

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
PROBATION DEPARTMENT
DIRECTIVE

No. 1274

Issued: 12/01/11

Post Until: 01/01/12

SUBJECT: Juvenile – Family Findings

Assembly Bill 938 amended Sections 309 and 638 of the Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) relating to the detention of children. It is the implementation of new Federal law that requires due diligence on the part of the Probation Officer to identify and locate all grandparents, adult siblings, and other relatives of minors who are at risk removal from their homes for foster care. These relatives, except when the relative's history of family or domestic violence makes notification inappropriate, are to be provided specific information regarding the minor's case when the Probation Officer decides to recommend foster care placement. Notification of these relatives must be done within 30 days of the decision for placement.

This directive outlines procedures to assure compliance with the changes and eligibility requirements for funding under Title IV-E of the Federal Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 670 et seq.).

Instructions for Completing Family Findings:

Intake Detention Control (IDC) Deputy Probation Officer (DPO) Responsibilities

IDC DPO:

- Conduct assessment, begin/develop case plan and prepare detention report to court.
- Question minors regarding relatives and document contact information in:
 - PCMS>Minor Information>Family Summary>Minors Statement & Rights Information to auto-populate to the Detention Report

DPO Responsibilities (when recommending 602 Suitable Placement)

DPO:

- Gather information during initial and subsequent investigations regarding grandparents, adult siblings and other relatives (names, addresses and telephone contact information) when recommending Suitable Placement and contact them regarding the minor's case and possible placement consideration.
- Document:
 - Contact information in PCMS>Minor Information> Family Summary
 - Juvenile Worksheet (Prob. 1571, Rev. 10/11) in Family Information>Family Findings
 - Pre-Plea/Disposition Court Report (Prob.1570, Rev. 10/11) in Family Information>Family Findings
- In contacting relatives of Indian Heritage, inquire about tribal affiliation and document in Interested Parties. (Refer to ICWA Directive)

If the DPO is recommending Home on Probation to the parents, the report shall include in the case plan steps to be taken to address issues in the home and/or parenting concerns in order to avoid foster care placement. (This "reasonable candidate" statement in the case plan allows Title IV-E claiming).

Redetermination/documentation of the "reasonable candidate" statement should be made in all reports recommending release from custody.

Residential Based Services (RBS) DPO Responsibilities

RBS DPO:

- Upon receiving the file, the RBS DPO:
 - Researches the case to determine whether or not Relative Notification has been completed.
 - If it has been completed, the RSB DPO follows up with the minor to determine what contact has been made, if any, and follows up with those relatives for possible inclusion in case planning.
 - If it has not been completed, the RBS DPO will gather information from the minor about relatives in his/her life, obtain addresses, document in PCMS (PCMS>Minor Information>Family Summary) and send out the notification.

When it has been determined that a relative has made contact and may be part of the permanent plan for the youth, the case will be referred to the Placement Permanency & Quality Assurance (PPQA) for possible Adoption or Legal Guardianship. If the RBS DPO cannot obtain any information on relatives, and it has been determined that family reunification may not be the permanent plan, the case will be referred to PPQA for family finding efforts.

Supervising Deputy Probation Officer (SDPO) Responsibilities

SDPO:

- Reviews the worksheet, court report and automated system (PCMS) to ensure that family information and efforts to contact relatives are documented.

Questions regarding this Directive should be directed to the applicable Bureau Consultant.



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