



Department of
Children's Services



Contract Provider Manual

Section Eleven (11) - Adoption

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Adoption-For Level II and Level III Continuums

Adoption Case Management & Continuum Services

1. The Contract Provider agency provides all case management services to include those services which are typical for foster care and those that are additional due to the child's adoption status. DCS policies, protocols, manuals, and work aids in Chapter 15 (Adoption Services) and Chapter 16 (Foster Care) are to be used as they relate to adoption and selected foster care services applicable to adoption. <https://www.tn.gov/dcs/program-areas/qi/policies-reports-manuals/policiesprocedures.html> .
2. The Contract Provider agency performs regular continuum services through the finalization of adoption to include the following:
 - a) Respond to any crises and provide assistance to the child and family, as needed.
 - b) Preserve the child's current foster care placement by providing appropriate foster care management and supportive services.
 - c) Submit monthly summaries relative to the child's safety, permanency, and well-being to DCS until finalization of the adoption.
 - d) Participate in permanency planning.
 - e) Participate in court reviews and foster care reviews and ensure that agency representation is present.
 - f) Prepare the appropriate forms (copy of DCS Permanency Plan, monthly summary, and/or court report) for each review.
 - g) Ensure the following steps to adoption are completed and thoroughly documented in the monthly summaries submitted to DCS.
 - ◆ In accordance with the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) requirements regarding concurrent planning, the provider agency begins gathering the necessary documentation in preparation for completing the child's pre-placement and presentation summaries when a referral is made to the DCS attorney to file termination of parental rights for children placed in level II and level III Continuums. The provider agency will review the file and alert DCS of any missing records or information within five (5) business days from the date of completing the file review. DCS will then submit a request for missing records or information within five (5) business days from the date the Contract Provider agency requested the missing records. Delays with obtaining access to the case record are communicated to the DCS Permanency Specialist assigned to the case.
 - ◆ The pre-placement/presentation summary shall be completed within thirty (30) days of the child entering full guardianship if the child has a family Identified and 60-90 days for children

entering full guardianship without a permanent family identified. DCS reserves the right to review the summaries and communicate the need for revision/changes, if applicable. Any changes should be submitted to DCS within ten (10) business days from the date DCS requested changes.

- ◆ When the foster family is identified as the pre-adoptive family, the provider agency is responsible for finalizing the adoption within ninety (90) days of the child entering full guardianship, so long as the child has been placed in the pre-adoptive home for at least six (6) months. In situations where the child is placed with a newly selected pre-adoptive family, the provider agency is responsible for finalizing the adoption within sixty (60) calendar days of the end of the six (6) month placement period.

- ◆ Recruitment of Adoptive Families
 - **Individual Recruitment Plan:** In situations where the child does not have a permanent family identified and there are no other viable permanency options, the provider agency works with the Child & Family Team (CFT) to develop and implement an Individual Recruitment Plan (IRP). The IRP must be completed within 30 days of the child/youth entering full guardianship, must be child-specific and include action steps with responsible parties and timelines for completion. All recruitment efforts should be documented in the IRP. Recruitment efforts should include a combination of child-specific, targeted, and general recruitment strategies. At a minimum, the IRP must be reviewed and updated every three (3) months.

 - **AdoptUSKids Registration and Maintenance:** The provider agency partners with the DCS Permanency Specialist to complete and provide the [CS-1012, AdoptUSKids Registration](#) form, the child's profile narrative, and photo to the Central Office AUK Coordinator within sixty (60) days of the child entering full guardianship. The provider agency partners with the recruitment team to respond to families who inquire through photo listings such as AdoptUSKids (AUK) within seven (7) business days from receiving the inquiry. Searches for potential family matches on AUK are initiated monthly, as needed. Refer to DCS Policy [15.5, Registering and Maintaining Status of Children on AdoptUSKids \(AUK\)](#).

 - **Archeological Dig:** The provider agency partners with DCS to ensure that an archeological dig is completed within ninety (90) days of the child entering full guardianship for children who do not have a permanent family identified. Refer to DCS [Protocol for Developing and Utilizing the Archeological Dig in Identifying Permanent Placement for Children/Youth](#).

- ◆ Home studies of potential adoptive families should be reviewed regularly in selection CFTM's Reference DCS Policy Attachment: [CFTM Guidelines for Identifying an Adoptive Family](#).

- ◆ Families who inquire about or commit to adopting a DCS custodial child/youth who are awaiting permanency and are legally free for adoption will receive a level of full disclosure. Refer to DCS Policy [**15.1, Adoption Related Disclosure.**](#)

- ◆ Adoption Assistance - The provider agency works with the pre-adoptive family to obtain all necessary documentation to determine eligibility for Adoption Assistance (AA) and to support the approval of the subsidy. The provider agency will assist the pre-adoptive parent(s) with completing the TFACTS-generated **CS-0930, Application for Adoption Assistance**, to include explaining the application process and benefits and services available through the Adoption Assistance program. Once eligibility has been determined in TFACTS, the provider reviews the **CS-4200, Adoption Assistance Eligibility** and **CS-0513, Adoption Assistance Agreement** with the pre-adoptive family and obtains the necessary signatures, in accordance with [**15.11, Adoption Assistance**](#) and the [**Subsidy Manual for Adoption Assistance and Subsidized Permanent Guardianship.**](#)

- ◆ Report to Court - The provider agency obtains the signed consent to the adoption from DCS. The provider agency prepares and submits court reports and necessary documents as required by the court.

- ◆ The provider agency completes the application for a new birth certificate by adoption.

- ◆ The provider agency works with DCS to seek clearance of the Putative Father Registry - Reference DCS Policy [**15.4, Putative Father Registry.**](#)

- ◆ Adoption Finalization
 - The provider agency adoption specialist attends the court hearing to finalize the adoption.
 - The provider agency partners with DCS to seal the adoption record and submit to the identified regional Adoption Team Leader for verification and approval of accuracy. DCS will have the record available and ready for the provider to seal. Refer to DCS Policy [**15.8, Preparing Adoption Records for Archives.**](#)