

**Series:** Foster Care  
**Policy Name:** Timely Permanency Achievement  
**Policy Number:** FC 303  
**Origination Date:** 11/19/10  
**Revision Date:** 09/21/2023  
**Regulation:** FS 39.621, 65C-30, CFOP 170-9  
**Applicable To:** CPC Staff

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**PURPOSE:** It is the policy of Community Partnership for Children, hereinafter referred to as CPC, to ensure permanency goals are established based on the child’s best interest. CPC will ensure reasonable efforts are made to achieve the permanency goal during the first twelve (12) months following the child’s removal from his or her home as established by Florida Administrative Code 65C-30.012.

**PROCEDURE:**

Permanency Goals, as set forth in Part IX, Chapter 39.621(2), F.S., shall be selected based on the best interest of the child.

**1. Available permanency goals listed in order of preference, are:**

- a. Reunification.
- b. Adoption, if a petition for termination of parental rights has been or will be filed.
- c. Permanent guardianship of a dependent child under s. 39.6221.
- d. Permanent placement with a fit and willing relative under s. 39.6231.
- e. Placement in another planned permanent living arrangement under s. 39.6241.

**2. Efforts to Address Permanency for Children in Out-of-Home Care:**

- A. Case Manager will ensure that monthly parental contacts (at least 30 days) will occur with parent(s)/legal guardian(s).
  - a. Case Manager will complete ongoing assessments of the family’s progress by assisting the parent(s) with moving through stages of change and progressing towards goal achievement as established by CFOP 170-9 Chapter 6.
  - b. Case Manager will maintain regular communication and collaboration with the family, involved team members, and the Court to effectively evaluate family progress and work towards permanency achievement.
  - c. Case Manager will submit referrals within seven (7) days of court order and/or case plan acceptance and will maintain monthly contact with assigned service providers and family’s support network.

- B. Permanency staffings will be held at four (4) months or prior to initial Judicial Review Hearing, (whichever is sooner), no later than ten (10) months from removal, and prior to all scheduled permanency hearings for all children in out of home care.
  - a. Case Managers will ensure that recommendations are legally supported through reasonable efforts, case documentation, assessment of conditions for return, and completion of progress updates prior to scheduled permanency staffings.
  - b. Permanency Staffing Specialists will address parental engagement, reasonable efforts, family progress, child's needs, and conditions for return during all permanency planning discussions.
  - c. Concurrent permanency goal recommendations, when appropriate, will be determined at initial permanency staffing and prior to scheduled initial Judicial Review Hearings to align with statutory requirements established in FS 39.621.
  - d. If reunification is not likely to be achieved within twelve (12) months, there must be a discussion regarding appropriateness of permanency goal change with parent(s)/legal guardian(s), CPC, Children's Legal Services, Guardian ad Litem Program, and others involved in the family's support network.
- C. Reasonable efforts to finalize the permanency plan must be made during the first twelve (12) months following the child's removal date from his or her home.
  - a. The Case Manager must document in the Judicial Review Social Study Report (JRSSR) his or her efforts to achieve the permanency goal.
  - b. The Court shall make a finding that the Department or contracted service provider has made sufficient reasonable efforts to finalize the permanency plan in effect in a timely manner.
  - c. When the Court does not make such a finding, the Case Manger will consult with Child Legal Services to immediately schedule an Evidentiary Hearing to obtain the finding.
- D. Unless there is a compelling reason for an exception, a petition for termination of parental rights shall, at a minimum, be filed when a child has been in out-of-home care fifteen (15) months out of the previous twenty-two (22) months. Compelling reasons are:
  - a. If the child is being cared for by a relative or non-relative who is willing and able to serve as a long-term legal custodian until the child reaches the age of majority and the custodian is not interested in adopting the child.
  - b. If there is a determination that the family has not been provided, consistent with the time period in the case plan, the services necessary to safely reunify the child.

**3. Efforts to Reduce Time to Permanency Achievement:**

- A. If the court makes a determination that reasonable efforts to reunify are not required, a permanency hearing will be held, and a permanency staffing must be held prior to the hearing to determine the permanency plan and goal for the child.
- B. Children with court approved permanency goals of **Reunification with parent(s)** or **No court approved goal** within twelve (12) months of the removal date time period will be reviewed and assessed on a monthly basis to assist with ensuring sufficient efforts are directed to identified cases to assist with meeting federal timely permanency achievement within twelve (12) months standard of 35.2%.
- C. Case Management Leadership will provide oversight to identified cases and assist to address identified needs or barriers.
  - a. Program Operations Administrators will schedule timely safety plan modification meetings to address visitations and/or critical juncture discussions with involved parties when it is determined that the danger threats have been mitigated or conditions for return are met to support reunification prior to twelve (12) month removal date, when appropriate.
  - b. Senior Leadership will request escalated permanency staffings to address systemic needs or barriers that impact timely permanency achievement for children in out of home care.
  - c. Executive Leadership will monitor compliance efforts with timely permanency achievement. When needed, escalated permanency case reviews will be arranged with internal and external stakeholders, including but not limited to Senior or Executive Leadership at the Guardian ad Litem (GAL) Program or Children’s Legal Services (CLS) to address timely permanency achievement.

**BY DIRECTION OF:**

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**Karin Flositz, Chief Executive Officer  
Community Partnership for Children**

10/02/2023  
**Approval Date**