

The Philadelphia Department of Human Services Children and Youth Division Procedural Guide

April 12, 2004

TO: All CYD Social Work Staff

FROM: Wanda Mial, Chief Deputy Commissioner
John McGee, Operations Director

RE: 85-29 Policy/Procedure Update for Kinship Care



Processing the Kinship Care Assessment Packet:

- In the event of a Kinship Care placement, CYD staff will provide the CRU with an acceptable Kinship Care Assessment Packet and CRU referral packet including the completed 85-29 worksheet as quickly as possible but no later than 15 days after placement.
- In the event that an acceptable Kinship Care Assessment Packet cannot be submitted by the 15th day, the CYD worker must send the packet up the chain of command to the Director of Operations with a cover memo explaining the reasons for the delay. If there is a need for retroactive payment as the result of a court order, a copy of the order must be included.
- Court-Ordered Retroactive Payments:
 - If the date of the court ordered retroactive payment predates the date DHS assumed responsibility for the child, this must be clearly stated in the memorandum to the chain of command so that special payment arrangements can be made.

Payment Date:

- During the period that the Kinship Care Assessment Packet is being completed and until the provider agency has accepted the CRU referral, the prospective kinship caregiver home will be paid directly by DHS. The 85-29 worksheet should be completed and reflect the date of placement determined by whichever of the following dates occurs the latest:
 - The date of the court order or VPA.
 - The date the home was approved by DHS.
 - The actual date of placement.
- Payment by the provider agency will begin on the date the provider agency accepts the referral from CRU and **not** the date the provider agency actually visits and/or approves the home.

- The CYD social worker should advise the kinship caregiver:
 - That they will be paid effective with the date of placement as determined above.¹
 - That a provider agency will be contacting them shortly and will review their own payment policies with the caregiver.

Provider Home Assessment:

- The provider agency's assessment of the kinship home shall begin no later than **72 hours** following the provider agency's acceptance of the CRU referral.
- Once the provider has accepted the referral from CRU, the agency is expected to notify the DHS social worker of the date they plan to visit the home.
- CRU will also notify the DHS social worker, supervisor, administrator and director by e-mail the same day that an agency has accepted a referral to alert them that the provider will be visiting the home within the next three days.

Questions regarding this Procedural Transmittal may be addressed to:

Wesley M. Brown, Administrator	x4112
Susan Weinberg, Program Supervisor	x4116
Jack Markowitz, Program Analyst	x4119

¹ If the 85-29 is processed before the 15th of the month, DHS payment will begin the very next month. However, if the 85-29 is processed after the 15th day of the month, DHS payment will not be made until the second month after the placement date. Provider agency policy on caregiver payments may be different.



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Commissioner
ALBA E. MARTINEZ

Deputy Commissioners
ANNE MARIE AMBROSE
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CHERYL RANSOM

April 8, 2004

Dear Colleague:

It has come to our attention that clarification is needed on several aspects of kinship foster care placements, including the effective date of these placements and the procedures for approval of kinship placement homes.

Kinship Placement Date

In the past, there has been significant confusion among providers and DHS staff regarding the date on which kinship care payments are initiated.

Effective *April 12, 2004*, provider agencies will be paid for kinship referrals beginning on the date on which the referral is accepted by the agency from the CRU. The start date of payment to the agency will not be required to be earlier to reflect the child's actual placement date in the home, nor will it be allowed to be later, based on the date the agency actually visits the home.

Once the provider has accepted the referral from the CRU, the agency is expected to:

- Visit the home **within 72 hours of the referral**: If an agency believes that it will not have adequate staffing to visit the home within that timeframe, the agency should reject the referral when it is initially contacted by CRU. CAPE will be monitoring agencies' compliance with this requirement.
- Notify the DHS social worker of the date they plan to visit the home.
- Fax the Provider Location Code Request Form to Margaret Hanner (fax: 215-683-5993) **within 72 hours of the referral** to obtain a provider location code.

Although it will not involve provider agencies, please note that DHS has an obligation to pay the kinship caregiver from an earlier date. For DHS purposes, payment to the caregiver will begin on the latest of the following dates: the Court order or Voluntary Placement Agreement, the approval of the kinship home by DHS, or the date of actual placement in the home prior to the agency's involvement in the case. In response to concerns raised by providers, DHS will make this payment to caregivers directly, without requiring providers to serve as a pass-through for payments to the caregiver prior to the agency's involvement. DHS is finalizing internal policy and procedure to facilitate these direct caretaker payments.

Approval of Kinship Homes

In several cases recently, providers have contacted CRU several days or weeks after accepting a kinship referral to state that they are not able to approve the home and are therefore rejecting the referral. *This is not an option under the PBC contract-* having accepted the referral, PBC providers are responsible for the child and must work with DHS to bring the home into compliance or, as an absolute last resort, to move the child.

DHS has made significant improvements in its initial assessment of kinship care homes, and the vast majority of kinship homes referred to agencies meet or exceed regulatory requirements. Please note that DHS is bound by State regulation and DHS policy; any more stringent agency-specific policies are entirely the responsibility of that agency. Even with the improvements in DHS assessment of kinship homes, we recognize that there may still be concerns about some kinship referrals. The process for resolving concerns regarding kinship home approval is outlined in the PBC contract and clarified below:

- If, after receiving a kinship care referral from DHS, the provider determines that the facility does not meet safety standards required by State regulation and DHS policy and there is reasonable likelihood that the home can be brought into compliance, the provider will take reasonable steps to bring the home into compliance, with appropriate collaboration with and notification of CYD chain of command.
- If necessary during the approval period, the provider may move the child into a temporary respite placement while working with DHS to bring the home into compliance. The DHS case manager must be notified of any such move, and an 85-29 must be initiated by the provider and completed by the CRU for any move lasting more than 24 hours.
 - 85-29 change requests are to be made through Joyce Trawick at Joyce.Trawick@phila.gov
- If the provider determines that the facility and/or caregiver is out of compliance with State regulation and/or DHS policy, the provider will document the nature of the non-compliance with respect to applicable regulations and will notify Al Elfman in DHS' CAPE unit at 215-683-4206 or Alan.Elfman@phila.gov as soon as possible and not later than the 30th day of placement. DHS and the provider will work together to bring the facility and/or caregiver into compliance.
- If in the process of working toward compliance, it becomes evident that the facility and/or caregiver cannot be brought into compliance by the 60th day of placement, as a last resort, the child may be moved. The provider should work with DHS to move the child into another kinship or family foster care home within its own system.
 - No later than 15 days in advance of the move, the provider must notify the child's parents in writing of the placement change and forward a copy of the notification to the DHS case manager. If the child is being moved to another kinship care home, before moving the child, the DHS case manager will obtain the oral ChildLine clearance, will obtain the online State Police clearance, and will clear household members in FACTS and the provider will conduct the safety assessments necessary to approve the home.
 - The provider will submit an 85-29 change request to Joyce Trawick at Joyce.Trawick@phila.gov

Please note that under no circumstances is an agency to close a home and discontinue its services to that child. Once the agency has accepted the referral, it is responsible for that child and needs to communicate with DHS to ensure that the child is in a safe home and is receiving services.

Summary of Who to Contact with Kinship Referral Concerns

Issue	Contact
Clarification needed on contents of referral packet	CRU Referring Worker (Supervisor, Belinda Moody)
Concerns about a kinship home that you think <u>can</u> be brought into compliance, including concerns about the kinship care assessment	CYD Chain of Command
Concerns about a kinship home that you think <u>cannot</u> be brought into compliance	CAPE – Al Elfman, 215-683-4206
Questions about kinship policies/procedures	Policy & Planning – Susan Weinberg, Wesley Brown
85-29 changes	Joyce Trawick, (Supervisor Rosemary Sweeney, CRU Administrator)
PBC referral/other policy questions	CAPE – PBC Analysts: Lynn Carter (215-683-4233), Mika Walton (215-683-4232), Robert Moultrie (215-683-4260)

Thank you,



Cheryl Ransom
Deputy Commissioner, Contract Administration and Program Evaluation

- cc: Wanda Mial
- John McGee
- Wesley Brown
- Joseph Kuna
- Carrie Whitaker