



Arizona Department of Child Safety

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Field Staff and Field Management

FROM: Greg McKay, Director

Date: October 12, 2017

SUBJECT: Group Home and Shelter Placement Administrative Directive

Purpose: To implement a centralized placement approval and selection procedure for the use of shelters, group homes, and licensed foster homes so that children only reside in a shelter or group home when necessary to meet their needs.

Directive:

Effective October 12, 2017, all decisions to place a child into a shelter or group home setting will be made by the Statewide Placement Coordination Administration.

Where applicable, this directive supersedes *Chapter 4, Section 5, Selecting Out-of-Home Care Provider* and *Chapter 4, Section 6, Placing Children in Out-of-Home Care* of the Arizona Department of Child Safety: Policy and Procedure Manual.

- Placement into a shelter or group home:
 - The DCS Specialist will assess the child's placement needs according to the procedures in *Chapter 4, Section 4, Placement Needs of Children in Out-of-Home Care*.
 - Before considering placement in a licensed non-relative foster home, shelter, or group home, the DCS Specialist will make reasonable efforts to identify a grandparent, member of the child's extended family, or person who has a significant relationship with the child who can provide care and meet the child's needs.
 - When the DCS Specialist's efforts have not identified a relative or significant person who can provide care and meet the child's needs, the DCS Specialist will send the Child Placement Referral form (FC20500, located in CHILDS Court Documents) to the appropriate centralized Placement Unit to notify that the child may need a licensed foster home, shelter, or group home placement.
 - If a shelter or group home placement is being considered because of the child's behavioral health or complex medical needs, the Placement Coordinator will consult with a Behavioral Health Clinical Coordinator and the DCS Specialist to determine if placement in a relative, kinship, or foster home is possible with additional physical health care or behavioral health services.
 - The Placement Coordinator must obtain approval from a Placement Unit Program Supervisor, Program Manager or Program Administrator prior to placing a child in a shelter or group home, regardless of the child's age.

- Transition out of a shelter or group home:
 - When a child residing in a shelter or group home due to behavioral health or complex medical needs is ready to reside in a family setting; and the DCS Specialist's efforts have not identified a relative or significant person who can provide care and meet the child's needs; the DCS Specialist will send the Child Placement Referral form (FC20500, located in CHILDS Court Documents) to the appropriate centralized Placement Unit to begin the caregiver selection process. The Child Placement Referral form's subject line should read "congregate care."

- Transition out of a restrictive setting:
 - When a child residing in an HCTC, TGH, or RTC is ready to transition to a less restrictive living arrangement, the DCS Specialist will send the Child Placement Referral form and the applicable supporting information to the appropriate centralized Placement Unit. The DCS Specialist will send the form when a discharge date is identified, and will not wait until the day of discharge.
 - When a child is hospitalized and the previous caregiver is not willing or able to be the child's caregiver upon discharge, the DCS Specialist will send the Child Placement Referral form and the applicable supporting information to the appropriate centralized Placement Unit on the day the child is admitted to the hospital.
 - Supporting information will include, but may not be limited to, the child's current:
 - location and caregiving agency;
 - behavioral health services, provider agency, and RBHA;
 - identified mental or behavioral health needs;
 - psychiatric evaluation (if applicable);
 - psychological evaluation (if applicable);
 - identified complex medical needs (with corresponding medical provider names);
 - Individual Education Plan (if applicable);
 - criminal charges (if applicable);
 - terms of probation or parole (if applicable); and
 - special considerations or restrictions of placement (such as to maintain proximity to parents, siblings, or supportive people; enrollment in the same school; or continuity of specialized care with specialty behavioral health or medical providers that may be unavailable elsewhere).

Placement Unit Centralized Mailboxes are:

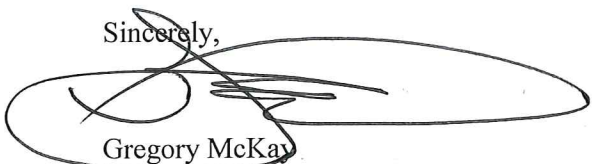
Maricopa/Pinal Counties Emergency needs: Maricopa Placements MaricopaPlacements@AZDCS.gov

Maricopa/Pinal Counties non-emergency needs: MaricopaPlacements@AZDCS.gov

Pima County: Pima Placements PimaPlacements@AZDCS.GOV

Northern Region: NAR Placements NARPlacements@AZDCS.GOV

Sincerely,



Gregory McKay
Director