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**Manual Transmission Letter (MTL)**  
**Family Programs Office: Statewide Child Welfare Policy Manual**

MTL #1003 – 08062019  
08/06/2019

TO: Timothy Burch, Administrator – Clark County Department of Family Services  
Betsey Crumrine, Social Services Manager V – DCFS – District Offices  
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FROM: Kathryn Roose, Deputy Administrator, Division of Child and Family Services

**POLICY DISTRIBUTION**

Enclosed find the following policy for distribution to all applicable staff within your organization:

- 1003 Kinship Care

This policy is/was effective: 07/24/2019

- This policy is new. Please review the policy in its entirety
- This policy replaces the following policy(s): MTL # \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Policy Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- This policy has been revised. Please see below for the type of revision:
- This is a significant policy revision. Please review this policy in its entirety.
  - This is a minor policy revision: (List page number & summary of change): **This policy was revised to include the term fictive kin throughout the policy, removed Placement Decision Making section, and the policy format was updated to be ADA compliant.**
  - A policy form has been revised: (List form, page number and summary of change):

**NOTE:**

- Please read the policy in its entirety and note any areas that are additionally required by your agency to be in compliance with the policy enclosed.
- This is an **ALL STAFF MEMO** and it is the responsibility of the person listed above to disseminate the policy enclosed to appropriate staff within his/her organization and to ensure compliance.
- The most current version of this policy is posted on the DCFS Website at the following address:  
<http://dcfs.nv.gov/Policies> Please check the table of contents on this page for the link to the chapter you are interested in.

1003 Kinship Care

Policy Approval Clearance Record

**STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Statewide Policy</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>New Policy</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Administrative Policy</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Modified Policy</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>DCFS Rural Region Policy</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>This policy supersedes:</b>
<b>Date Policy Effective:</b>	07/24/2019
<b>Attorney General Representative Review:</b>	01/09/2019
<b>DCFS Deputy Administrator Approval</b>	07/24/2019
<b>DMG Original Approval</b>	10/24/2006
<b>DMG Approved Revisions</b>	07/24/2019

**Policy Statement and Purpose:** Public Child Welfare Agencies have a legal, professional, and ethical responsibility to promote stable, permanent relationships and community connections for every child with whom we work, and in particular, for those in Agency custody. Whenever possible, children need to be placed with relatives or someone with whom they have a significant and positive connection. Determining who constitutes family is critical component of our work. It is a fluid process that needs to begin from the moment we first interact with a family and must be examined and re-examined throughout the life of the case.

The purpose of the policy seeks to emphasize the importance of seeking and supporting kinship placements, as well as the preservation of familial bonds by making clear that our preferred practice is to minimize the impact of separation from parents and the familiar environment, taking into account community, church, schools, as well as family and close family friends (fictive kin). Using this broader definition of kinship care within this policy, identifies that “fictive kin” must be given consideration for placement similar to relatives within the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) degree of consanguinity, prior to placing with a foster family unknown to the child, if such placement is determined to be in the child’s best interest.

Kinship placement provide children with familiarity, stability, continuity, an understanding of the heritage, and a sense of belonging that cannot be provided elsewhere when their parents are unable to provide for their safety and well-being. Such connections can often help to mitigate the traumatic impact of the abuse and/or neglect and prevent further trauma, which can result from placement in an unfamiliar out-of-home setting.

**AUTHORITY**

**Federal:** [Social Security Act 42 U.S.C. 671 Sec. 471\(a\)\(19\)](#)

**NRS:** [NRS 424.090](#); [NRS 432B.390](#); [NRS 432B.391](#); [NRS 432B.393](#); [NRS 432B.397](#); [NRS 432B.480\(2\)\(a\)](#); [NRS 127.330](#)

**DEFINITIONS**

**Caregiver:** (as defined by the child welfare agency) The person or persons providing foster, adoptive or relative care for a child, or a person who provides care in a treatment home or residential treatment facility in which a child is placed.

**Diligent Search:** An ongoing and continuous process to identify, locate, inform and evaluate relatives/non-custodial parents regarding their interest in providing a temporary or permanent placement for or adopting a child prior to or when the child is placed in substitute care.

**Fictive Kin:** A person not related within the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) degree of consanguinity by birth, marriage or adoption; such as a close family friend or neighbor who has a significant emotional and positive relationship with the child.

**Kinship Care:** A relationship that involves the full-time care of a child(ren) by an individual(s) who is related to the child by blood, marriage, adoption, or as fictive kin, whom are acknowledged by the parents, tribe, or child when the living arrangements are made through the child welfare system and the court process.

**STANDARDS/PROCEDURES**

**Procedures:** State law requires preference be given to adult relatives and fictive kin caregivers, over non-related care providers, for the placement of children.

1. Diligent Search (refer to statewide [1001 Diligent Search](#) policy for additional information):
  - a. Exploration of relatives must begin at intake of the initial report and continue throughout the life of the case.
  - b. Whenever possible, phone numbers and addresses of potential relative resources are to be obtained by the intake worker.
  - c. Caseworkers must conduct an immediate diligent search for possible non-custodial parents, relatives, or fictive kin, who are able to commit to permanency or to providing emotional support/relationship for the child.
  - d. Placement resources must be considered in ascending order of priority; beginning with relatives. After ruling out placement with relatives within the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) degree of consanguinity, fictive kin (if identified) must be given consideration for placement.
  - e. The Agency must engage the family in identifying persons who have a significant and positive relationship with the family and child. Early in the life of the case, families must be asked to cooperate in identifying relatives and/or fictive kin who might be appropriate to care for their children on a temporary or permanent basis in the event the child does not reunify.
  - f. Caseworkers during initial interviews, will ask parents, “If you were unable to care for your child(ren) for any reason, such as illness, who would you trust to care for you child(ren)?” Caseworkers will ask for the names, addresses, and phone numbers of these potential resources. In addition, caseworkers will ask children with whom they feel safe, and who cares for them other than their parents. In some cases, it may be necessary to request the court’s assistance to persuade a family to identify appropriate relatives.

**Timeline:**

Requirement	Starting Date	Deadline	Responsible Party	Actions to be Taken
Identification of family and fictive kin	Upon removal	Throughout the life of a case	Caseworker	Caseworker will work with parents to identify relative and fictive kin placements.

**Documentation:**

**Case File Documentation (paper)**

File Location	Data Required
• N/A	• N/A

**UNITY Documentation (electronic)**

Applicable UNITY Screen	Data Required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Case Notes</b></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All search activities must be documented in UNITY to ensure diligent efforts were made in order to contact non-custodial parents, relatives, fictive kin, etc. regarding a child welfare case. Search results must be entered into UNITY by the diligent search specialist or caseworker. Documentation may occur in the case note section or diligent search documentation window. All diligent search records in UNITY may be read and printed by all caseworkers and supervisors.</li></ul>

**JURISDICTIONAL ACTION**

**Development of Internal Policies:**

1. Each Jurisdiction shall establish specific guidelines for determining which placement resource is the most appropriate to meet each child’s needs for safety, stability, permanency, and well-being; including the evaluation of relative or fictive kin placement in emergency situations which must include at minimum; a home inspection including the Confirming Safe Environments Child Placement Assessment, a Child Abuse and Neglect (CANS) background check and a criminal records check of all adult members of the household.
2. Relative and unrelated fictive kin caregivers must be encouraged to pursue licensure, ensuring access to financial and other supports. For exceptions, refer to statewide policy [1002 Waivers for Foster Care and Adoption](#).
3. Whenever possible, relative and fictive kin caregivers are to be given priority for expedited foster care training and licensure.
4. Each Child Welfare Agency will explore and identify foster resources in the community which support kinship caregivers and the children in their care.

**Supervisory Responsibility:** Ensure Agency protocols are followed when determining the most appropriate placement resource for each child in care.

**STATE RESPONSIBILITIES**

Compliance with the policy will be monitored via state Agency’s quality assurance process.

**POLICY CROSS REFERENCE**

- Policies:** [0204 Case Planning](#)  
[1001 Diligent Search](#)  
[1002 Waivers for Foster Care and Adoption](#)  
[1010 Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program \(KinGAP\)](#)

**History and Updates:** The Kinship Care policy was approved on 10/24/2006, with revisions on 1/31/2007, and 7/24/2019.

**ATTACHMENTS**

N/A