

CWS3000.1W Foster Care New Worker Guidance

LEARNER HANDOUTS Day 4



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL SERVICES



Revised 01/14/26

FOSTERING FUTURES

MY FUTURE. MY CHOICE.

You have the right
to say what will
happen to you.

Participation in
the Fostering
Futures program
is completely
voluntary and
depends upon
your agreement and commitment.

Your plan should reflect your input
on personal goals, strengths,
interests, and needs. Talk with a
worker at your local Department for
more information about all of
your options.



Foster Care Worker Contact Information:

To speak with your foster care worker about Fostering
Futures, contact your local department of social services
or visit www.dss.virginia.gov/localagency.

Fostering Futures can help me with:



housing
support



education
/job training



independent
living needs



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL SERVICES



Division of
Family Services

FosterMyFuture.com



MY FUTURE.
MY CHOICE.

FosterMyFuture.com

WHAT IS FOSTERING FUTURES?

Fostering Futures is a foster care program available to youth in foster care after age 18. This voluntary program enables your local department of social services (LDSS) to provide financial assistance, support and services until you are 21 years old to help you successfully transition to independence.

What can it cover?



Housing Support

- › Continued placement with your foster parents if you decide to remain in their home, or
- › Room and board if you enroll in a vocational school/college, or
- › Rent or payment for an independent living arrangement when you are ready.



Education/Vocation Assistance

- › Assistance with the costs of vocational training, college tuition, work uniforms, tools, computers, books, and related supplies.



Independent Living Needs

- › Groceries, transportation, and clothing.
- › Child care and other supports, as needed, to help you be successful.
- › Support from a foster care worker to help you along the way.



HOW DO I KNOW IF I'M ELIGIBLE?

You may be eligible if on or after July 1, 2016...

- › You turned 18 in foster care and have not yet turned 21, or;
- › You turned 18 while in a juvenile justice facility but had been in foster care when you were committed and you have not yet turned 21.

WHAT WILL BE EXPECTED OF ME?

- › Your commitment to go to school, vocational training, or work in order to maintain eligibility
- › The loss of a job or change in circumstances does not automatically disqualify you so long as you are working towards your goals.
- › Your willingness to continue to work with your foster care worker.
- › Your participation in the development of a transition plan and efforts to achieve your goals.
- › Completion of the Voluntary Continuing Services and Support Agreement (VCSSA).
- › Your attendance at court hearing(s), administrative review(s), and case planning meetings.

HOW DO I APPLY?

- › You may apply for Fostering Futures any time between 18 and 21 years of age.
- › Before 18: Talk with your foster care worker and begin making plans.
- › Between 18-21: If you have left foster care, contact your LDSS and speak with your former foster care worker or another agency representative about Fostering Futures.

WHAT IF I CHANGE MY MIND?

- › You can apply to transition to Fostering Futures directly from foster care at 18.
- › If you leave foster care or the Fostering Futures program, you may apply to come back to Fostering Futures any time before you turn 21.
- › You may leave Fostering Futures any time you decide it is not for you.

NOTE

If you were 16 in foster care on or after July 1, 2016, and left through adoption or KinGAP prior to turning 18, you may be eligible for some extended services and assistance. Please contact your local department of social services to find out more.

FOSTERING FUTURES

Fostering Futures is a program designed to maximize the number of youth who continue receiving support and services to successfully transition into adulthood. For youth turning 18 on or after July 1, 2016, **Fostering Futures** offers greater flexibility in receiving ongoing foster care services as outlined in VDSS Foster Care Guidance Section 14.

To qualify for Fostering Futures, youth must:

- “Age Out” of foster care
- Be between the ages of 18-21
- Have been in foster care immediately prior to their commitment to DJJ and leave DJJ facility after age 18 and before turning 21
- Sign a **Voluntary Continuing Services and Support Agreement (VCSSA)** upon turning 18; this also acts as an entrustment agreement and must be approved by JDR Court

In order to continue to be **eligible** for the program, participants must meet at least one of these five criteria:

- Completing secondary education or in a GED program
- Enrolled in college or vocational program
- Attending classes to promote employment or remove barriers to employment
- Working at least 80 hours per month
- Unable to meet one of the four conditions above due to a documented medical reason

Fostering Futures features expanded flexibility in the **Supervised Independent Living settings** in which participants may reside to include:

- On their own
- With their spouse (or girlfriend/boyfriend)
- In a college dormitory
- With a family member or extended family member
- In a foster family home- including TFC and LDSS approved homes
- Military reserves
- Job Corp or vocational training program

The placements **not** allowed are:

- Group homes
- Residential facilities
- Active duty military
- Long term incarceration

There is a **placement exception** for youth placed in a group home or residential facility program prior to turning 18 if they are on track to graduate before 19. They can remain eligible for foster care placement in their group home or residential setting (funded by IV-E or CSA) until such time as they graduate or it is determined they will not graduate before turning 19. They will then transition into Fostering Futures (with a signed VCSSA and new IV-E determination) and must transition to another type of placement. (**Note:** If a young adult requires a level of care that is not permitted through Fostering Futures, advance coordination with Adult Services is essential to promptly transition the young adult to the appropriate ongoing services.)

Maintenance payments (\$700/month as of July 1, 2016) are intended to cover the participant's costs for food, shelter, clothing, supplies, and personal incidentals and can be made directly to the youth or a person designated by the IL arrangement agreement (such as a landlord or foster parent). **Note:** **Maintenance payments replace the IL Stipend** which was a service. Participants are eligible for the same aspects of maintenance payments as minors in foster care to include: annual clothing allowance, maintenance payments for minor children residing with the participant, and enhanced maintenance when placed in a foster home where VEMAT is utilized.

The **VCSSA starts a new foster care episode** which must be documented in **OASIS** (as outlined below). Workers must also conduct a **new IV-E eligibility determination** based on the youth's income (no further IV-E eligibility reviews are needed).

OASIS DOCUMENTATION

Note: When a youth turns 18, signs a Voluntary Continuation of Services and Support Agreement (VCSSA), and all required signatures have been received on the agreement, several updates are required in OASIS:

- end date the current Legal Status screen and enter the effective date of the VCSSA and select the Fostering Futures options as outlined below;
- ensure the placement screen remains accurate; and
- update the funding screen.

OASIS\CUSTODY STATUS\LEGAL STATUS

End Date: End date foster care episode prior to VCSSA with the effective date of the VCSSA.

Click Change and then Clear to get a new line. (This prevents typing over history.)

Begin Date: Effective date of VCSSA (when last required signature is received)

Official Custody: Entrustment-Fostering Futures

Custody Disposition: Fostering Futures

Legal Basis: VCSSA

***Note:** The **End Date** for the **Legal Status screen** for the foster care episode prior to VCSSA will be the **same date** as the **Begin Date** for when the youth enters care through **Fostering Futures**. *For example, the child turns 18 on July 1 and the VCSSA is executed (last required signature is received) on July 2, the End Date for the prior foster care episode will be July 2 and the Start Date for Fostering Futures will be July 2.*

OASIS DOCUMENTATION (continued from previous page)

CLIENT \ FINANCES \ FUNDING SCREEN

End Date: (One day prior to effective date of VCSSA)

Click Change and then Clear to get a new line. (This prevents typing over history.)

Funding Sources:

Funding Source Type: Foster Care

Effective Date: (VCSSA effective date)

Program Category: ☒ IV-E

Source of Payment: ☒ IV-E

Monthly Maint. Payment: \$700.00

Other Resources:

Select options as appropriate.

Medicaid: Yes

Click **ADD**.

Note: The **Funding Screen End Date** should be **the day prior to the effective date of the VCSSA** as two funding sources cannot be used on the same day. *Continuing the prior example from above: The End Date would be July 1 and the new Effective Date would be July 2.*

The **LDSS Basic Case Management Responsibilities** are to:

- Visit (face to face) with the participant monthly
- Conduct Independent Living (IL) skills assessments and develop IL Transition Plans
- Develop a foster care plan with participant (goal of either IL or PFC) which addresses permanency and family connections
- Continue requests for services funding with local FAPT

Exiting from Fostering Futures can occur through voluntary termination by the participant or termination by the LDSS if it is determined that the youth no longer meets eligibility requirements. Efforts must be made by the LDSS (including requirements for written notifications) to help the youth understand the ramifications of termination, encourage participation/compliance and inform the youth of the process for re-entry. **Re-entry** by signing a new VCSSA is allowed at any time prior to their 21st birthday, provided they meet one of the eligibility requirements. There is **no limit** on the number of times a young adult can re-enter nor is there a limit on the time between exit and re-entry. Each time there is a re-entry, the following needs to happen:

- Sign a new VCSSA
- End date the old and start a new episode in OASIS on the Legal Status Screen
- File for a court hearing within 180 days to hear the VCSSA

Special Circumstances

Youth who were in the custody of LDSS immediately prior to their commitment to **DJJ** who turn 18 on or after July 1, 2016 are eligible for Fostering Futures:

- Upon release from commitment, and
- At any time before they turn 21, and
- Are eligible for re-entry, should they exit the program and want to re-enter

*Youth must meet one of the five eligibility criteria.

Any youth adopted at age 16 or older and who turns 18 on or after July 1, 2016 may continue to receive **adoption assistance** through Fostering Futures (if they are not already eligible for an extension related to special needs). They must meet one of the five eligibility criteria and the adoptive family must file an annual affidavit indicating the youth is still eligible. Adoption assistance is always paid to the family. **Note:** Case management requirements do not apply to this group of eligible youth and adopted youth are not eligible for re-entry.

To assist you in understanding these changes, a number of resources have been posted on Fusion <https://fusion.dss.virginia.gov/dfs/DFS-Home/Foster-Care/Fostering-Futures>

- Transmittal 270
- Foster Care Guidance
 - Section 14 covers current Fostering Futures Program for youth 18-21
- Fostering Futures Transmittal Training- Power Point and recorded webinar FSWEB1005
- Fostering Futures Checklist *New

Contact your Permanency Consultant if you need additional clarification.

FOSTERING FUTURES CHECKLIST

Name of Youth

Date of Birth

90 DAYS PRIOR TO YOUTH TURNING 18

- ☐ Hold a Family Partnership Meeting (FPM) or Child and Family Team Meeting (CFTM)
- ☐ Update the youth's [Transition Plan](#)
- ☐ Provide the youth with information in writing about the Fostering Futures Program
 - [Fostering Futures Brochure](#)
 - [Foster My Future's Fostering Futures page](#)
- ☐ Follow your agency's guidelines to obtain funding approval
- ☐ Document all of the above in OASIS, including efforts to enroll youth in Fostering Futures

(Refer to Foster Care Guidance 13.14 90-Day Transition Plan Prior to Youth Turning 18)

FOSTERING FUTURES ENTRY

- ☐ Execute the [VCSSA](#) and obtain signatures from the participant and all required parties as soon as possible after 18th birthday *(14.4.4.2)*
- ☐ Ensure that the participant is placed in an allowable setting *(14.4.4.3)*
 - If participant remains in foster home and foster parent is the payee:
 - ☐ Complete a new placement agreement and financial agreement
 - ☐ Obtain criminal background checks if needed
 - If participant is placed in an independent living arrangement and receives the maintenance payment:
 - ☐ Complete the [Independent Living Arrangement Agreement](#)
 - ☐ Complete a [W-9 Form](#)
 - If participant is placed in a supervised IL program:
 - ☐ Complete the placement and financial agreement with the IL program at the same time that the participant signs the VCSSA
- ☐ Follow Internal LDSS policy to initiate the new funding arrangement (if needed)
- ☐ Complete the Title IV-E Application and Evaluation with 10 calendar days of signing the VCSSA *(14.4.4.5)*
- ☐ Medicaid category switched to coverage group for former foster youth *(14.4.6)*
- ☐ Complete any new consents or releases of information with participant
- ☐ Update OASIS ([Job Aid - Fostering Futures OASIS Entries](#))
- ☐ If the participant received SSI as a minor, re-apply for benefits as an adult; this can be done 180 days prior to the youth's 18th birthday *(14.5.3)*

COURT

- ☐ Within 30 days of signing the VCSSA, file a petition with the juvenile and domestic relations court for review of the agreement and approval of the foster care plan. *(14.4.4.4)*

The following shall be submitted to the court:

- ☐ Signed VCSSA
- ☐ Foster Care Plan (Part A)
- ☐ Transition Plan
- ☐ Youth Rights Acknowledgement Form
- ☐ Within 45 days of receipt of the petition, the court must schedule a hearing

Date Court Approved:

ONGOING REQUIREMENTS

- ☐ Ensure that the participant maintains eligibility for Fostering Futures (14.4.4.1)
 - Current participation or evidence of intent/plan for immediate future
- ☐ Secondary Education/GED Program
- ☐ Full-time/Half-time College or Vocation
- ☐ Employed at least 80 hours per month
- ☐ Participating in a program or activity designed to promote employment or remove barriers to employment
- ☐ Incapable of engaging in any of the above activities due to a medical condition

Type of Verification Received:

- ☐ Conduct face-to-face visit with participant at least once every month (14.5.4)
- ☐ Re-administer the Independent Living Assessment at least every 12 months
- ☐ Update the participant's Transition Plan at least every 12 months upon completion of the IL Assessment
- ☐ Ensure that the youth is aware of all benefits eligible to them, including but not limited to, Chafee, ETV, and Drive to Thrive

If court does not retain jurisdiction after the initial hearing,

- ☐ Complete an Administrative Panel Review 6 months from the date that court approved the service plan (14.5.5)
- ☐ Ensure that an Administrative Panel Review occurs every 6 months thereafter
- ☐ At each bi-annual review, ensure that the case record includes all appropriate documentation for the youth's participation status throughout the six (6) months just ended, and provide documentation of all such verifications to the benefits worker

TERMINATION BY PARTICIPANT OR LDSS

- ☐ Provide [Notice of Intent to Terminate Fostering Futures](#) at least 30 days in advance (14.6.2)
- ☐ Ensure that the participant is aware of all benefits eligible to them, including Housing Support Assistance
- ☐ Provide the participant with Proof of Foster Care letter [Fillable](#) or [PDF](#)

HELPFUL RESOURCES

[Fostering Futures FAQ](#)

[Housing Support for Emancipated Youth Communication Form](#)

[Broadcast - Free Tuition and Room & Board at Virginia's Public Institutions](#)

[Foster My Future website](#)

[Drive to Thrive Guidebook](#)

NOTICE OF INTENT TO TERMINATE FOSTERING FUTURES VOLUNTARY CONTINUING SUPPORT AND SERVICES AGREEMENT

Participant Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Date of Notice _____ Effective Date of Termination _____

Local Department of Social Services _____

This is a notice of termination of the Fostering Futures Voluntary Continuing Support and Services Agreement (VCSSA) and discharge from foster care.

This termination is initiated by the _____ Participant _____ LDSS

Please review this notice carefully as it outlines the reason(s) for termination, the consequences of terminating the VCSSA, the right to appeal the termination if you disagree with this decision, and the procedures for re-entering the Fostering Futures program. **You have 30 days from the date of this notice to address the reasons for termination and return to compliance before payment and/or services end.**

REASONS FOR TERMINATION (check all that apply)

_____ You will be 21 years old, and no longer meet the eligibility requirements for Fostering Futures

_____ You have not met at least one of the criteria to continue eligibility for Fostering Futures:

- Completing secondary education or in a GED program
- Enrolled in college or a vocational program
- Attending classes to promote employment or remove barriers to employment
- Working at least 80 hour per month, or
- Verification of a medical condition that limits your participation in any of the activities listed above.

_____ You have stated you wish to voluntarily terminate participation on _____ (date) and provided verbal/written notice to the LDSS.

Additional Explanation

CONSEQUENCES FOR TERMINATING FROM FOSTERING FUTURES

Termination of your VCSSA for Fostering Futures means that all services and support will be discontinued. This may include case management, therapeutic services, tuition assistance, etc. Termination may also impact your living arrangement, and you may have to move.

You may be eligible for time-limited housing support assistance for up to six months (consecutive or non-consecutive).

YOUR RIGHT TO APPEAL TERMINATION

If you wish to appeal this action, you, or someone on your behalf, have **thirty (30) calendar days** from the date of this written notice to submit a written request for an appeal. Requests for appeals must be submitted in writing. Detailed steps for the Appeals and Fair Hearing Process can be found at the end of this document. Please review these steps carefully and contact your service worker if you are in need of assistance or clarification.

In addition to filing an appeal, you may request a conference with your local department of social services director/director designee, or other entity who is taking these actions

PROCEDURES FOR REENTERING THE FOSTERING FUTURES PROGRAM

Following termination, you may contact the LDSS if you wish to re-enter the program. The service worker can assist you with working toward meeting the criteria to be eligible for the program and maintaining eligibility.

- There is no limit on the number of times you may re-enter the program between the ages of 18-21.
- There is no restriction on how much time has elapsed between exit and re-entry.
- A new VCSSA shall be executed and a new transition plan developed each time you re-enter the program.
- If six or more months have elapsed since your termination, the LDSS shall file a court petition for review of the new VCSSA and a new service plan and transition plan.
- When re-entering the program, the LDSS should work closely with you to address how to help you to be successful, make progress toward your goals, and identify and address factors that led to your exit to reduce the likelihood of future termination.

LDSS Representative Signature

Date

I acknowledge that I have received notice of my termination as well as information on my right to appeal this decision. I understand that it is now my responsibility to contact my service worker to ask for help with the appeal process and to ask for information and help in applying for other services which may be available to me. I also acknowledge that I have been informed about the time-limited housing support assistance and how I may be able to apply for this while not participating in Fostering Futures.

Participant Signature

Date

APPEALS AND FAIR HEARING INFORMATION

Appeals shall be processed in accordance with [§ 63.2-915](#) (for cases related to foster care) or [§ 63.2-1304](#) (for cases related to adoption assistance) of the Code of Virginia. Foster and Adoptive parents, the youth/young adult, or an authorized person acting on their behalf, may submit a request for an appeal and fair hearing.

Requests for appeals must be submitted in writing to the following address within **thirty (30) calendar days** of receiving a written decision related to the case:

**Appeals and Fair Hearings Unit Virginia
Department of Social Services 5600 Cox
Road, Glen Allen, VA 23060**

A hearing officer will determine if the request for appeal is valid. The hearing officer is an impartial person designated by the Commissioner to hear appeals and decide if the local department followed policy and procedure in making a decision.

If the VDSS hearing officer determines the appeal request is valid, the LDSS and appellant are notified in writing at least **ten (10) calendar** days prior to the Administrative Hearing. If the hearing officer determines the appeal request is invalid, the LDSS and appellant receive written notification with an explanation of the reason for the determination that an administrative appeal hearing cannot be granted.

The local department prepares a Summary of Facts and sends a copy to the appellant (and their representative if any) and the hearing officer at least **five (5) days** prior to the hearing. The hearing is scheduled and conducted at a time, date, and place convenient to the appellant, and may be conducted by teleconference.

If the appellant fails to appear without good cause or by their authorized representative at the hearing scheduled, the hearing officer may deny or dismiss the request for a hearing.

At the hearing, the appellant and/or their authorized representative have the opportunity to:

- Examine all documents and records used at the hearing, to the extent that the information does not violate confidentiality requirements.
- Present the case.
- Bring witnesses.
- Establish all pertinent facts and circumstances.
- Advance any argument without undue interference.
- Question or refute any testimony or evidence, including the opportunity to confront and cross-examine witnesses.

The local department has the opportunity to:

- Clarify or modify its statements contained in the Summary of Facts
- Question the individual and his witnesses on the salient issue(s).
- Examine all documents submitted by the individual or his authorized representative.

Only relevant evidence related to the issue(s) being appealed is admissible at the hearing. There is a legal presumption that the local department acted in accordance with law and policy and the burden of proof is on the individual to demonstrate local department error.

The decision of the hearing officer shall be based exclusively on the evidence and other material (i.e., documents or testaments) introduced at the hearing. Evidence includes all applicable laws, regulations, policies, and guidance manuals

The hearing officer shall notify the individual and the local department in writing of its decision on the appeal within **ninety (90) calendar days** following the date the appeal request was received by the VDSS, except when a postponement was requested. If the hearing was postponed, the time limit will be extended for as many days as the hearing was postponed.

The decision of the hearing officer is final and binding when the decision is mailed to the local department and the individual.

Withdrawal Statement

If the local department and the appellant resolve the issue at any time after the Appeals and Fair Hearings Unit receives the Individual's request for an Administrative Review Hearing, appellant must provide a written statement withdrawing the appeal request. The withdrawal statement is sent to the hearing officer with a copy to the local department.

Appeal to Circuit Court

The individual aggrieved by the decision of the hearing officer may seek further review of the decision by the appropriate Circuit Court. The individual has thirty **(30) days** from the date of service (the date they actually received the hearing officer's decision or the date it was mailed to the individual, whichever occurred first) to provide notice of his intent to file an appeal with the circuit court. The individual must send written notice of intent to appeal the hearing officer's decision to:

**Commissioner
Virginia Department of Social Services
5600 Cox Road, Glen Allen, VA 23060**

In addition, the individual must file a written petition in Circuit Court in the locality where they live in order to perfect the appeal. The individual will not receive correspondence now will his benefit continue as a result of the individual sending written notice to VDSS of his intent to appeal, as the hearing officer's decision is the final administrative action.

Foster Care Case Management Timeline

IMMEDIATE	<input type="checkbox"/> Hold Family Partnership Meeting (FPM) if one wasn't held prior to removal (2.9.1)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Place a child in their First and Last placement (6.3) with siblings (6.4). If siblings are not placed together, document reasons why (6.4.2)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Track/Document efforts regarding Indian Child Welfare status (3.9.2.2)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Consider Relative Foster Home Placement/Initiate Emergency Approval process (6.13)
WITHIN 72 HOURS	<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure child receives medical evaluation, when child has urgent health/medical/mental health/substance abuse needs (4.9)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Submit written notification to the school principal and superintendent of need to immediately enroll student (6.10.3)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Conduct Best Interest Determination (BID) (12.12/Joint Guidance)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Arrange for transportation/payment for child to remain in school or ensure the child is enrolled in new school (Joint Guidance/ 12.10.2)
WITHIN 5 DAYS	<input type="checkbox"/> Document case opening and case information (4.3.1)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete Interim Application for Child Support Enforcement & Absent Parent form (4.7.2)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Develop Visitation Plans for child with parents and siblings (4.8.1)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Search for and notify relatives, grandparents, parents, parents of siblings of child's removal and document, when feasible, otherwise within 30 days (2.3)
WITHIN 10 DAYS	<input type="checkbox"/> Arrange for and conduct initial visit with family and child (4.8)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete Title IV-E Medicaid Eligibility Form and any new information affecting eligibility (4.5.1)
WITHIN 30 DAYS	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete and document medical examination completed (4.9)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Administer Casey Life Skills Assessment on youth 14+ (13.5.3)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Request search of the birth father registry for unknown father (2.5)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Hold FPM or CFTM (Child and Family Team Meeting) prior to filing of service plan (15.3) Hold CFTM monthly thereafter as long as goal is return home
WITHIN 45 DAYS	<input type="checkbox"/> File Service Plan with the court (15.6)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Administer Initial VEMAT (18.2.4)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure child receives dental exam if the child has not received exam within past 6 months (4.9)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete Transition plan within 30 days of Independent Living Needs Assessment (13.7.3.1)
WITHIN 60 DAYS	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete Reassessment of VEMAT for scores 28+ (18.2.2.6)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Reassess placement for siblings who are not placed together (6.4.4)
EVERY 3 MONTHS	<input type="checkbox"/> Conduct review of the child's case through a Court Hearing or Administrative Panel Review (16.4)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Submit Adoption Progress Reports for cases with goal of adoption (16.5)
EVERY 6 MONTHS	

Immediate notification required for the following:

- ☐ Death of foster child (notify CPS, VDSS Regional Director, child's parents) (17.13)
- ☐ Foster youth that is missing/runaway (notify law enforcement, parents, GAL, NCMEC) (17.12)

First 1-2 weeks:

- ☐ Complete Permanency Planning Indicator (7.4.1)-opt.
- ☐ Complete Concurrent Planning/ Early Relative/ Permanency Assessment (7.4.1)
- ☐ Determine resources/ assess eligibility and complete referrals for all other benefits (4.11)

Monthly:

- ☐ Complete worker visits with foster youth (17.7.2)
- ☐ Document how safety, permanency, well-being were addressed in visit (17.7.7)
- ☐ Complete worker visits with birth parents (17.9)
- ☐ Complete worker visits with resource parent/placement provider when child is receiving VEMAT (18.2.5.1)
- ☐ Submit payments to Service provider (4.12)
- ☐ Conduct Supervisory Conference (8.5.1)
- ☐ Complete face to face visit with child on trial home placement (8.6.6)

EVERY 12 MONTHS	<input type="checkbox"/> Reassessment of VEMATs with scores below 28 (18.2.2.6) <input type="checkbox"/> Submit annual clothing allowance (18.3) <input type="checkbox"/> Re-administer the Independent Living Needs Assessment (13.5.3) <input type="checkbox"/> Update Transition Plan (13.7.3.1) <input type="checkbox"/> Provide and document credit reports at no cost to Youth (13.9) <input type="checkbox"/> Give youth 14+ document outlining rights (13.7.4)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Hold FPM (2.9.1) <input type="checkbox"/> Continue search and exploration of potential relative options (7.4) <input type="checkbox"/> Determine whether current placement supports permanency (6.7.1) <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare child and family for transition toward permanency (6.7.1)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete Background checks/Home Visit/Safety Assessment (8.6.5) <input type="checkbox"/> Plan for school enrollment, medical needs, transition of services, etc (8.6.1) <input type="checkbox"/> Start trial home visit (8.6.5) <input type="checkbox"/> Complete initial face-to-face with child and family within 72 hours after child returns home (8.6.6)	
PLANNING FOR PERMANENCY	Reunification:	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete Background checks/Home Visit/Safety Assessment (8.6.5) <input type="checkbox"/> Plan for school enrollment, medical needs, transition of services, etc (8.6.1) <input type="checkbox"/> Start trial home visit (8.6.5) <input type="checkbox"/> Complete initial face-to-face with child and family within 72 hours after child returns home (8.6.6)
	Relative Custody/KinGAP:	<input type="checkbox"/> Begin visitation (10.4.4) <input type="checkbox"/> Discuss and assess custody transfer without KinGAP (10.4.2) <input type="checkbox"/> Identify/Approve prospective relative custodians as foster parents (10.4.1) <input type="checkbox"/> Plan for school enrollment, medical needs, transition of services, etc and place child in home (10.6) <input type="checkbox"/> Start KinGAP process 6 months after placement
	Adoption:	<input type="checkbox"/> Petition the court for TPR, If child has been in care for 15 out of the last 22 months and no progress has been made on reunification (9.4.4) <input type="checkbox"/> Request 2nd search of the birth father registry if father unknown (9.4.4.3) <input type="checkbox"/> Notify child support after TPR (4.7.9)
PLANNING FOR OLDER YOUTH	<input type="checkbox"/> Hold FPM to develop 90 day transition plan for youth turning 18 (13.14) <input type="checkbox"/> Implement Fostering Futures for Youth who are 18 on or after 7/1/16 (14B) <input type="checkbox"/> Provide youth with certain documents prior to exiting care (13.14)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Discharge youth from placement within 5 business days of child leaving care (4.3.1) (19.2) <input type="checkbox"/> Document final case contact reflecting case disposition, summary of services in place at termination, child and family adjustment, overall case progress, and summary of final court hearing (19.9.1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notify the eligibility worker immediately in writing that the child is no longer in custody of LDSS and date of discharge (19.3) <input type="checkbox"/> Return to SSA all unspent funds paid to child from Social Security (SSA) and placed in special welfare account. For SSI/SSA or other benefits, the worker shall inform the source of benefits about the change of address for child. All unspent funds, other than saved SSA/SSI benefits, must be paid to child/legal guardian (19.5-6) <input type="checkbox"/> Terminate all maintenance payments once child leaves care. Terminate all payments for services that will not continue after return home (19.4)	
CASE CLOSURE	<input type="checkbox"/> Discharge youth from placement within 5 business days of child leaving care (4.3.1) (19.2) <input type="checkbox"/> Document final case contact reflecting case disposition, summary of services in place at termination, child and family adjustment, overall case progress, and summary of final court hearing (19.9.1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notify the eligibility worker immediately in writing that the child is no longer in custody of LDSS and date of discharge (19.3) <input type="checkbox"/> Return to SSA all unspent funds paid to child from Social Security (SSA) and placed in special welfare account. For SSI/SSA or other benefits, the worker shall inform the source of benefits about the change of address for child. All unspent funds, other than saved SSA/SSI benefits, must be paid to child/legal guardian (19.5-6) <input type="checkbox"/> Terminate all maintenance payments once child leaves care. Terminate all payments for services that will not continue after return home (19.4)	

Ongoing:

- ☐ Maintain child's connections (2.4) (17.15)
- ☐ Ensure child receives periodic screenings (well-child visits) at regular intervals based on Virginia's EPSDT schedule (12.11.2)
- ☐ Ensure child receives routine dental exams based on established guidelines (12.11.2)
- ☐ Hold FPM prior to any change of placement for child (2.9.1)
- ☐ Complete BID prior to placement changes or within 72 hours of placement change. (Joint Guidance/6.10.3)
- ☐ Document Child's Placement & Funding Changes within **5 days** (6.10)
- ☐ Notify all parents with residual rights/prior custodians in writing of any changes to visitation, placement, and communication changes within 10 days (6.10.3)
- ☐ Hold FPM prior to the development of foster care plan for the court review and permanency planning hearings (2.9.1)
- ☐ Provide youth 14+ with opportunity to choose up to 2 members of planning team who are neither foster parent nor caseworker (2.4)
- ☐ Document all IL Services that are offered/provided on IL Screen within 30 days(13.15)
- ☐ Initiate IL Services at age 14 (13.6)

Foster Care Monthly Worker Visit Checklist

	Worker Responsibilities	Sample questions to ask the foster parent:	Sample questions to ask the child/youth:
Safety	<p>Assess child/youth's safety and risk (including identification of safety threats, vulnerabilities, and protective capacities) by considering the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Does the child/youth appear safe and comfortable in the place of residence? □ Does the child/youth appear to be free of any physical injuries/or bruising? If not then formal action is required. □ Observe what is happening in the home. □ Observe the child/youth's bedroom. □ Identify any concerns, changing circumstances, and challenges. □ Ensure there is one on one time with the foster parent and with the child/youth to provide ample opportunity to discuss any concerns privately. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Does the child/or youth appear safe and comfortable in your home? □ Who provides supervision to the child/youth when you are not home? □ Do you know who the child/youth's friends are? □ Do you have any concerns/challenges with the youth's use of social media? □ Has the child/youth fallen, gotten hurt/injured since the last worker visit? □ How does the child/youth get to/from school and/or work? □ Does the child/youth know what to do if there is an emergency? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Do you feel safe/comfortable in the foster home? □ Who watches you when the foster parents are not home? How do you feel when you are with this person? □ Do you visit friends or have friends visit you here? □ Have you fallen, gotten hurt/injured since the last worker visit? □ How do you get to/from school and/or work? □ Do you know what to do if there is an emergency?
Permanency	<p>Assess progress toward permanency and child/youth's readiness by considering the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ The child/youth's and placement provider's understanding of the permanency plan using the foster care plan and case documents. □ Case goals, progress toward goals since the last visit, and actions needed—in language that all participants including the youth can understand. □ Upcoming court dates, FPM/TDM, Child Family Team Meetings, FAPT. □ Changes in primary/secondary FC goals. □ Child/youth concerns or questions regarding the foster care plan and permanency plan. □ Changes in academic progress, behavioral issues, suspension, BID/IEP meetings. □ Changes in community service/probationary issues. □ Changes in visitation with birth family, prior custodian, siblings, and other significant relationships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ What are the goals for this child/youth and their family? How to you feel about them? □ How are the visits between the child/youth and their family? □ Does the child/youth have the opportunity to see other members of the family (siblings, grandparents, etc.)? □ Do you have any questions about the permanency goal or concurrent goal and what that means for this family? □ What is it like for this child/youth at school? Are there any challenges that you need to share? □ Do you understand the purpose of any upcoming meetings (FPM, TDM, child and family team meeting, FAPT) or court dates? □ What are the things that you need to support this child/youth achieving permanency? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ How are the visits with your family? What do you do during visits? □ What contact do you have with your family outside of visitation? □ Do you see other members of your family (siblings, grandparents, etc.)? □ If everything is the way you want it be, what would it look like and how can we help you get there? □ Do you have any questions about your permanency goal or concurrent goal and what that means for you and your family? □ What is it like at your school? Are there any challenges that you would like to share with me? □ Do you understand the purpose of any upcoming meetings (FPM, TDM, child and family team meeting, FAPT) or court dates? Who would you like to invite to support you during these meetings?

Foster Care Monthly Worker Visit Checklist

Well-Being	Worker Responsibilities	Sample question to ask the foster parent:	Sample questions to ask the child/youth:
	<p>Assess the child/youth's well-being by considering the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Changes in child's behavior, loss/gain of privileges, activity level, eating habits, sleep patterns. □ Changes in interactions between child/youth and placement provider. □ Changes in physical/health/nutrition requiring medical attention. □ Changes and responses to prescribed medication/or over the counter medication. □ Changes in mental health/psychiatric hospitalizations. □ Extracurricular, enrichment, cultural, and social activities for the month (Normalcy). □ Changes in monthly allowance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ What has it been like to care for this child/youth? □ What has been the effect on your family having this child/youth placed in your home? □ What are the services the child/youth is receiving and what do you think and feel about those services? □ What activities does the child/youth like to do? What opportunities have been provided since the last worker visit (normalcy)? □ What are the things that you need to support your continued care of this child/youth? □ Have there been any changes in the child/youth's behavior, loss/gain of privileges, activity level, eating habits, sleep patterns? □ Are there any cultural considerations that you need assistance with? □ Have there been any changes in the physical/health/nutrition requiring medical attention? □ Have there been any changes in medications (prescription or over the counter)? □ Have there been any changes in the child/youth's mental health including hospitalizations? □ Is the youth receiving a monthly allowance? Does the youth have opportunities to practice managing money? How does the youth get money needed for social, recreational, or extracurricular activities? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ What is it like to live here? □ Who else lives here with you and what is that like? □ How do you feel about the caregivers? How do you think they feel about you? □ Are you able to be yourself (ie-sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression)? □ Are there things that you can and can't do while living here? □ What are the rules here and what happens when you break a rule? □ Who can you talk to if you get angry or upset about something? □ If you need to get in touch with me, do you know how to do that? How? □ What do you like to do for fun? Do you have opportunities to do those things (normalcy)? □ Have you been to the doctor/dentist or seen a counselor since my last visit? □ Are you taking medication? Do you know what the medication is for? □ Do you receive a monthly allowance?

Foster Care Monthly Worker Checklist Instructions

The Foster Care Monthly Worker Visit Checklist can be used when the LDSS is completing monthly worker visits in the child/youth's place of residence. (See Foster Care guidance 17.7.1.) The focus of the worker visits should be on the child/youth's safety, progress to permanency, and well-being. This checklist replaces the Home Visitation Guidance tool previously posted on Fusion and now is comprised of three components: worker responsibilities, sample questions to ask foster parents, and sample questions to ask the child/youth. The assigned worker is not required to ask every question under each component as not every practice item applies to each case (age, developmental level). This checklist can be used as a general outline to help the field with developing quality contacts, strengthening case documentation, supporting the use of transcription services, and improving outcomes for children and families.



Foster Parent Bill of Rights

All foster parents, including kinship foster parents, have the following rights regarding collaboration, communication, access, and transparency:

1. To be regarded as the primary caregiver of a child placed in foster care and to be treated with dignity, respect, trust, value, and consideration, including the local department giving due consideration to the foster parent's family values, traditions, and beliefs;
2. To receive copies of all documents related to the foster parent, the foster parent's family, and ongoing services provided to the foster home;
3. To be considered part of the foster care team and to be able to contribute input regarding the child's permanency plan and receive copies of the plan;
4. To be provided all reasonably ascertainable background, medical, and psychological records of the child prior to placement, at the initial placement, or at any time during the placement of a child in foster care;
5. To be provided all information relevant to the child's foster care services as allowed by federal and state law;
6. To be notified of court hearings and scheduled meetings;
7. To be informed of decisions made by the court, local board, or licensed child-placing agency concerning the child's foster care services;
8. To be able to communicate, to the extent permitted under federal and state law, with professionals who work directly with the child in foster care, including therapists, physicians, and teachers;
9. To be informed in a timely manner of changes to the child's case plan or the termination of the child's placement;
10. To be afforded the same rights as outlined in the Foster Care Placement Agreement and the Code of Ethics and Mutual Responsibilities;
11. To be provided with approved or eligible reimbursements for costs associated with foster care services in a timely manner;
12. To be provided with a method to contact the local board or licensed child-placing agency for assistance 24 hours a day and seven days a week; and
13. To receive a timely response from the local department of social services regarding whether or not information may be provided to requests for information regarding the child's progress after leaving foster care.

Foster Parent Signature

Date

Foster Parent Signature

Date

Foster Parent Dispute Resolution Process

Foster parents have a right to file a complaint regarding alleged violations of the regulations governing collaboration, communication, access, and transparency between the local boards, the licensed child-placing agencies, and the foster parents. (From Foster Care Guidance 17.11.1) When filing such a complaint, foster parents must follow the following steps:

1. The foster parent shall contact the service worker assigned to the foster home within 10 business days and provide a detailed description of the conduct constituting the alleged violation of the regulations governing collaboration, communication, access, and transparency between the local boards, the licensed child placing agencies, and the foster parents and attempt to resolve the dispute.
2. The service worker shall respond within five business days and explain any corrective action to be taken in response to the foster parent's complaint.
3. If the foster parent and service worker are unable to resolve the complaint informally, the foster parent may file a written complaint through the dispute resolution process with the local board's foster care supervisor or assigned designee.
 - The written complaint shall include a detailed description of the conduct constituting the alleged violation of the regulations governing collaboration, communication, access, and transparency between the local boards, the licensed child-placing agencies, and the foster parents and a copy of the service worker's response.
 - The written complaint shall be sent to the supervisor and must be received by the supervisor within 10 business days of the foster parent receiving the service worker's response.
4. The foster care supervisor or assigned designee shall respond to the complaint in writing within five business days setting forth all findings regarding the alleged violation and any corrective action taken.
5. If the foster parent disagrees with the findings or corrective actions proposed by the foster care supervisor or assigned designee, the foster parent may appeal the decision to the local director by filing a written notice of appeal.
 - The notice of appeal shall include a detailed description of the conduct constituting the alleged violation of the regulations governing collaboration, communication, access, and transparency between the local boards, the licensed child-placing agencies, and the foster parents and a copy of the foster care supervisor or assigned designee's findings or recommendations.
 - The notice of appeal shall be sent to the local director and must be received by the local director within 10 business days of the foster parent receiving the supervisor's response.
6. The local director shall hold a meeting between all parties within seven business days to gather any information necessary to determine (i) the validity of the alleged violation of the regulations governing collaboration, communication, access, and transparency between the local boards, the licensed child-placing agencies, and the foster parents and (ii) the appropriateness of any recommendations for corrective action made by the family services specialist and foster care supervisor or assigned designee.
7. A summary of the meeting shall be documented in writing by the service worker after approval by the foster care supervisor or assigned designee.
8. Following such meeting and documentation, the local director shall issue to all parties written findings and, when applicable, recommendations for corrective actions.

This dispute resolution process does not apply to a complaint related to the denial or failure of a local board to act upon an individual's claim for benefits. Complaints related to a claim for benefits shall be appealable pursuant to 42 USC § 671(a)(12) and 22VAC40-201-115.



OFFICE of the CHILDREN'S OMBUDSMAN

If you have concerns with the way your local department of social services is handling a child protective services or foster care case, the OCO may be able to help. Contact us if you don't understand why an agency took a certain action or made a certain decision. In some cases, we may be able to investigate if you think the agency's action or decision violated laws or policies.

Your contact with us is confidential and it's against the law for an agency to penalize you for contacting us. We are part of the Office of the Governor and are independent from all other state and local agencies so our reviews of cases can be impartial and thorough.

Visit our website at www.oco.virginia.gov.

For general questions about the OCO, email us at info@oco.virginia.gov.

If you have a concern with a local department of social services, you can email us at complaints@oco.virginia.gov, or call us at (804) 225-4801.

INVESTIGATE

ADVOCATE

EDUCATE



OFICINA de el OMBUDSMAN de MENORES OFFICE of the CHILDREN'S OMBUDSMAN

Si usted tiene una preocupación sobre la forma en que su departamento local de servicios sociales está manejando un caso de servicios de protección infantil o cuidado de crianza temporal, la OCO puede ayudarle. Comuníquese con nosotros si no comprende por qué una agencia tomó una cierta acción o tomó una cierta decisión. En algunos casos, es posible que podamos investigar si cree que la acción o decisión de la agencia violó leyes o reglas políticas.

Su contacto con nosotros es confidencial y es ilegal que una agencia lo penalice por comunicarse con nosotros. Somos parte de la Oficina del Gobernador y somos independientes de todas las demás agencias estatales y locales, por esa razón nuestras revisiones de casos pueden ser imparciales y exhaustivos.

Visite nuestra página web en www.oco.virginia.gov.

Para preguntas generales sobre la OCO, envíenos un correo electrónico a info@oco.virginia.gov.

Si usted tiene algun preocupación con un departamento local de servicios sociales, puede enviarnos un correo electrónico a complaints@oco.virginia.gov, o llamarnos al (804) 225-4801.

REVISAR

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EDUCAR

Child and Family Service Review Quality Worker Visit Guide

- Face-to-face contact- includes all children in the home/case, parents or caretaker, and any paramours: however, for incarcerated or out of state parents this may not be permitted. In lieu of face-to-face visits, efforts to maintain monthly communication with the parent via phone calls and/or letters should be considered.
- Visits are frequent enough to adequately assess the child's safety, promote timely achievement of case goals and support their well-being.
- Visit frequency must be at least monthly; however, visitation should be based on needs of the case and not state guidance. Example a case SDM identified as a high risk case due to the age of the children and parental substance abuse may require weekly visits to ensure compliance with safety plan.
- Visits are of good quality, with discussions focusing on the children's and parent/caregivers needs, services, and case plan goals.
 - o the children were visited alone.
 - o the length and locations of visits foster open, honest, and thorough communications (i.e. not always at court, school, or during pickup/drop off for visitation)
 - o Frequent visits in the home assess the child's living arrangement and assess the child's interactions with caregivers/foster parents
 - o Visits feature evaluations and discussions of safety, individual needs, services, case plan goals, and any visitation.

- Case planning should happen and should include service plans and any plans by service providers. Include:
 - o Having age-appropriate discussions with children and explaining case plans in a language they understand.
 - o Evaluations of the capacity of case members to participate actively in case planning on a case by case basis. Decisions should be supported in the documentation/case record, such as treatment documentation or IEP. Most children who are elementary school aged or older are expected to participate to some extent.
 - o Explaining permanency goals and changes made to goals to include an understanding of the court process and what to expect at any required court hearings. This would include a clear understanding of the timeline requirements as well as concurrent planning.
 - o Discussing family strengths and needs with children and parents.
 - o Evaluating other case plan goals and progress in services with both children and parents.
 - o Ensuring that case planning meetings are arranged based on the family's availability and are utilized to engage the family in case planning discussions.
 - o Involving all children in in-home cases.
 - o Evaluating progress and making changes in the type and level of services needed as well as understanding of changes made to their goals.
 - o Involving parents and children in FAPT, FPM, and treatment/team plans
 - o Involving caretakers pursuing reunification in children's medical, dental, educational and mental health appointments and treatment where applicable.
 - o Identifying and discussing barriers to accessing, participating or achieving service/goals.



Children Missing From Care

Reporting Missing Children to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children®

Case Worker Guide to Reporting Missing Children



How to Report a Child Missing from Care



1-800-THE-LOST®



CMFC.MissingKids.org

When making a missing child report to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC), please be aware that certain information is required for NCMEC to take an effective report. Additional information is requested and helpful to each missing child's case. Please review the below items to help you better prepare for reporting a missing child to NCMEC.

Missing Young Adults (MYA)

Although no longer considered a child under U.S. federal law, NCMEC can assist with cases of missing young adults between the ages of 18 – 20 years old and accept a report under two circumstances:

1. From the legal guardian if the young adult remains under the ongoing guardianship of a state or county welfare agency. Policies and state laws concerning the extension of foster care beyond the age of 18 vary from state to state. A few key considerations before making a report to NCMEC are as follows:
 - » Is the youth consenting to be in extended foster care or any other voluntary service the department is able to offer the youth beyond the age of 18? Has the youth come back to foster care after turning 18 and requested services voluntarily? If so, the youth would not qualify for NCMEC resources.
 - » Is there a court order in place specifying legal guardianship of the State to make legal decisions on behalf of the young adult (i.e., due to mental health needs, differing abilities, etc.)? If so, the youth would qualify for NCMEC resources and should be reported.
2. NCMEC will also assist with missing young adult cases reported by a law enforcement official.

The following information is essential when reporting a missing child or MYA to NCMEC:

- Caller information, including full contact information
- Child's full name
- Child's date of birth, gender, height, weight
- Date child went missing
- City and state from where child went missing
- Law enforcement information including agency name, telephone and missing persons police report number
- Case Worker information including name, agency name, relationship to child (guardianship status), full contact information (telephone number(s) and email address). If you are a service provider, provide the legal guardian information, whether it's a bio family member or an assigned case worker from the agency that maintains guardianship over the child.

Other Helpful Information Requested:

Missing Child or MYA

- Alias, nickname
- School attended
- Specific missing location
- Group home information (if applicable)
- Contact information (e.g. last known home address, email address, cell phone)
- Child descriptive information (e.g. hair, eyes, scars, marks, tattoos, clothing, jewelry)
- Child endangerments (e.g. run away before, medical condition, mental health condition, special needs, life threatening condition, on medication, suicidal, self-harm, pregnant, drug/alcohol use, carrying weapon, gang involvement, online enticement/luring)
- Child internet activity – online activity, user names
- Circumstances surrounding missing event

Companion or Other Person with Information

- Name, alias, nickname
- Relationship to the child
- DOB, gender
- Descriptive information (e.g. hair, eyes, scars, marks, tattoos, clothing, jewelry)
- Last known information (e.g. address, telephone phone number(s), email, Driver's license)
- Any known warrant information
- Endangerments (e.g. run away before, medical condition, mental health condition, special needs, life threatening condition, on medication, suicidal, self-harm, pregnant, drug/alcohol use, carrying weapon, gang involvement, online enticement/luring)
- Internet activity – online activity, user names
- Circumstances surrounding missing event

Additional Information

- Is there any concern of exploitation or trafficking of the child?
- Does child have any unexplained items (examples: money, hotel keys, prepaid credit cards, additional phones), access to high cost items (hair or nails done, jewelry or clothing)?
- Does child have a history of sexual or physical abuse, stripping, pornography, or sex trafficking?
- Are there any known pimps; older, controlling boyfriends/girlfriends; or gang affiliations?
- Is there any indication that child has traded sex in exchange for place to sleep, drugs, or money, food, something of value, or been traded by anyone, including family members?
- Known direction of travel?
- Places they may frequent?
- Did they take any belongings with them?

Case Worker Information

- Supervisor contact Information (telephone number(s) and email address)

Law Enforcement Information

- Date/time reported
- Assigned Officer (if known)
- Unit/Area/Precinct
- Email address, fax number

Vehicle Information

- Make, model, year, color, VIN, Tag
- Owner of vehicle



[NCMEC.org/CMFC](https://www.ncmec.org/cmfc)

Scan to view NCMEC resource guides.



Children Missing From Care

Children Missing from Care: Frequently Asked Questions of Social Service Agencies



Q: What is the definition of a missing child?

A: Federal law ([34 U.S.C. § 11292](#)) defines a “missing child” as any individual less than 18 years of age whose whereabouts are unknown to their parent, legal guardian, or other person exercising parental rights over the child. This broad definition includes children who may have (1) been abducted by a non-family member; (2) wrongfully taken or retained by a person related to them; (3) wandered away from a safe environment and become lost; (4) been displaced by disaster; (5) run away from a home, foster home, or state care facility; or (6) otherwise gone missing for any reason at all. In some jurisdictions, state law expands on the broad federal definition and provides further guidance on how agencies should treat missing child cases in their state.

A report to NCMEC should be promptly made (immediately and no later than 24 hours) when the legal guardian agency does not know the whereabouts of the child missing from a foster home, relative placement or any child placement agency. This does not include when a child or youth is in an unauthorized or unapproved placement but the agency knows the child’s whereabouts (e.g., the child is verified to be attending school or their place of employment). It also does not include when a child leaves a foster home or child placement agency without permission but the agency, relative or foster parent knows where the child or youth has gone. There may be scenarios in which the child does not fall under the federal definition of missing that will be examined on a case-by-case basis.

Q: Why do I have to report the missing child to NCMEC if I've already reported to my local law enforcement agency?

A: NCMEC and law enforcement are two separate entities. NCMEC is a non-profit organization whose core mission is to help find missing children, reduce child sexual exploitation, and prevent child victimization. NCMEC works with families, victims, child welfare, law enforcement, private industry, and the public to support its core mission. NCMEC provides added support and advocacy between all of these disciplines and assists to recover missing children. NCMEC also provides resources to children, youth and families for continued support and healing beyond recovery. The law requires child welfare to report children missing from care to both your local law enforcement agency and to NCMEC. Although we make every effort to ensure good communication, please be aware that a report to law enforcement (even if they properly enter the child into the National Crime Information Center ((NCIC) system) does not automatically generate a report to NCMEC. A separate report to NCMEC has to be made after law enforcement is contacted.

Q: What if law enforcement refuses to take my missing child report?

A: Federal law requires law enforcement agencies to respond in a specific way, regardless of the reason why a child is missing (or if the child has gone missing or run away in the past). Law enforcement agencies are prohibited from establishing or maintaining a waiting period before accepting a missing child report and must promptly enter information regarding a missing child into the NCIC system within two hours of receiving a report. See [34 U.S.C. § 41308](#).

Q: Should I only report a missing child who is believed to be a victim of sex trafficking to NCMEC?

A: Federal law requires that state agencies report any child who has gone missing (which means the child's whereabouts are unknown) from their care.

Q: What about young adults missing from care?

A: Although no longer considered a child under U.S. federal law, NCMEC can assist with cases of young adults between the ages of 18 - 20 years old who are missing and the young adult remains under the ongoing guardianship of a state or county welfare agency. Each state has its own policies and laws related to foster care extending to young adults. If the young adult is consenting to be in extended foster care or any other voluntary service the department is able to offer or the young adult has come back to foster care after turning 18 and requested services voluntarily, the young adult would not qualify for NCMEC resources.

If there is a court order in place specifying legal guardianship of the state to make legal decisions on behalf of the young adult (i.e., due to mental health needs, differing abilities, etc.), the young adult would qualify for NCMEC resources and should be reported.

NCMEC will also assist with missing young adult cases reported by law enforcement.

Q: How do I make a report to NCMEC?

After a report is made to law enforcement, you can make a report by calling NCMEC at 1-800-THE-LOST® (1-800-843-5678) or making an online report here after creating an account:

<https://cmfc.missingkids.org/reportit/Account/LogOn>



Case Worker Guide to
Reporting Missing Children

[https://www.ncmec.org/
content/dam/missingkids/
pdfs/cmfc-case-worker-guide-
reporting-missing-children.pdf](https://www.ncmec.org/content/dam/missingkids/pdfs/cmfc-case-worker-guide-reporting-missing-children.pdf)

Q: Q: What can I expect when making a report to NCMEC?

A: The report will require specific, basic identifying information about the child and circumstances concerning how, when and where the child went missing. As the core mission of NCMEC is to find missing children, reduce sexual exploitation and prevent victimization, you can expect the report will be followed up and efforts will be made in consultation with the reporting source to carry out this mission. You can expect that your case will be assigned, and a case manager will be reaching out to follow up on your behalf. NCMEC will work with the legal guardian agency and law enforcement to provide everything from posters to analytical support. NCMEC will also offer appropriate recovery and family advocacy services to parents, legal guardians, and members of a child's support system to design plans that prevent future victimization and/or exploitation. Depending on the information gathered, NCMEC's Recovery Services Team will reach out in cases where it is believed the child is suspected of being trafficked to support the agency in recovery planning. NCMEC's Family Advocacy Division may also reach out to provide support in certain circumstances.

Q: Does NCMEC publicize that a missing child is in foster care or a victim of child sex trafficking?

A: No. NCMEC takes care to protect and maintain the privacy of information regarding missing children and consults with the child's parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) and the investigating law enforcement agency before disseminating any identifying information publicly. Additionally, NCMEC does not generally make any public reference to the fact that a child is missing from care, was in state custody at the time they went missing, or that they are likely the victim of child sex trafficking.

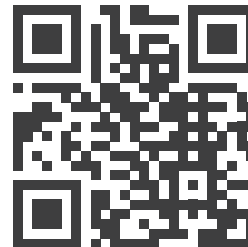
Q: What is the expectation when a child has been located?

A: Please let the assigned NCMEC Case Manager know when a missing child has been located. This is very important so that case managers will know when the services they are providing are no longer needed and when other resources through the Recovery Services Team or Family Advocacy Division can be offered or provided. If a NCMEC Case Manager does not hear from you after a period of time, you can expect they will reach out for a status update on the missing child. On-going communication with NCMEC concerning developments in the case or recovery of the child may help with a more expedient recovery if there are subsequent missing incidents or may prevent future incidences of trafficking or other endangerments.

Q: In a situation where a caseworker may be working with a family whose child is not in the agency's care and custody, but the caseworker becomes aware that the child is missing, how should this be handled?

A: Any child whose whereabouts are unknown to a legal guardian or parent should be reported to NCMEC. However, there are a few requirements of which child welfare professionals or other third-party reporters should be aware. One is that the parent/legal guardian's full contact information must be provided to NCMEC and a report must also be made or attempt to be made to law enforcement. NCMEC will ultimately need certain authorizations from the parent in order to provide resources such as posters. Ideally, if you are working with a parent, best practice would be to have the parent make the referral or to make the referral in collaboration with the parent.

For any additional questions not covered by this FAQ guide, please feel free to email CMFC@NCMEC.org.



[NCMEC.org/CMFC](https://www.ncmec.org/cmfc)

Scan to view NCMEC resource guides.



RESOURCES FOR MISSING CHILD CASES

The **National Center for Missing & Exploited Children® (NCMEC)** is a private, nonprofit organization, that is congressionally authorized to perform 15 specific duties related to missing and exploited children. It was created to **help find missing children, reduce child sexual exploitation, and prevent child victimization**. NCMEC is the nation's largest and most influential child protection organization. NCMEC leads the fight to protect children, creating vital resources for them and the people who keep them safe. Every child deserves a safe childhood.



HOW TO REPORT TO NCMEC:



To report a missing child to NCMEC, call our 24-hour hotline **1-800-843-5678**



Scan to view NCMEC resource guides.





HOW NCMEC CAN HELP:

After a case is reported to NCMEC, a **Case Manager** is assigned. As the primary point of contact, the Case Manager helps manage communication between all involved parties and works across multiple NCMEC divisions to coordinate the application of specialized resources to help locate the child.

Role of the NCMEC Case Manager:

- » Maintains continued contact with parents, legal guardians, and law enforcement to obtain updated information about the child, possible companion, or suspect, to further assess risk and ongoing case needs.
- » Facilitates collaboration between various local, state, and federal agencies. For international cases, NCMEC Case Managers work closely with the Office of Children's Issues, a part of the Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs.
- » Acts as a resource providing assistance to parents and legal guardians to help them navigate through the reporting process with law enforcement and legal process with the court.
- » Deploys NCMEC's Team Adam consultants, retired law enforcement professionals who can provide rapid, onsite assistance to law enforcement during critical cases involving missing children.
- » Allocates resources, including poster distribution and analytical searches. An active case with law enforcement, and verification of the custody situation, is needed for poster creation.
- » Coordinates access to recovery planning and travel assistance to recover a child if needed.
- » Helps connect families with mental health services along with emotional and peer support.
- » Develops recommended investigative strategies for long-term cases, creating individualized roadmaps and convenes outside subject matter specialists.


Team Adam Deployment


-  Search and rescue management
-  Investigative recommendations and strategies
-  Equipment and resources
-  Technical assistance on long-term missing child cases


Team Adam consultants bring immediate access to additional resources including:

- Vehicle forensics
- Air Force Rescue Coordination Center
- Civil Air Patrol





Analytical Support

-  Produce timelines of an abductor's current and historical places of residence, employment, vehicles, and travel using public records databases, NCIC/Nlets, social networking activity, and other open source data combined with information from NCMEC's internal systems.

-  Compile and analyze data regarding incidents of attempted abductions within a selected geographical radius for critical missing child cases.

-  Search for links to missing child cases reported to NCMEC.

Poster Creation, Distribution, and Retargeting

-  Poster distribution through traditional media outlets and social media platforms
-  Targeting of specific geographic areas using NCMEC's 200+ nationwide photo distribution partners
-  Media strategies for law enforcement and families
-  Highlight anniversaries of long-term missing children

Age-Progressions

NCMEC's artists create **age-progression images** of children as they mature so the public has a more accurate representation of what that child may look like now.









Forensic Services

NCMEC can facilitate the collection of biometric data, including **DNA**, **dentals**, and **fingerprints** for missing and unidentified children cases.

Forensic lab partners specialize in:

- DNA case work
- Pollen analysis
- Chemical isotope analysis
- Fingerprint testing

Pre-Recovery and Post-Recovery Support

-  Crisis intervention
-  Emotional support
-  Referrals to appropriate community agencies and mental health professionals
-  Attorney referrals
-  Peer connection
-  Reunification assistance



Child Name: _____

Date: _____

CONSENT FOR PSYCHOTROPIC MEDICATION

In accordance with foster care policy, only the LDSS that holds custody of the child can provide consent for psychotropic medications. Prior to the youth being placed on a new psychotropic medication, the youth should receive: a) a pediatric medical examination to ensure symptoms are not indicative of a medical problem, except in the case of an emergency (in an emergency, a physical examination should be conducted as soon as possible) b) a comprehensive child and adolescent behavioral health evaluation by a licensed mental health professional to identify psychosocial interventions.

ASSESSMENT & EXAMINATION			
Primary Psychiatric Diagnoses (DSM-5):			
Please list any other medical diagnoses and non-psychotropic medication (including allergies):			
CURRENT PSYCHOTROPIC MEDICATIONS			
Medication	Dosage & Frequency	Target Symptoms	Start Date:
#1			
Prescriber:		Potential Side effects:	
#2			
Prescriber:		Potential Side effects:	
#3			
Prescriber:		Potential Side effects:	
PROPOSED PSYCHOTROPIC MEDICATIONS			
Medication	Dosage & Frequency	Target Symptoms	Start Date:
#1			
Prescriber:		Potential Side effects:	
#2			
Prescriber:		Potential Side effects:	
Prescriber:		Potential Side effects:	
Discontinued psychotropic medication:			
TREATMENT & INTERVENTIONS			
Is there a medication treatment plan?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	

Does the medication treatment plan include the following? (Check all that apply)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Dosage (how much)	<input type="checkbox"/> Medication purpose	<input type="checkbox"/> Medication review(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Medication discontinuation plan (if applicable)
Describe interventions/therapies being used:			
INFORMED CONSENT			
Prior to administration of psychotropic medication, was the youth involved in the decision-making process, including receiving the <i>Making Healthy Choices</i> Guide and given information regarding the proposed medication and side effects and assent provided as appropriate for age and development?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Input from youth:
Prior to the approval of psychotropic medication, were the following individuals informed? Input from individuals:	<input type="checkbox"/> Mother <input type="checkbox"/> Father <input type="checkbox"/> Caregiver <input type="checkbox"/> Guardian <input type="checkbox"/> Family Services Specialist Worker <input type="checkbox"/> TFC Case Manager		

I have received information describing:

- Youth's condition to be treated;
- The beneficial effects expected from the medication on that condition;
- Potential consequences of not consenting to the medication;
- Potential side effects and risks associated with the medication;
- And other forms of treatment and the reasons for the proposed treatment.

This consent is given voluntarily and without due influence.

I understand that I have the right to choose not to consent to this medication. I understand that I have the right to withdraw consent for this treatment at any time.

☐ By signing below, I give consent for this youth to receive the medications listed above, as recommended by their licensed health care provider/child psychiatrist.

☐ By signing below, I **do not** consent for this youth to receive the medications listed above, as recommended by their licensed health care provider/child psychiatrist. The reason consent is denied and next steps:_____

Signature of Psychotropic Medication Consenter (PMC)	Date
Printed Name	Relationship to Youth

Situations in which a psychiatric consult or second opinion may be warranted:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Absence of thorough assessment (medical & mental health) or DSM diagnosis in child's medical and/or foster care record <input type="checkbox"/> Taking three or more medications at the same time <input type="checkbox"/> Prescribing more than one medication for a symptom before trying a single medication	<input type="checkbox"/> Medication dose exceeds usual recommended dose <input type="checkbox"/> Prescribing medication that have adverse side effects* <input type="checkbox"/> Prescribing medication that is not FDA approved for children <input type="checkbox"/> Child/youth is less than six years old	<input type="checkbox"/> Prescriptions by primary care provider with no documented specialty training for diagnosis other than attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD) or uncomplicated anxiety disorder <input type="checkbox"/> Taking two or more medications for the same purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Others:_____
*Medications with adverse side effects may include those with the potential to induce or increase the child/youth's risk for: suicidal thoughts, raised cholesterol level, weight gain, diabetes, tardive dyskinesia, sun sensitivity/dehydration, etc		

PMC Review of Consent:

PMC Signature	Date	PMC Signature	Date		
PMC Signature	Date	PMC Signature	Date		

Medications (continued)			
Medication	Dosage & Frequency	Target Symptoms	Start Date:
Prescriber:		Potential Side effects:	
Prescriber:		Potential Side effects:	
Prescriber:		Potential Side effects:	
Prescriber:		Potential Side effects:	
Prescriber:		Potential Side effects:	
Prescriber:		Potential Side effects:	

Training Requirements for Permanency Staff

Name: _____

Start Date: _____

The training required for new foster care and adoption service workers and services supervisors during the **first three (3) weeks** of employment include the following online courses: *These courses are **pre-requisites** for many other courses including *CWS3000 Foster Care New Worker Guidance Training with OASIS* and *CWS3010 Adoption New Worker Guidance Training with OASIS*. (Note: e-Learnings are denoted by CWSE titles.)

COURSE	Completion Date
CWSE1002 Exploring Child Welfare - online	
CWSE5692 Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect – Mandatory Reporter Training - online	
CWSE1500 Permanency Navigating the Child Welfare Automated System: OASIS – online	

The training required for new foster care and adoption service workers and services supervisors during the **first three (3) months** of employment includes the following instructor led courses and require the worker to have completed the three previous courses.

COURSE	Completion Date
CWS3000 Foster Care New Worker Policy Training with OASIS – 4 days (Prerequisites: CWSE1002, CWSE5692, CWSE1500 Permanency)	
CWS3010 Adoption New Worker Policy Training with OASIS – 2 days (may be postponed if worker only does foster care) (Prerequisites: CWSE1002, CWSE5692, CWSE1500 Permanency)	
*CWS3001R Foster Care Refresher Training- 2 days (*Available only for experienced staff hired prior to 2013)	
CWS5011 Case Documentation (Prerequisite: CWSE5011 Case Documentation) CWSE4060 Family Search and Engagement	

The training required for new foster care and adoption service workers and services supervisors during the **first six (6) months** of employment includes:

COURSE	Completion Date
CWSE3030 Normalcy for Youth in Foster Care - online	
CWSE4050 Psychotropic Medications in the Child Welfare System - online CWS4080 Kinship in Virginia (Prerequisite: CWSE4060)	
CWS3015 Adoption Assistance (Prerequisites: CWSE1002, CWSE5692, CWSE1500 Permanency, CWS3010) Required for Adoption Service Workers only	

The training required for new foster care and adoption service workers and services supervisors during the **first 12 months** of employment includes the following instructor led courses:

COURSE	Completion Date
CWS1021 The Effects of Abuse & Neglect on Child & Adolescent Development- 2 days	
CWS1031 Separation and Loss Issues in Human Services Practice - 2 days	
CWS1041 Legal Principles in Child Welfare Practice- On-line & 1 day (Prerequisites: CWSE1041, SCV Child Dependency Case Processing)	
CWS1061 Family Centered Assessment -2 days (Prerequisites: CWSE1002, CWSE5692, CWSE1500 Permanency, CWS3000/CWS3001R/or CWS3010)	
CWS1071 Family Centered Case Planning -2 days (Prerequisites: CWSE1002, CWSE5692, CWSE1500 Permanency, CWS3000/CWS3001R/or CWS3010)	

Training Requirements for Permanency Staff

Name:

Start Date:

CWS1305 The Helping Interview - 2 days (Prerequisite: CWS3000 or CWS3010)	
CWS3041 Working with Children in Placement -2 days (Prerequisite: CWS3000)	
CWS3081 Promoting Family Reunification - 1 day (Prerequisite: CWS3000/CWS3001R)	
CWS4020 Engaging Families and Building Trust-Based Relationships – 2 days (Prerequisite: CWS3000 or CWS3010)	
CWS5307 Assessing Safety Risk and Protective Capacity - 2 days (Prerequisite: CWS3000)	
CWS4015 Trauma-informed Child Welfare Practice: Identification and Intervention (Prerequisite: CWSe4015 Trauma-Informed Child Welfare Practice))	

The training for new foster care and adoption service workers and supervisors during the **first 24 months** of employment include:

COURSE	Completion Date
CWS3021 Promoting Birth and Foster Parent Partnerships- 1 day (Prerequisite: CWS3000)	
CWS3061 Permanency Planning for Teens-Creating Lifelong Connections - 2 days (Prerequisite: CWS3000 or CWS3010)	
CWS3071 Concurrent Permanency Planning – 1 day (Prerequisite: CWS3000 or CWS3010)	
CWS5305 Advanced Interviewing: Motivating Families for Change – 2 days	
DVS1001 Understanding Domestic Violence – 2 days	
DVS1031 Domestic Violence and Its Impact on Children – 1 day (Prerequisite: DVS1001)	

Supervisor Completion Sign Off: _____

Training Requirements for Permanency Staff

Name: _____

Start Date: _____

The following meet the annual **24 hours of continuing education** requirements beginning the third year of employment. *This may include elective VDSS **SPECIALTY COURSES** or outside professional development.

[illegible]