routine activities of parenting such as attending his/her child's school functions, special occasions and medical check-ups, as well as engaging in feeding, diapering, and other direct child care responsibilities.
6. Family visits should become more frequent and of longer duration when placement with the parent nears. Visits in the home of the parent are important in the transition from foster care to the home, but **require the approval of the court.** (See Section 1009.6.)

UNSUPERVISED, OVERNIGHT VISITS APPROVED BY COURT

1009.6

Requirement

When the county department is considering unsupervised visits, overnight visits between the child and his/her parent, relative or person who:

- previously had custody; and/or
- was involved in the maltreatment of the child, THEN

prior approval must be obtained from the court.

1009.6 PRACTICE ISSUE

Should the court-ordered Case Plan already address unsupervised, overnight visits, approval from the court is not necessary.

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~~PRESERVING SIBLING CONNECTIONS to their FAMILIES~~

1009.7

Requirement

Whenever possible, efforts should be made to place siblings together in care to preserve their connections to family.

1009.7 PRACTICE ISSUE

Placing siblings together lessens separation trauma, eases the stress on their parents, reinforces the importance of family relationships, and facilitates visits and communication between children and their parents.

WHEN SIBLINGS ARE PLACED IN SEPARATE HOMES

1009.8

Requirement

If siblings must be placed in separate homes/facilities, frequent and regular contact between the children needs to be maintained. There must be documentation in the Case Plan as to why it was necessary to place siblings in separate homes/facilities; e.g., due to the lack of available resources, pattern of disrupted placements, individual needs of the child that could only be met in separate placements, etc. The reason/explanation is documented in the Case Plan item that relates to whether the child is placed in the "most family-like setting."

1009.8 PRACTICE ISSUES

1. Placement of siblings apart from each other should take place very rarely, and only if placement together would be contrary to the developmental, treatment and safety needs of a given child.
2. Separating siblings compounds the child's sense of loss and feelings of being disconnected from family.
3. Siblings should share in special times like birthdays, graduation, and other significant family events.
4. Besides face-to-face visits, other forms of contact may include telephone calls and letters.
5. All contacts between siblings are documented in the case record.

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GRANDPARENT VISITATION

1009.9

Requirement

The county department may grant the request of a grandparent to visit the child in care if it is deemed important for the child. Depending on the interaction between the grandparent and the child, the agency can supervise the visits when needed.

1009.9 PRACTICE ISSUES

1. Should DFCS not grant grandparent visitation, the grandparent has the legal right according to O.C.G.A. Section 19-7-3, to petition the court for visitation rights with a minor child when:

- The minor child's parents are divorced;
- The parental rights of either parent have been terminated;
- The parent of the child is deceased; or
- The child has been adopted by the child's blood relative or by a step-parent.

Note: "Grandparent" (as used in this provision of the law) refers to the parent of a minor child's parent; the parent of a minor child's parent who has died, or the parent of a minor child's parent whose parental rights have been terminated.

2. Reasonable visitation rights between the grandparent and the child may be granted if the court finds:

- The health or welfare of the child would be harmed unless such visitation is granted; and
- The best interest of the child would be served by granting the visitation request.

VISITS WITH SIGNIFICANT OTHERS

1009.10

Requirement

Other family members or friends, with whom the child has had a significant, positive relationship before entering care, may visit when the county department deems it important for the child.

1009.10 PRACTICE ISSUES

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- ~~1. When parents object to certain individuals having visits with their child while in DFCS custody, the Case Manager needs to understand the reasons for the parent's objection and determine if such contact is indeed contrary to the well-being of the child. Should the county department arrange contacts despite the objections of the parent, the Case Plan must clearly document all of the reasons for the parent's objections. **The approval of the court must be obtained.**~~
2. When visits with significant others are not supervised, the Case Manager is responsible for assessing the adequacy and safety of the "visiting resource." (See 1004 Placement Resources, for the outline used in conducting an assessment.)
3. The county department must be notified of and approve all contacts and visits the child has with adult friends and family.

DISRUPTION IN PLACEMENT

1009.11

Requirement

When the placement resource notifies the county department of possible disruption, all possible efforts must be taken to prevent an abrupt or unnecessary replacement of the child. See 1009.12 – Decision to Remove and follow all procedures for notifying the court, child under age 14, parent and any attorney of record of the change in placement.

1009.11 PROCEDURES

The following guidelines are followed when removal is being considered:

1. Discuss O.C.G.A. Section 15-11-55 and 49-5-3 with the Foster Parent. Not less than five days in advance of any placement change the Division of Family and Children Services shall notify the court, a child who is 14 years of age or older, the child's parents, guardian or legal custodian and any attorney of record of any change to the location of the child's placement while the child is in the division's custody.
2. Whenever possible, assist the placement resource to maintain the child while another placement resource is being identified/developed and until after ten days of the notice to change placement is mailed, if no hearing is requested.
3. Evaluate with the placement resource the reasons for possible disruption.

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- ~~A. Determine if additional support services to the placement resource person could alleviate the need for removal of the child.~~
- B. Determine if additional services to the child could alleviate the need for removal of the child.
4. Consult with the Supervisor in making the final decision about removing the child.
5. If at any time during this process, the county department determines that the health and welfare of the child require the location of the placement to be changed right away, move the child and notify the court and all parties to whom the original notice was sent.

1009.11 PRACTICE ISSUES

1. The placement resource may request removal due to reasons involving the care of the child or due to circumstances that are beyond the control of the family/facility or child. In any case, the request for removal needs to be explored fully before any action is taken.
2. Since every move compounds the child's sense of loss, it is essential that resolution be attempted first.

DECISION TO REMOVE (Placement Change Notification)

1009.12

Requirement

Whenever the decision is made to terminate the placement, there must be adequate preparation of the child and placement resource.

In Accordance with O.C.G.A. Section 15-11-55 and 49-5-3, whenever the placement location of a child in the temporary or permanent custody of DHR/DFCS is changed, children age fourteen (14) and older, parents, guardians or other legal custodians and all attorneys of record must be provided a notice and an opportunity for a hearing. If the child is in the permanent custody of DHR, the birth parent shall not be notified of a change in placement.

In addition, if there are changes to the case plan or permanency plan resulting from the child's change in placement location, a request may be made for a hearing. The hearing request should be with regard to the child's case plan or permanency plan can be made to consider the change in the location of the child's placement.

Note: The court can order the Division to develop a new case plan and permanency plan recommendations, but the court cannot order that the child be placed in a specific placement. The Department maintains discretion in the choice of a placement.

When a change in placement location for a child is being planned:

- a. The SSCM shall

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- ~~1. Within five days of any placement change, notify the court, a child who is 14 years of age or older, the child's parents, guardian, or other legal custodian, and any attorney of record of any change in the location of the child's placement while the child is in the Division's custody. If the child is in the permanent custody of DHR, the birth parent shall not be notified of a change in placement.~~
 2. If the child's health or welfare is endangered by a delay in changing the child's placement, the child shall be moved immediately. Within 24 hours of the change in placement, notify the court and attorneys of records of the placement change.
 3. Obtain the names and addresses of the child's parents, guardian, and legal custodian, the names and addresses of all attorneys who have represented any party to the deprivation action and the child. If the child is in the permanent custody of DHR, the birth parent shall not be notified of a change in placement.
 4. Send a written notice using the form, Notice of Change in Placement, to the individuals listed in (a), any child who is 14 years or older **and the court** informing them of the planned change in the child's placement location. If the parent, guardian or legal custodian's current address is unknown, the last known address must be used.
 5. Send a copy of the notice to the SAAG who represents the agency on matters that pertain to the child.
 6. Request that the SAGG remind the court of the hearing deadline.
 - A hearing must be requested within ten (10) days after the notice is mailed.
 - If problems arise with regard to the time of the hearing, contact the State Legal Services Office.
 - If the Division determines that the health or welfare of the child shall be endangered by a delay in changing the placement, before the hearing, the child shall be moved immediately.
 7. Prepare to represent DHR/DFCS' position at the hearing. Consult with the SS Supervisor and the SAGG prior to the hearing.
- b. At the hearing:
1. If the court requests the recommendation of another placement location, reconsider the planned placement change and offer the court an alternative placement location for the child, taking into consideration the court's concerns about the location of the placement originally recommended.
 2. The court shall accept or reject the case plan or permanency plan, including the recommendation regarding the location of the child's placement:
 3. The court must make findings of fact upon which it relied in accepting or rejecting the case plan or permanency plan recommendations of the Division.
 4. The court must demonstrate that the Division's recommendations were considered and explain why the Division's recommendations for a placement change are rejected.
 5. The court may order the Division to devise a new case plan and permanency plan recommendation, including a new recommendation for placement of the child within the resources of the department.
 6. The court may issue any other order relative to the placement or custody outside of the Division of Human Resources as the court finds these placements to be in the best interest of the child.
 7. Placement or a change of legal custody by the court outside of the Department of Human Resources shall relieve the Department of further responsibility for the child.

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If at any time during this process, the county department determines that the health and welfare of the child require the location of the placement to be changed right away, the following procedures shall be followed:

- a. Move the child from the current placement as his or her health and welfare requires.
- b. Within 24 hours of the change in placement for the child, send the court and all attorneys of record the form, Notice of Change in Placement.
- c. Notify the SAAG who represents DHR/DFCS with regard to the child's case.
- d. If a hearing is requested, notify the SAAG and be prepared to fully present DHR/DFCS' position during the hearing.
- e.

See 1009.16 – Notification of Change in Placement and follow all procedures for notifying the court, child under age 14, parent and any attorney of record of the change in placement.

1009.12 PRACTICE ISSUES

When new case plans, new permanency plans and recommendations for new placements are ordered by the court, document the courts recommendations in the case record. The SSCM in consultation with the SS Supervisor shall ensure appropriate action and follow up on any recommendation made by the court.

The following steps should be followed in preparation for disruption of placement:

1. During face-to-face contact, the Case Manager, foster parent and the child should discuss the reason for the need to change placement in honest and nonjudgmental language.
2. The Case Manager and the child should talk about possible placement resources and progress in finding an alternate placement.
3. When a child is placed in a Child Caring Institution (CCI), facility staff may discuss with the child the reasons for the move and the progress in obtaining alternate placement.
4. If possible, the placement resource should assist the Case Manager with planning for the child's actual removal.

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WRITTEN NOTICE TO THE PARENT

1009.13

Requirement

In accordance with PL 96-272, the county department must give the parent written notice of the intended change in placement that includes the following information:

- A. The parent has the right to object by contacting the Case Manager; and/or
- B. The parent has the right to appeal the decision to the Office of Administrative Hearings, if not resolved locally.

Unless the parent signs a waiver, no action is to be taken for 30 days to allow the parent sufficient time to appeal.

1009.13PROCEDURE

Mail a copy of the *Notification Form for Change in Case Plan/Services – Placement* (See Appendix R) which provides the required written notice.

1009.14PRACTICE ISSUES

Should a change of placement be necessary, the parent may respond in one of the following ways:

1. Understand and agree to the change verbally and in writing;
2. Object to the change, but agree to a meeting with the Case Manager and the Supervisor to discuss the parent's objections and the reasons for the change; or
3. Fail to reach a satisfactory resolution as a result of Practice Issue (B), and request an Administrative Hearing. (See Section 1013 Legal.)

EMERGENCY REMOVAL

1009.14

Requirement

If an emergency situation forces a change in placement, the county department must give written notice to the parent of the change in placement that includes the following information:

- A. The parent has the right to object by contacting the Case Manager; and/or
- B. The parent has the right to appeal the decision to the Office of Administrative Hearings, if not resolved locally

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1009.15 PROCEDURES

When circumstances dictate the emergency removal of the child, the Case Manager takes the following steps:

In addition, within 24 hours of the change in placement for the child, send the court and all attorneys of record the form, Notice of Change in Placement. See 1009.12– Decision to Move – Notice of Change in Placement

1. Within 24 hours of the change in placement for the child, send the court and all attorneys of record the form, Notice of Change in Placement. See 1009.12 – Decision to Move- Notice of Change in Placement.
2. Obtain approval of the emergency action by the County Director/designee within two (2) working days of the action.
3. Mail a copy of the *Notification Form for Change in Case Plan/Services – Placement* (See Appendix R) within three (3) working days of the action taken.
4. Should the parent object to the change, arrange a conference with the parent, the Case Manager and the Supervisor to discuss the parent's discussion and the reasons for the change.
5. If the conference does not resolve the parent's objection, explain the parent's right to an Administrative Hearing. (See Section 1013 Legal.)
6. Document the case specifics of the emergency situation.

WRITTEN NOTICE TO FOSTER PARENT OF REMOVAL

1009.15

Requirement

When it is the agency's decision to move a child from a foster home, the foster parent is given in writing a ten-day notice of intent to move the child prior to moving him/her.

(EXCEPTION: No advance written notice is necessary if the child is clearly at risk and must be removed for safety reasons.)

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1009.15 PROCEDURES

Depending on the circumstances of the agency removal of the child, notice is provided to the foster parent in the following ways:

- A. If a move is planned due to circumstances within the foster home or to the foster parent's inability to meet the child's needs, notify the foster parent in a letter and provide an explanation that:
 - During this period of time, the foster parent is given the opportunity to consider the move. If requested by the foster parent, the ten-day wait may be waived.
 - If the foster parent believes that the move is not in the best interest of the child, the foster parent may file a grievance. The child may not be moved until the grievance is resolved. **NOTE: A return to the birth family or a court-ordered placement is not a grievable issue.** (See *Foster Parent Manual* for forms and instructions for filing a grievance.)
- B. If a move is anticipated due to the decision to terminate parental rights and seek a permanent home, then notify the foster parent via Form 149 (*Notification to Foster Parents of Intent to Petition for Termination of Parental Rights*) of the county department's plan and the options of the court regarding permanent custody of the child.
- C. When rights have been terminated (or surrendered) and the search for an adoptive home is planned, then notify the foster parent via Form 150 (*Foster Parent Affidavit for Consideration of Adopting Foster Child Currently in Home*) to make an informed decision regarding an interest in adopting.
- D. When the staffing is held to make placement plans for the child, provide the foster parent with Form 151 (*Foster Parent Notification of Decision Regarding Adopting the Foster Child Currently in Home*) and ask the foster parent to complete and return within 30 days of the staffing regarding his/her interest in being considered to adopt.

REPLACEMENT OF THE CHILD

1009.16

Requirement

In selecting a placement resource, the Case Manager and the Supervisor must carefully evaluate the type of placement needed by the child utilizing the criteria in Section 1004 Placement Resources.

1009.16 PROCEDURES

1. Engage the child in a pre-placement discussion and visit at the selected placement resource. (If possible, have the parent participate in the process.)
2. Provide the child with an opportunity of saying "good-bye" to the foster parent and other family members or to important facility staff and peers.

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3. ~~Give the placement resource, in writing, as much information about the child as possible. At a minimum, the foster parent receives the following in accordance with the specified time frames.~~
- *Form 40 (Agreement Supplement)*
 - *Form 469 (Foster Child Information Sheet)*
 - *Medical and Educational Records*
 - *Most recent Case Plan*
4. Give the facility resource, in writing, as much information about the child as possible. At a minimum, the provider receives the following in accordance with the specified time frames:
- *Form 448 (Institutional Foster Care Agreement)*
 - *Medical and Educational Records*
 - *Most recent Case Plan*
 - *Any additional child information that may or may not be already included in the Application materials.*

1009.16 PRACTICE ISSUES

1. All moves experienced by a child will revive earlier feelings associated with past separations and entry into care. Helping a child express his/her feelings and concerns, as well as find appropriate ways to grieve, will make the replacement go smoother.
2. The selection of the best possible placement resource capable of meeting the child's needs is enhanced when there are several resource options from which to choose.
3. Ideally, pre-placement activities should be as thoughtfully planned as a child's initial placement into care under non-emergency circumstances.

TRIAL HOME PLACEMENT (LEGAL CUSTODY RETAINED)

1009.17

Requirement

If part of the Case Plan and if approved by the court, a trial home placement may be considered as preparatory step for reunification when:

- The risks for maltreatment have been sufficiently alleviated/resolved so that the child's safety can be ensured in his own home; AND
- The court has approved or directed the placement prior to the retransfer of the child's physical custody.

1009.17 PROCEDURES

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1. Conduct a face-to-face meeting with the parent and child of appropriate age/level of functioning, to discuss the planned home placement.
2. Ensure that the Case Plan addresses the specific goals/steps that reflect the conditions for the child to be safely maintained in the home.
3. Notify the court so that the court can approve or direct the placement prior to returning physical custody of the child to the parent/relative/person who previously had physical custody and/or was involved in the maltreatment of the child.

1009.17 PRACTICE ISSUES

1. A trial home visit should never be attempted unless the placement is expected to be successful. It will require careful planning and preparation prior to and following the reunification.
2. Wraparound and other support services need to be provided and/or arranged to support the reunified family such as counseling, child care, financial assistance, health care, housing, in-home services, etc.
3. See Eligibility Section 1003, regarding a child maintaining IV-E eligibility if the trial home visit is less than six months (or other time frame ordered by the court), and it becomes necessary for the child to re-enter care.
4. The child needs to be prepared so that the transition is as smooth as possible. The Case Manager should discuss the move soon enough to allow time for adjustment and should give information about the actual date, time, circumstances, etc., of the move. The child should know how the Case Manager would continue to be involved with the child and family.

AFTERCARE and PLACEMENT SUPERVISION

1009.18

Requirement

When the court has transferred custody of a child to his/her parents or other custodian, the county department may only provide aftercare services/placement supervision by court order. In the event that the child's return to the parent is the result of the parent signing a Form 518 (*Termination of Voluntary Agreement to Place Child in Foster Care*), aftercare services are dependent on the willingness of the parent to participate.

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TIME LIMITS FOR AFTERCARE SERVICES

1009.19

Requirement

When the physical and legal custody of a child has been returned to the parent/relative, the Case Manager may provide aftercare services up to 12 months (or longer, if ordered by the court) to support the reunified family.

1009.19 PRACTICE ISSUES

1. Post-placement activities assist the family in adjusting to the placement and in assuming full responsibility for the child.
2. Services may be provided to or arranged for the family through referrals to community agencies.
3. Monitoring the child during post-reunification focuses on safety issues as well as the provision of care that meets the child's basic needs.

AFTERCARE CASE PLAN

1009.20

Requirement

An Aftercare Case Plan is mutually developed and periodically reviewed to address the specific goals/steps for the child to be safely maintained in the home.

1009.20PROCEDURES

1. Arrange a meeting or family conference to discuss services needs of the reunified family.
2. Identify the specific goals and steps that the family must meet in order for the child to be safely maintained in the home.
3. Monitor the child in placement by making monthly face-to-face visits (See contact requirements in Section 1011 Service Needs of the Child.)
4. Document with sufficient detail the parent's progress with achieving the Case Plan goals and in meeting the needs of the child.
5. Discuss the termination of agency supervision and services with the parent in a family conference or face-to-face visit once the home is stable and/or the period of court-ordered supervision expires.
6. Provide referrals, as needed, to other agencies/programs for the family to maintain the health, safety and well-being of the children.