



Resource Family Approval Program

San Benito County Health
and Human Services
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Presented by:

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Biggest Takeaway Involving CPS Role at Removal

CPS will do everything possible to support placement of a child with a relative and/or non-relative extended family member immediately after they are removed from their parent's custody if possible and appropriate.

If a family member is located an emergency placement assessment can be completed immediately. An RFA referral would be submitted as soon as possible.

Placing children in a foster home with a family that is unknown to them only occurs as a last resort.



What is the Resource Family Approval Program?

- On October 11, 2015 Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. signed legislation that comprehensively reformed placement and treatment options for youth in foster care. (Assembly Bill 403)
- This effort known as the Continuum of Care Reform draws together a series of existing and new reforms to our child welfare services program designed out of an understanding that children who must live apart from their biological parents do best when they are cared for in committed nurturing family homes.

Legislative Intent

- To develop a unified, family-friendly, and child-centered resource family approval process that:
 - Eliminates duplication
 - Increases approval standards
 - Includes approval for: foster care, guardianship, and adoption

Key Message of RFA

- Focuses on life-long relationships & quality parenting
 - No additional assessment of the family for adoption or guardianship
 - Considers family's ability to meet the needs of
 - vulnerable children
- Achieves results for children and families
 - Families are better prepared and supported
 - Less intrusive to family
 - Training and support for all families → more stability,
 - fewer moves
- Improves efficiency
 - Eliminates redundant processes



Foster Families – Resource Families

- Resource Family Approval
 - Related and non-related families – Including those providing a foster care placement for a probation child
 - Training for all families
 - Resource Families still choose the role they play in the system: temporary or permanent
 - Prepared for permanency-no additional approvals necessary



Qualifications

Be 18 years or older

Pass a background check

Be caring, flexible, protective

Willing to work as part of the child's team: CPS workers, Therapists, Counselors, and Advocates



Placement Prior to RFA Approval

- **1. Emergency Basis:**
 - Must be with relative or nonrelative extended family member (NREFM)
 - Requires WIC 309/361.45 assessment
 - Caregiver must agree to submit an RFA application and begin home environment assessment (including background checks) within 5 business days
 - Placements made on an emergency basis may occur at any time during the life of the child's court case
- **2. Compelling Reason:**
 - Can be with relative/NREFM or someone from the community
 - Based on needs of the child
 - After home environment assessment (including background checks) completed
 - Permanency assessment to be completed within 90 days



What does a Comprehensive RFA Assessment Look Like?

- Look at the family as a whole, not just the home
- One approval standard:
 - One application
 - One criminal background check
 - Combined home environment and psychosocial assessment
 - Pre- and post-approval training for all families
 - Bi-Annual Updates

Comprehensive Assessment Components

Background Check Assessment

- Child Abuse Central Index (CACI)
- DMV (Applicant and other adults who frequently transport child)
- Megan's Law Registered Sex Offender Check
- Criminal Records Check
- LAARS & LIS Checks

Home Environment Assessment

- Home & Grounds
- Fire Clearance
- Capacity Determination
- Storage Requirements
- Outdoor Activity

Permanency Assessment

- *Psychosocial Assessment*
- *Caregiver Training*
- *Written Report (Family Study)*
- *Any Additional Activities*

The Need

- Children need loving, caring homes
- Children need to remain in their communities
- Children need to remain in their school of origin
- Children need to remain as close to their family and community as possible to reduce trauma



RFA Assessment Process

ORIENTATION

APPLICATION

LIVE SCAN, BACKGROUND CHECK

CPR & First Aid

Training and Education

Home Assessment and Interviews of household members

Final Report and Recommendation



Current Local Statistics Involving Foster Youth

- 41 Dependents (Children and Non-Minor Dependents) in Child Welfare System
 - 12 of these Dependents are currently in a plan of Family Maintenance with their parents.
 - 09 of these Dependents are currently placed in out-of-home care with RFA relatives locally
 - 08 of these Dependents are current placed in out-of-home care with RFA relatives out of county
 - 04 of these Dependents are currently placed in out-of-home care with RFA non-relatives locally
 - 06 of these Dependents are currently placed in out-of-home care with RFA non-relatives out of county
 - 02 of these Dependents are living independently



San Benito County Resource Family Approval Statistics

- Certified Resource Family Approved Homes in San Benito County: 35
 - 7 of these homes accept children ages 0-5 Only
 - 5 of these homes accept children ages 6-12 Only
 - 3 of these homes accept children ages 13-18 or older Only
 - Many of these homes are child-specific with relatives who became certified and who are not interested in taking in non-relatives for placement.
 - A significant challenge currently is the lack of resource family homes locally who are willing and able to accept children who are school-aged
- Active Application Being Screened at this time: 5



Resources and Information

Social Work Supervisor
Tessa Romero

- RFA Email: rfa@cosb.us
- RFA Phone: (831)636-4382
- RFA Website: <https://hhsa.cosb.us/children-and-adult-services/resource-family-approval/>
- California Department of Social Services RFA: <https://cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/resource-family-approval-program>
- Binti Application Portal: <https://binti.com/>
- Foster Parent College Training Site: <https://www.fosterparentcollege.com/>

OUR KIDS
NEED YOU!

Will you
join our team?

