

STEP BY STEP: BASIC IV-E

A. **SCREENING: PRIMARY ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA** -- All children being considered for placement should be screened for IV-E eligibility. If it is determined that the child meets all eligibility criteria, including placement in a Title IV-E approved setting, a Foster Care Assistance Application **must** be completed and submitted within 30 days. The primary eligibility criteria are:

1. **Court Orders** -- Orders removing the child from the home must include findings regarding the following:
 - Best interest of the child to be removed from the home (initial order)
 - Reasonable efforts made to prevent removal (within 60 days of initial order)
 - Both “best interest” and “reasonable efforts” findings must include child specific information (i.e. exhibits A and B).
 - The department’s responsibility for care and placement of the child

If a child went from home to detention to placement, the detention order is the order of removal. If the child went from home to disposition to placement, the disposition order will be the removal order. Disposition orders include modification, agreed modification, and other similar orders. Placing the child in the home of removal following the disposition order will result in ineligibility for IV-E. Refer to the *Compliance Resource Manual* (CRM) for complete information regarding court orders.

It is recommended that any order that could potentially remove a child from the home include the required court findings.

2. **IV-E Approved Facilities** -- The child must be placed in a IV-E approved facility as determined by the *Title IV-E Approved Facilities List* located in the *Search* section of the TJPC website. This list is provided by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS) and is updated monthly.
3. **AFDC Eligibility** -- The child must have been eligible for AFDC at the time of removal from the home. In general, AFDC eligibility requires that the child be living with a single parent (or two parents if one is disabled or qualifies as an “underemployed” parent) whose income meets AFDC guidelines, or with another relative as defined by program guidelines.

B. **FOSTER CARE ASSISTANCE APPLICATION** -- Within the first 30 days of an eligible child's placement in a IV-E approved facility the department **must** complete and submit to TJPC the *Foster Care Assistance Application* packet which includes:

- *Foster Care Assistance Application* submitted via the TPS database; the following attachments must be submitted within 2 business days of submitting the application:
- Verification of date of birth (birth certificate or other acceptable documentation)
- Social Security number or copy of application
- Copies of court orders (initial removal order and disposition order)
- Required documents if child is placed out of state (refer to the CRM)

C. **CHILD/FAMILY CASE PLAN** -- Within 30 days of placement, the *Child/Family Case Plan* must be completed. The case plan provides an outline of services to be provided to the child and family while the child is in placement and states the permanency plan for the child. This plan is reviewed and updated every 6 months from the date of placement.

- D. MONTHLY CONTACT** -- Monthly contact with the child, parent, and caregiver is required while the child is in placement. The purposes of these contacts include ensuring the health, safety and well being of children in placement, evaluating progress on goals identified in the *Child/Family Case Plan*, and addressing new needs that may arise. All contact must be documented and should clearly reflect with whom contact was made.
- E. MONTHLY CASEWORKER VISITS** – The Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006 requires monthly (face-to-face) caseworker visits with all children placed in foster care under the responsibility of the state. This impacts juvenile probation by requiring these monthly visits (effective September 2008) for all Title IV-E certified children since these youth are reported in the Texas Department of Family and Protective (TDFPS) (data) system. These visits must be face-to-face and be conducted by a person who either has responsibility for the case OR visitation of the child. These visits shall be documented in Caseworker (or some other approved format) and reported to TJPC as requested.
- F. REIMBURSEMENT REQUESTS FOR FOSTER CARE** -- Requests for reimbursement for foster care/placement (*also called "maintenance"*) expenses are due to TJPC by the 10th of the month following service delivery. A correction form is used to modify previously submitted requests.
- G. SIX MONTH CASE REVIEWS** -- Within six months from the date of placement and every six months thereafter, the child's case must be reviewed through either an administrative or a judicial proceeding. The purpose of the review is to determine the safety of the child, the continuing necessity for and appropriateness of the placement, the extent of compliance with the case plan, the extent of progress on issues that led to the child's removal from the home, and the projection of a likely date for permanency.

Forms to be completed in conjunction with the six month review are:

- *Child/Family Case Plan Review*
- If the six month review is a judicial proceeding a copy of the *Permanency Hearing Order* must be submitted to TJPC
- A *Periodic Case Review Monthly Summary* must be completed and submitted to TJPC by the 10th of each month to report administrative reviews conducted during the previous month.

- H. PERMANENCY HEARING** – A permanency hearing must be held within 12 months of the child's date of placement and every 12 months thereafter to make determinations including whether the permanency plan for the child is appropriate and whether reasonable efforts to finalize the permanency plan have been made.

Forms to be completed in conjunction with the permanency hearing are:

- *Child/Family Case Plan Review*
- *Foster Care Assistance Review* (must be submitted to TJPC)
- *Permanency Hearing Order* (must be submitted to TJPC)

- I. CHANGES IN CHILD'S STATUS OR LOCATION** -- The *Placement Information/Discharge* (PID) form must be received by TJPC within 5 days of any change in the child's placement (including moves to detention or other secure facilities), level of care, or change in eligibility status (change to inactive, or discharge from the IV-E program).