



QUARTER 3

PIP 1.2.3

CLARK



**CLARK COUNTY CFSR
PROGRAM PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT
QUARTER 3 REPORT**

Jurisdiction: Clark County

Primary Strategy: 1 Strengthen and reinforce safety practices throughout the life of the case			Applicable CFSR Outcomes or Systemic Factors: Safety Outcome 1 and 2 Permanency Outcome 2	
Goal: 2 Reduce the number of short term emergency removals under circumstances that do not involve a child abuse neglect allegation			Applicable CFSR Items: 1, 3, 15	
Action Steps and Benchmarks	Person Responsible	Evidence of Completion	QTR Due	QTR Completed
1.2.3 Washoe and Clark will explore expanding current relative search capacity to conduct relative searches 24/7 and will provide DCFS an informational report on the outcome	DCFS, WCDSS, CCDFS Directors/Designee	Copy of informational report	Q 3	Q 3

The Clark County Department of Family Services (CC DFS) has Diligent Search processes outlined throughout several areas of the agency. These business processes impact Goal 2 of Primary Strategy 1 which focuses on the reduction of short term emergency removals under circumstances that do not involve a child abuse neglect allegation. Diligent search is performed to circumvent the placement of children into custody of the Department if the mitigation of safety is possible.

1). CC DFS states the following in the CWS policies and procedures guidelines specific to Placement and Receiving:

3300. Emergency Placement in Relative Care

The Department's first preference for protective placement is relative care. This section covers emergency placement in relative care. For direction on emergency placement in other types of family-based care, see *Section 3400: Emergency Placement in Foster Care or Shelter.*

3310. Emergency Placement and Requirements

Emergency placement is needed when the case manager and supervisor agree that a child must be removed from his/her current living arrangement and placed in a new home immediately. The demand for emergency placement may occur as the result of: (1) an investigation where all reasonable efforts have been made to keep the child safe at home, (2) an unavoidable placement disruption, or (3) an abandoned infant.

When children are brought to the ERC by anyone other than a case manager, the ERC will call the Hotline to ensure that it is aware of the removal/abandonment. The Hotline will accept the report and initiate an investigation.

All emergency placements must be referred to the Receiving Team. In obtaining an emergency placement, the case manager and the Receiving Team complete concurrent tasks to locate and approve a home, prepare the child for placement, prepare for Court, prepare the placement, and make the placement.

3320. Removal and Notifications

Protective custody may only be taken – and must be taken – of children who are unsafe and for whom no reasonable safety plan will adequately control the identified safety concerns.

- ⊗ The child(ren) are found to be **unsafe** using the Nevada Safety Assessment, **and**
- ⊗ The parent(s)/caregiver(s) is unable or unwilling to accept an in-home safety plan, **or**
- ⊗ The nature of the safety threat is such that no reasonable in-home safety plan will control it.

The decision to take protective custody must be reviewed and approved by the supervisor unless the circumstances of the situation suggest extreme immediate danger to the child.

When removing the child, the case manager simultaneously:

- ⊗ Works with the family to identify potential relative caregivers.
- ⊗ Supplies required materials to the family. See *Section 2300: Conducting CPS Investigations* of the Investigations procedures.
- ⊗ Notifies the Receiving Team that a placement is intended for a relative home.
- ⊗ Escorts the child to the ERC for medical and clinical screening.

The case manager will make every effort to complete these activities within his/her working hours. See *Section 2300: Conducting CPS Investigations* of the Investigations procedures for additional tasks to be completed in the investigation.

3330. Kinship Requirements

All kinship placement options, such as putative father, noncustodial parent, and paternal and maternal relatives, are considered in this family-led search. A person related by blood or marriage within the first, second, or third degree to the parent(s) or stepparent(s) includes:

- ⊗ Grandparents of the child.

- ⊙ Great-grandparents of the child.
- ⊙ Aunts and uncles of the child, including spouses of aunts or uncles.
- ⊙ Siblings of the child.
- ⊙ An unrelated person where placement with such person allows half-siblings to remain together in an unapproved foster home and the parents or stepparents of one of the half-siblings is related to such person in the second or third degree.

The relative placement must be with adults, age twenty-one (21) or older.

3340. Fictive Kin

Fictive kin placements are **not** authorized prior to the Dispositional Hearing. Nevada law gives the Department the authority to place children in licensed foster homes or facilities and in the home of relatives **only**. Children in DFS protective custody may not be placed with "fictive kin." The case manager must explore with child(ren), parents, and others whether there are non-relatives with whom the child(ren) has a significant and positive relationship. This will enable Permanency staff to consider the possibility of licensing them.

If, prior to the Dispositional Hearing, the Court asks about the possibility of placement with a unlicensed non-relative, the case manager must inform the Court that DFS has no authority to make such placements. If the Court orders the placement with the unlicensed non-relative, DFS must comply. However, the Case manager must immediately present this court decision to his/her supervisor, and the supervisor will contact the district attorney assigned to DFS for assistance in reaching an alternative disposition. If the case meets NCIC criteria, the case manager must conduct an emergency background check. If the case does not meet NCIC criteria, the case manager must conduct immediate SCOPE and UNITY checks **before placement**. If a record would normally preclude placement, the case manager must immediately inform the district attorney and request that the case be placed on the calendar so that the Court can be informed of the record.

3350. Search for Relative Caregivers

The case manager will conduct a thorough search for relative caregivers that includes:

- ⊙ Asking questions of the child's parents or guardians about the child's relatives and preferences about the relatives.
- ⊙ Involving the child, based upon his/her ability to communicate, in the diligent search interviews and activities. The *Placement Inventory* is a helpful guide to this interview.
- ⊙ Calling or sending letters of inquiry to the noncustodial parent and maternal and paternal relative(s), once they are identified.
- ⊙ Contacting relatives and requesting names of other relatives, divulging only the information necessary to help identify additional relatives and assess their interest in accepting placement of the child. case managers should maintain the confidentiality of the family while completing diligent search activities and need to obtain releases and/or Court orders when warranted.

If a parent objects to the Department contacting relatives, the case manager will obtain a Court order, based on the child's safety and best interests, stipulating whether relatives should be contacted. A child's best interests include consideration of whether relative contact would limit the Department's ability to work with the parent.

a. Continuing Search for Relatives

If the case manager cannot complete the identification and selection of the relative placement during his/her shift, the Receiving Team will continue the relative search and selection processes begun by the case manager according to diligent search procedures outlined above.

The Receiving Team supervisor and the case manager have a mutual responsibility to communicate any new information that becomes available during the kinship care identification and confirmation process (e.g., a relative returns a call and expresses interest in caring for the child). This responsibility for open communication continues until the child is placed in an approved substitute care placement.

3360. Teaming Approach for Emergency Relative Placement

The Department has a centralized Receiving Team that operates between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and midnight, seven (7) days a week for the purpose of supporting the case manager in making an emergency substitute care placement. Under the direction of a supervisor, the Receiving Team, with others, completes the following tasks in close collaboration with the case manager:

Task	Responsible Staff
Case manager	
Determines need for removal and notifies Receiving Team.	Case manager With supervisor approval
Identifies relative caregiver through family interviews and/or diligent search.	Case manager
Refers relative caregiver to Receiving Team for safety clearances.	Case manager
Brings child(ren) to the ERC for medical and clinical screening.	Case manager
Completes all placement referral forms.	Case manager
Completes the home safety check.	Case manager
Makes the placement.	Case manager or placement specialist by agreement on a case-by-case basis
Receiving Team	
Oversees and coordinates Receiving Team functions and serves as a liaison for all involved parties to mobilize supports.	Team lead/placement specialist
Reviews all placement clearance activities and authorizes placement.	Placement staff
Provides administrative support, including entering UNITY data, initiating NCIC/fingerprint process, etc.	Admissions staff Fingerprint/NCIC-authorized agent
Prepares required documentation for placement.	Placement staff

Conducts medical screening, including exam and medical history.	Medical staff
ERC	
Provides temporary child care, supervision, and stabilization services.	Child development specialist
Photographs child.	Child development specialist
Conducts mental/behavioral health screening using standardized instruments.	Child development specialist

The members of the Receiving Team may complete the required tasks either sequentially or simultaneously. It is likely that the investigation will continue while the placement process is under way.

3370. Determining Suitability of Relative Placement

If more than one parent/relative qualifies to care for the child as the result of safety and background checks and home study, case managers will by personal observation or brief interview:

- ⊗ Confer with the parent(s) and relative family for the purpose of assisting them to come to consensus regarding which relative family would be the most appropriate for the placement of the child.
- ⊗ Assist in the selection of potential caregivers by informing them of the Department's preferences and requirements in choosing a suitable relative home, including:
 - Willingness and ability to assure the child's safety, including if and when a child may visit his/her parents.
 - Physical and mental ability to meet the child's immediate and long-term needs for safety and well-being.
- ⊗ Willingness to meet Department requirements, including prohibition of corporal punishment and willingness to inform the Department of any plan to change the composition of the family (i.e., people moving in or out of the home).
 - Ability to acknowledge and meet the child's individual needs.
 - Willingness to cooperate with requirements placed by the Court.
 - Ability to support efforts to develop a permanent plan for the child.
 - Ability to commit to the child on a permanent basis.
 - Timeliness of interest in providing a permanent home.
 - Consideration of other household members.
 - Caregiving standards.
 - Interaction with birth parents and willingness to assist the child with maintaining a lasting relationship with his/her siblings.
 - Ability to support alternate permanency planning for the child(ren).
- ⊗ Inform the parent/relative of services and other financial resources to support the placement, such as the Caregiver Support Services.

Other factors, such as family income, amount of prior contact of family member with the child, and geographic location (including a location outside of the United States) shall not preclude a finding of suitability. Determine which parent/relative family or families are most appropriate for consideration if the parent/relative families cannot themselves conclude which relative family is the best resource for the child.

3380. Completing Referral to Receiving Team

Once the relative placement has been identified and the relative has agreed to accept placement, the case manager will:

- ☉ Refer the adult members of the relative household to the Receiving Team to complete the background check process and placement formalization processes.
- ☉ Bring the child to the ERC for medical and clinical screening.
- ☉ Prepare the following required documentation for placement:

1. *CPS Face Sheet.*
2. *Summary of Child's Needs.*
3. *Safety Assessment.*
4. *Emergency Placement Safety Checklist.*
5. *Common TANF Application.*
6. *ICWA documentation.*
7. *Diligent Search Request Referral.*

3390. Placement Clearance for the Relative Home

The Receiving Team is responsible for placement clearance for all relative care placements. This includes initial removals and re-placements as a result of placement disruption. The on-duty Receiving Team supervisor must:

- ☉ Greet the relatives and introduce them to the admissions specialist.
- ☉ Review and photocopy the required identification.
 - The required documentation is a valid, government-issued identification with a photo. It is not required that this be a United States-issued identification card.
 - For undocumented relatives, proof of familial relationship is also required.
 - A Social Security number is requested to narrow the search, but is not required.
- ☉ If the potential relative caregiver does not have a valid, government-issued identification, DFS will obtain and submit fingerprints with the name provided to the central registry. In this case, the placement will **not** be authorized until the fingerprints are cleared.
- ☉ Assist the potential caregiver in completing the *Consent to Background Check* forms.

All adult members of the relative household will be fingerprinted and have completed UNITY, CANS, and NCIC checks as part of the placement clearance process.

The NCIC authorized agent must:

- ⊗ Complete the NCIC live-screen criminal background check, fingerprint the applicant(s), and complete the local SCOPE check.
- ⊗ Review NCIC background check results and complete additionally required clearance forms *Attachments I and II*, which document the results of the background checks.
- ⊗ Inform the case manager and the on-duty Receiving Team supervisor of determination the results.

If the proposed relative placement is not approved on the basis of the background check, the Receiving Team will continue the relative search and the identification of non-relative foster home options.

- ⊗ In seeking a relative caregiver, the Receiving Team will follow the procedures in *Section 3350: Search for Relative Caregivers* and *Section 3370: Determining Suitability of Relative Placement*.
- ⊗ If the Receiving Team locates and approves an alternative relative caregiver, the Receiving Team supervisor contacts the case manager to complete the *Emergency Placement Safety Checklist*.

If an alternative relative caregiver is not located and approved, the Receiving Team will seek an appropriate placement in this order of preference: foster family care, shelter foster care, congregate shelter care, or a specialized HLOC as appropriate.

a. Placement Background Cleared

Upon notification that the background check has been cleared, the case manager informs the relative(s) and:

- ⊗ Completes the home visit and *Emergency Placement Safety Checklist*.
- ⊗ Completes *Attachment III (Sleeping Arrangements of Children in Household)*.
- ⊗ If child has known medical needs, completes the *MEDWRAP Referral* to access services.
- ⊗ If there is a short-term, concrete need (i.e., cribs, diapers, baby formula, or car seats) that is an obstacle to placement, notifies the ERC to arrange for immediate resolution of the issue.
- ⊗ Prepares pre-Court (*Yellow Card*) release.

The case manager consults with his/her supervisor to obtain approval for placement in this relative home.

a. Placement Approval Process Completed

The Receiving Team, based on the case manager's home inspection, collects the following documentation:

- ⊗ *Placement Request and Disclosure* form.
- ⊗ *Health Passport*.

- ⊙ *Placement Custody Letter.*
- ⊙ *Kinship Caregiver Resource Guide brochure.*
- ⊙ *Foster Care Licensing Application.*
- ⊙ Obtains signature(s) on the *Foster Parent License Pre-Application.*

The Receiving Team also performs the following tasks:

- ⊙ Enters placement start date in UNITY.
- ⊙ Notifies the Caregiver Support Services of the new placement (*See Section 7400: Support Placement Stability of the Caregiver Support Services Policies and Procedures.*)
- ⊙ Notifies the Licensing unit of new kinship care placement. *See Section 8400: Foster Family Care Licensing: Relatives.*
- ⊙ If the child and relative caregiver meet at the ERC to complete the placement process, the Receiving Team notifies the case manager that the child is placed using the *Notice of Placement* form.

The duties of the Department staff in preparing the child for placement are discussed in *Section 3100: Preparing for Placement.*

33100. Placing the Child

If the case manager, in conjunction with the supervisor, determines that the relative can safely care for the child(ren), the case manager must make arrangements for the child(ren) to be brought to the relative's home. The case manager notifies the Receiving Team to make arrangements. The case manager may: (1) pick the child(ren) up from the Emergency Reception Center (ERC) and bring them to the relative's home, (2) accompany the relative caregiver so that the relative caregiver can pick up the child(ren), or (3) provide the relative caregiver with the pre-Court *Yellow Card* release or a post-Hearing judicial electronic release authorizing the relative to pick up the child(ren). If it is decided that the relative will pick the child(ren) up using a *Yellow Card*, the case manager must call the Receiving Team that this is the case and provide an approximate time that the child(ren) will be picked up. The Receiving Team will accompany the relatives on site to facilitate the placement. *NOTE:* Relatives are not permitted to enter the ERC.

See *Section 3130: Making the Placement* for details on required activities at placement.

3400. Emergency Placement in Foster Care or Shelter

Emergency placement is needed when the case manager and supervisor agree that a child must be removed from his/her current living arrangement and placed in a new home immediately. The demand for emergency placement may occur as the result of: (1) an investigation where all reasonable efforts have been made to keep the child safe at home, (2) an unavoidable placement disruption, or (3) in the case of an abandoned infant.

When children are brought to the ERC by anyone other than a case manager, the ERC will call the Hotline to ensure that it is aware of the removal/abandonment. The Hotline will accept the report and initiate an investigation.

All emergency placements must be referred to the Receiving Team. In obtaining an emergency placement, the case manager and the Receiving Team complete concurrent tasks to locate and approve a home, prepare the child for placement, prepare for Court, prepare the placement, and make the placement. For emergency placements, if a relative caregiver is not located and approved, the Receiving Team will seek an alternative placement in this order of preference: foster family care, shelter foster care, congregate shelter care, or a specialized HLOC as needed.

2) CC DFS states the following in the CWS policies and procedures guidelines specific to CPS Investigations:

An Adult Subject of the Investigation Cannot Be Located – In-person contact may be waived when the investigative worker has taken all of the following steps to locate a subject, and is still unable to locate the subject:

- Make repeated visits to the family's last known address at different times of day and communicate with neighbors in the area to inquire about the family's new location.
- Request the local, county, and state law enforcement agencies to check their records for information which would locate the subject.
- Contact agencies that may have provided services to the family (e.g., Nevada State Welfare Division, Housing Authority, electric company).
- Ask the reporter (if identity known) to provide as much additional information as possible to help locate the subject.
- Ask relatives and friends of the subject (if known) to provide information to help locate the subject.
- **Request a diligent search.**

3) CC DFS states the following in the CWS policies and procedures guidelines specific to Permanency:

Reviewing Documentation of Prior Child Welfare Intervention

As part of the assessment, the permanency case manager must thoroughly review all available documents related to child welfare intervention in Clark County or elsewhere. This includes documentation of any:

- ⊙ CPS investigation(s) leading to the child(ren)'s removal.
- ⊙ If applicable, information about any permanency or in-home service provision that preceded the child(ren)'s removal.
- ⊙ Safety assessments completed to date.
- ⊙ Information Collection Standard (ICS).
- ⊙ *NIA Summary* as completed by a CPS investigator.
- ⊙ Risk assessments completed as part of any CPS investigation(s).
- ⊙ Documentation related to any other previous involvement the family has had with the Department.

- ⊙ Available information concerning any involvement the family may have had with child welfare agencies in other Nevada counties or other states.

d. Assessment Visits With the Family

Assessment contacts with family members must meet the following requirements:

- ⊙ At the Transitional Child and Family Team (CFT) meeting, the permanency case manager must schedule a home visit with the family. If at all possible, the visit must be scheduled within three (3) working days of the Transitional CFT meeting.
- ⊙ At the initial home visit, the assessment process must be explained and discussed with the family.
- ⊙ All family members residing in the home must be interviewed in person as part of the assessment.
- ⊙ Noncustodial parents must be interviewed.
 - If a noncustodial parent is reasonably available (i.e., lives in or near Clark County), this interview must take place in person.
 - If a noncustodial parent is not reasonably available (e.g., resides in another state or a different county), the interview may be conducted by telephone or, if possible, by staff from the respective child welfare agency in the state/county in which the non-custodial parent resides.
 - If the noncustodial parent's whereabouts are unknown, the permanency case manager must conduct a **diligent search**.

5510. Permanency Planning Principles

The permanency case manager must, with the approval of the permanency supervisor, recommend a permanency goal to the Family Court. The Court determines the permanency goal for each child in out-of-home care.

The following are basic principles of permanency planning:

- ⊙ *Concurrent Planning Determination* – As part of the collaborative case planning process, a determination regarding whether a case should be considered for concurrent planning is to be made using *Nevada's Concurrent Planning Guide*.
- ⊙ *Permanency for Children* – Early permanency for children is the ultimate goal. Workers must see success as **permanency** for the child, either through reunification or another permanent plan.
- ⊙ *Full Disclosure* – An open, honest discussion that involves the family, the permanency case manager, the out-of-home caregiver, and the legal system regarding the process of out-of-home care, including federal and state time frames and guidelines. Parents must be in-formed of their rights, responsibilities, available services, permanency and parenting options, and the consequences for failing to successfully meet case plan objectives. This includes communication with all parties involved that an alternative permanency plan will be made for the child in the event that (s)he cannot safely return home. This must occur early and throughout the

life of the case. Further, the case plan must be developed with the parents and must fully articulate the expectations of the parents, agency, and others, including qualitative, behavioral measurements of success and deadlines. It is the responsibility of the permanency case manager to regularly update parties involved regarding progress or concerns through the case planning process.

- ⊙ *Permanency Time Limits* – Families must be provided with information regarding time limits designated by law (i.e., twelve [12] -month Permanency Hearing and 14/20 rule, in accordance with NRS 432B.553).
- ⊙ *Visitation* – Parents who visit with their children regularly have the best chance of reunification. A structured visitation plan must be created that fits the need and age of the child. Out-of-home caregivers must be involved and support the planning and implementation process.
- ⊙ *Alternative Permanency Goal* – The permanency plan must be created and be part of the case plan. When reunification is the primary permanency/case plan goal, an alternative permanency plan must be identified in cases where there are identified risk factors that could delay reunification, based on the results of the guide. Both permanency/case plans begin concurrently when the child is placed in out-of-home care. It is essential that a **diligent search** to identify and involve immediate and extended family members be completed early in the planning process so as to identify potential placement resources and avoid multiple placements for the child(ren).
- ⊙ *Compelling Reasons* – The decision to not make a referral for termination of parental rights when any child has remained in out-of-home care for fourteen (14) months of any twenty (20) -month period must always be made on the basis that there are compelling reasons to support this decision. These compelling reasons must be clearly and specifically documented.

Other planned permanent living arrangement (OPPLA) may be selected as a primary permanency goal only when it is determined that no other permanency option is reasonable. In these instances, compelling reasons (documented on the *Compelling Reasons Checklist*) why no other permanency options are reasonable have been submitted to the Family Court and the Court has approved OPPLA as the child's permanency goal.

- ⊙ *Engagement and Collaboration* – A key component to permanency planning is the partnerships that are formed between birth families, the permanency case manager, and out-of-home caregivers, which encourages and supports reunification efforts. Foster families understand that it is in the child(ren)'s best interest, whenever possible, to reunify with his/her family and are able to establish mentoring-type relationships with birth families.
- ⊙ *Documentation* – Case managers must document all contacts, casework efforts, and collateral information pertaining to a case as the case progresses. This prepares the case in the event that subsequent legal action is required (e.g., termination of parental rights [TPR], voluntary relinquishment).
- ⊙ *Behavior Changes* – Birth parents must make favorable progress and change the behaviors that caused the removal of their child(ren). Parents must respond to case plan objectives and demonstrate positive changes in their parenting capacity.

5540. Adoption

e. Court-Ordered Termination of Parental Rights

When parents fail to make reasonable progress toward achieving their case plan objectives within a reasonable period of time and decline voluntary relinquishment, the permanency case manager must begin the

legal process of requesting termination of parental rights (TPR) (see *Section 51150: Termination of Parental Rights Hearings*).

Situations in which a request for TPR must be considered include those in which the parent(s) declines voluntary relinquishment and where:

- ⊗ Parents indicate verbally or through their behavior that they are unwilling or unable to care for their child(ren). The permanency case manager and adoption case worker must meet with the parents to discuss voluntary relinquishment of parental rights.
- ⊗ Within the federally mandated time frames (within twelve [12] months of removal or when the child has been in out-of-home care for fourteen [14] of the most recent twenty [20] months), a parent(s) has failed to make substantial progress toward achieving his/her case plan objectives. The permanency case manager must meet with the parent(s) to discuss voluntary relinquishment of parental rights.
- ⊗ The Family Court waives the reasonable effort requirements.

The adoption worker informs the permanency case manager and assists in ensuring that the request to the Family Court for TPR is properly documented. (See *Section 6000: Adoption Policies and Procedures* for additional TPR guidelines.)

Documentation

Referral Process for Termination of Parental Rights

The referral to the District Attorney's (DA's) Office to terminate parental rights occurs when adoption is the permanency goal for the child and legal grounds for termination exist. The permanency case manager's recommendation to refer for termination of parental rights (TPR) must be reviewed by the permanency supervisor. The permanency case manager must:

- ⊗ Complete the *TPR Worksheet and Checklist*.
- ⊗ Answer all questions on the worksheet and provide supportive documentation.

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- ⊙ Describe all efforts to locate the parents, legal custodians, and/or legal guardians (a **diligent search** to locate them must have been completed).
- ⊙ Complete TPR referral packets and submit them to the supervisor for approval and submission to the DA's Office within thirty (30) calendar days from the date that adoption is approved as the permanency goal by the Court **or** when the Department determines that filing for TPR is in the child's best interest.
- ⊙ As part of the TPR process, determine whether the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) applies to the case. Consult with legal counsel in these cases.

The TPR order allows the Department to have custody and control of the child, with the authority to place the child and consent to the child's adoption.

5740. Direct Permanency Service to Parents/Caregiver(s)

C. Visits With Parent(s)/Caregiver(s): Special Circumstances

When parents whose parental rights are intact are unavailable, the following regulations must be followed:

(v) Parent Incarceration

If reasonably possible, the permanency case manager may have in-person contact with incarcerated parents. The frequency of this contact must be determined by the permanency supervisor and will depend upon:

- ⊙ The regulations of the facility in which the parent is incarcerated.
- ⊙ The proximity of the facility in which the parent is incarcerated.
- ⊙ The present and future role of the incarcerated parent in the family as it may affect child safety and potential reunification.

(vi) Unknown Whereabouts of Parent

No later than thirty (30) days after the parent is known to be missing, the permanency case manager must make a referral to the Business Center/**Diligent Search** which must conduct a search for the missing parent(s), by using the **Diligent Search Request** form. When a parent's (parents') whereabouts continue to be unknown, this referral for **diligent search** must be completed at least every six (6) months and at least sixty (60) days prior to any upcoming Court hearing. Known relatives must be contacted by the permanency case manager by telephone, by letter, or in person every thirty (30) days to inquire about the parent's whereabouts.



QUARTER 3
PIP 1.2.3
WASHOE



WASHOE COUNTY

"Dedicated to Excellence in Public Service"



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DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
Children's Services

September 1, 2011

Amber Howell, Deputy Administrator
Division of Child and Family Services
4126 Technology Way, 3rd Floor
Carson City, NV 89706

Subject: PIP Item 1.2.3 Washoe and Clark will explore expanding current relative search capacity to conduct relative searches 24/7 and will provide DCFS an informational report on the outcome

Dear Ms. Howell,

Washoe County Department of Social Services is complying with the above-referenced PIP item through this informational memorandum. As a result of the State of Nevada approved budget through the 2009 State legislature and continued economic recession, WCDSS has suffered significant budget reductions reducing the ability to grow and expand programs. However, WCDSS has improved current practice and trained effected staff formally and through supervisory consultation. Specifically, WCDSS requires Emergency Response Unit (ERU) and On-call staff to conduct relative inquiries of parents capable of providing this information every time a child is faced with out of home placement due to present safety danger. When a local relative is found and a safety plan is considered, staff are required to conduct a local background and CANS check, as well as to conduct a home check to ensure the relative home is safe.

For informational purposes, the ERU shift is staffed with a minimum of one supervisor and two case workers and staff respond in the field until 10 pm 7 days per week. (Their shift ends at 11:00 p.m. but the last hour is intended to be in the office to complete required documentation.) ERU is operational on Saturdays and Sundays beginning at 11:00 a.m. The On-call staff include one case worker and one supervisor daily. On-call case workers are required to respond in the field to present danger safety calls and consult with a supervisor on all anticipated placements. The On-call supervisor assists with locating relatives through consultation and telephone contact as needed.

WCDSS is pleased with the increased number of safety plans utilized to keep children safely in relative homes when out of home placements are required to keep children safe. While we have not been able financially to expand capacity, we have improved practice in that workers first engage parents to identify local relatives, and then explore the relative to ensure a child can safely be placed in a relative home.

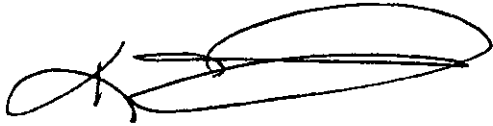
WASHOE COUNTY IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

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Additionally, I have instructed my Administrative staff to monitor this enhanced process through regular review of after-hours placement.

Please let me know if additional information may be provided regarding this item.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'K. Schiller', written over a horizontal line.

Kevin Schiller, Director