

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Scope of Work | 2 |
| Overview | 2 |
| Family to Family Values..... | 3 |
| I. Outcomes and Accountability | 4 |
| II. Quality of Care Practice Protocols | 6 |
| Safety | 6 |
| Permanency | 7 |
| Wellbeing | 11 |
| Wellbeing: Medical, Dental & Mental Health | 12 |
| Wellbeing: Education | 13 |
| Wellbeing: Independent Living Skills | 15 |
| III. Case Management Practice Protocols | 17 |
| Placement Changes | 19 |
| Termination/Discharge from Placement | 21 |
| Case Plans | 22 |
| Court | 23 |
| IV. Partnership Support Protocols | 24 |
| V. Conflict Resolution | 24 |
| VI. Administrative Practices and Protocols..... | 25 |
| Payments | 27 |
| Over (Under) Payments | 28 |

SCOPE OF WORK

The County of Fresno, through its Department of Children and Family Services, herein after referred to as "COUNTY," is implementing Practice Protocols with Foster Family Agency (FFA) vendors, herein after referred to as "FFA(s)" to better monitor and report outcomes for Fresno County foster children. It is the intent of the County to limit foster placements to those agencies willing and able to comply with the Practice Protocols.

State of California Certified Foster Family Agencies who agree to participate with the COUNTY in the use of the enclosed Practice Protocols in the provision of services to COUNTY clients are asked to submit an Application (attached) for consideration of inclusion in a Master Provider Agreement. Participation in this Master Agreement in no way affects or modifies any condition of licensure, FFA Program Statement, or requirements of Title 22 regulations.

The Master Agreement will require participant agencies to ensure that the physical, emotional, and academic needs of children in their care are met, agree to participate fully in the child and family's case plan as established by the COUNTY and comply with practice protocols that facilitate positive outcomes for children and families. The Master Agreement shall additionally include, but not be limited to, reporting, insurance, and audit requirements.

Participant agencies will be required to measure and report client specific, as well as, aggregate client data to the COUNTY on an ongoing basis to assure progress toward outcomes for dependent youth and to support COUNTY efforts to sustain Annie E. Casey Foundation Family-to-Family (F2F) values and outcomes.

OVERVIEW

The COUNTY recognizes the irreplaceable role of the foster parent in the lives of each and every child placed away from his/her birth parents. It is the expectation of the COUNTY that the foster parent, rather than the FFA social worker, will be the primary source for parenting activities for the child. Foster parents are in the unique position to best meet the child's emotional needs and to deliver messages to the child that he/she is loved, valued, and whose success is of the utmost importance to his/her new foster parents. The ability of the child who has been removed from his/her parents to begin to form new relationships with the foster parents as "parent figures" is critical to the child's recovery from past trauma and their ability to begin to heal from past pain, fears, and feelings of anger and abandonment.

The F2F Initiative, adopted by the COUNTY in 2003, is designed to reform the child welfare and foster care system nation wide as well as improve outcomes for children and families. Fresno is one of the 25 counties in California that actively participates in the F2F Initiative. Notably, the County of Fresno has been designated as an Anchor Site for the Central and Coastal areas in California.

FAMILY-TO-FAMILY VALUES

I. Family to Family Values

- A. A child's safety is paramount.
- B. Children belong in families.
- C. Families need strong communities.
- D. Public child-welfare agencies cannot do this work alone. They need to work in partnerships with the community and with other systems to achieve strong outcomes for children.

II. Family to Family Outcomes

- A. Reduction of the number and rate of children placed away from their birth families.
- B. Among children coming into foster care, increase the number and rate at which children are placed in their own neighborhoods or communities.
- C. Reduction of the number of children served in institutional and group care and shifting resources from institutional and group care to kinship care, family foster care, and family-centered services.
- D. Decrease lengths of stay of children in placement.
- E. Increase the number and rate of children reunified with their birth families.
- F. Decrease the number and rate of children re-entering placement.
- G. Reduction of the number of placement moves children in care experience.
- H. Increase the number and rate of brothers and sisters placed together.
- I. Reduction of any disparities associated with race/ethnicity, gender, or age in each of these outcomes.

I. OUTCOMES AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Participant agencies will measure and report client specific, as well as, aggregate client data to the COUNTY on an ongoing basis to ensure progress toward outcomes for dependent youth. This document describes the protocols by which preferred outcomes are obtained, as well as, the data to be reported by the agencies for outcome measurement.

FFA Reporting Responsibilities

1. Complete an intake assessment of each child at the time of the initial placement and at discharge.
2. Provide timely incident reports to COUNTY social worker, as required by Community Care Licensing.
3. Report emergency incidents to the COUNTY Careline [559-255-8320] immediately.
4. Report non-emergency incidents within 24-hours by contacting the COUNTY social worker. If there is a question, report to the Careline and social worker, and/or the social work supervisor if the social worker is unavailable.
5. Provide a written report of incident to COUNTY social worker within seven (7) days of the incident.
6. Submit quarterly reports to COUNTY social worker which speaks to all elements of each child's functioning and adjustment. The format for the quarterly reports is at the discretion of the FFA, but must include the domains described in Section II. Following the initial placement assessment, reports are to be submitted on a timeline that parallels the court review hearing calendar.
7. Submit semi-annual outcome reports on safety, permanency and well-being of the aggregate population of foster youth to the Foster Parent Resource Liaison.

FFA Outcome Responsibilities

1. **Safety** - Children will be protected from abuse and neglect while placed in FFA foster homes. Agency standard is for weekly contact with children in care.
 - a. 100% of children placed in FFA are not subjects of substantiated allegations of child abuse or neglect while in placement.
 - b. 100% of children placed in the foster home for more than 30 days will have monthly safety assessments conducted by an FFA Social Worker.
2. **Permanency** - Children placed in foster homes will have placement stability. FFAs will facilitate the maximum potential for life long connections between each child and their foster family. FFA's will place children thoughtfully into homes that are best suited to meet each child's potential need for a permanent family. The foster parents will be the leaders, and will provide their personal support through advocacy, support, transportation, and working with each child in their care to achieve the following outcomes:
 - a. 80% of the children placed in foster homes will experience no placement transfers from their original date of placement.
 - b. 100% of the children placed in the FFA, in need of a permanent family, will have the full participation of the FFA, the FFA foster parents, and DCFS social worker team (the Permanency team) in identifying the best permanent plan for the children.

- c. 90% of the youth discharged from foster homes will have a permanent plan.
 - d. 100% of the children placed in the FFA will have Permanency Assessments completed monthly and on file in the child's file.
3. **Well-Being** - Children placed in the FFA will receive services to adequately meet their physical, mental health, educational and independent living needs. The foster parents will be the leaders, and will provide their personal support through advocacy, support, transportation, and working with each child in their care to achieve the following outcomes.

Health

- a. 100% of children placed will have current physical exams that comply with the periodicity table.
- b. 100% of children placed will have current dental exams that comply with the periodicity table.
- c. 100% of children placed who are referred for mental health services are receiving services.

Education

- a. 100% of the children placed will have strong attendance at their educational placement.
- b. 70% of children placed who are in grades 7-12, will have a 70% grade or better of a "C" in each class.
- c. 70% of the children placed who are in grades K-12, are current with school credits and classes and pass their current grade or graduate from high school.
- d. 70% of the children placed who are in grade 12 will pass the CAHSEE.

II. QUALITY OF CARE PRACTICE PROTOCOLS

| |
|---------------|
| Safety |
|---------------|

COUNTY Responsibilities

1. COUNTY will notify FFA of any new information pertinent to the case, including dangerous propensities of the child or the adults in his/her life.
2. COUNTY will work with FFA to develop a mutually agreeable alternative plan of visitation for the biological family members and significant others who present a tendency for dangerous propensities and may require a third party visits.
3. On report of an emergency placement change, will within 3 working days, schedule a TDM that includes the FFA, the foster parent, COUNTY Social Worker, the child's therapist and others, as needed, to ensure that the child is in an appropriate placement.

FFA Responsibilities

1. FFA social worker will have weekly contact with the foster youth in their foster homes. Documentation of the contact and narratives shall be kept in the agency file.
2. A safety assessment shall be conducted by the FFA social worker monthly for each child in the home. A safety assessment should be a private conversation between the FFA social worker and the child. The social worker will check in with the child and ask the child some basic questions about such things as: his/her discipline by the foster parent, about any adults who may have come into the home, any change in caregivers, and any questions or concerns the child may have along those lines.
3. Provide COUNTY with all information on reported allegations of abuse or neglect of any child placed in a foster home as required by Community Care Licensing.
4. Notify COUNTY of any new information pertinent to the case, including dangerous propensities of the child or the adults in the child's life.
5. In the case of an emergency, defined as a matter of immediate and urgent necessity related to the safety of the child or a crisis in the foster home, the FFA
 - a. May move a child to another certified home: and
 - b. Notify both the FPR liaison and the child's social worker by phone or fax during normal working hours; or
 - c. After hours, notify the Careline (559-559-255-8320) and leave a message with the COUNTY social worker; and
 - d. Notify the COUNTY social worker, as soon as possible and no later than the next working day when a child is moved.

II. QUALITY OF CARE PRACTICE PROTOCOLS

Permanency

The ultimate plan of permanency for each foster youth is to return them safely to their home of origin. COUNTY will work with the FFA to engage the birth family in their efforts of reunification, ensure the progression of the visitation plan, and provide opportunities for the birth family to have positive and meaningful contact with the youth while in out of home care.

If reunification cannot be achieved, permanency will be sought with the child's extended family or non-related extended family members. If however, there are no options for either reunification or placement of the foster child with family, COUNTY will work with each FFA to evaluate and maximize each child's chance for permanency with his/her respective FFA foster family.

FFAs will thoughtfully place each child into homes that are best suited to meet each child's potential need for permanent family. Foster parents will assure that foster children have stability and facilitate the maximum potential for life long connections with each child. Foster parents will be the leaders, and will provide their personal support through advocacy, transportation, and working with each child in their care to achieve strong permanency outcomes for each child.

To avoid delays in establishing a permanent home, in a concurrent planning case, COUNTY will initiate discussion with the FFA social worker regarding the foster parent's willingness and appropriateness to be a child's adoptive or guardianship family if relatives and mentors are ruled out. The FFA and COUNTY social workers will agree on an appropriate timeframe and manner to approach the family.

COUNTY Responsibilities

1. Develop, in writing, with the FFA a comprehensive visitation schedule with the child and family according to the case plan and/or court orders, and the child's best interests, mutually respecting the foster family's schedule and lifestyle. Plans should include the need to be flexible upon mutual agreement.
2. If there is interest on the part of the foster family, COUNTY will conference with the FFA social worker and foster family, and provide legal, financial and other information relevant to adoption or guardianship, including Fresno County adoption placement policies. A comparison of the regulations which govern the financial benefits of adoption, legal guardianship, and foster care are available at http://calswec.berkeley.edu/CalSWEC/04_Guide_to_Permanency_Options_CWW.doc
3. Work with FFA to assure that an adoptive home study is completed for the foster home, either by the FFA, if licensed as an adoption agency, by COUNTY, or by contracting with another agency.
4. If the foster family is not appropriate for, or interested in, adoption or guardianship, COUNTY will initiate a search for a permanent family. Other placements within the FFA where the child is already placed will be considered prior to looking outside the agency, giving the FFA the opportunity to assess whether they have an appropriate placement for the child. COUNTY is responsible to find the most permanent home for the child and will not assist with a guardianship if it has determined that adoption is the appropriate permanent plan.

II. QUALITY OF CARE PRACTICE PROTOCOLS

Permanency (Cont.)

5. COUNTY social worker will complete and submit a court report, identifying the appropriate permanent plan.
6. If adoption is the permanent plan, COUNTY is responsible to
 - a. Prepare and submit all required court documents to terminate reunification.
 - b. Prepare and submit all required court documentation to terminate parental rights, and, if the families agree, initiate mediation for open adoptions.
 - c. Once rights have been terminated or relinquished, prepare all adoptive placement documents as required by regulations, including gathering of all items required to be disclosed.
 - d. Work with FFA to set appropriate adoptive placement dates and written verification of adoptive placement date, which take into account the best interest of the child and foster family.
 - e. Notify the FFA within 10 days the dates that a child's status with the family has led to guardianship without dependency, or when the adoption is finalized.
 - f. Notify FFA of all dates of placement termination immediately.
 - g. Cooperate in preparation of adoption finalization paperwork and interface with court as decided upon with FFA and foster family, including scheduling and attending the juvenile court hearings.
 - h. Prepare and submit all paperwork to terminate dependency.
 - i. Provide all documents needed by the FFA, if licensed as an adoption agency, to claim for Private Adoption Agency Reimbursement Program (PAARP) within 30 calendar days of the finalization.
 - j. Provide resource information for adoptive families.
3. If guardianship is the permanent plan, COUNTY will
 - a. Prepare and submit all required court documents.
 - b. Terminate dependency as appropriate.
 - c. Notify FFA in writing as to date guardianship is granted.
 - d. Terminate FFA payment on the date guardianship was granted and initiate appropriate payment to the guardian family.

FFA Responsibilities

1. Foster parents will commit to the children in their home, up to and including the willingness to be permanent connections for the child.
2. FFA and the foster parents will work with the birth parent(s) toward reunification by:
 - a. Sharing information on the child's educational and developmental milestones;
 - b. Serving as mentor to the birth parents;
 - c. Advising and inviting birth parents to school and/or medical appointments.

III. QUALITY OF CARE PRACTICE PROTOCOLS

| |
|---------------------------|
| Permanency (Cont.) |
|---------------------------|

3. Provide supervised visits between birth families, foster children and siblings, as appropriate.
 - a. FFA will not be responsible for providing supervised visits until such a time as training curriculum is developed by the COUNTY to include, but not be limited to, how to report about the visit afterward, how to provide for safety during the visits, and when to terminate visits for reasons such as parent being under the influence of drugs/alcohol.
 - b. COUNTY will support the FFA with implementation of the initial supervised visitation training. Ongoing and subsequent training is the sole responsibility of the FFA.
 - c. Foster families will not be asked to provide supervision of visits unless the FFA agency, the family, and the COUNTY team have met and all agree that visitation supervised by the foster parent is appropriate.
 - d. When supervised visits are provided by the FFA:
 1. Foster parents will supervise sibling visits and ensure that sibling visits are welcome.
 2. Work with the foster parents to ensure that the child's scheduled visits are timely and adhered to consistently.
 3. Foster parents will look for all opportunities to support, strengthen, and preserve the relationship between the foster child and his/her biological family members (parents and siblings).
 4. Foster parents will support and facilitate visitation between the foster child(ren) in their home and child's siblings not placed in the same home.
4. Work to place sibling groups together within the same foster home if at all possible. If not, then sibling contact and visitation will be ensured by the FFA.
5. Complete a permanency assessment each month drawing on feedback and input from COUNTY social worker.
6. If a relative or mentor is identified who is willing to make a permanent plan, and the child needs to be transitioned out of the care of the foster family, the FFA shall work with COUNTY on the transition plan in line with the child's best interest. In most cases, it is ideal for the child, if attached whatsoever to the foster family, to maintain contact with the foster family after they are moved to their permanent placement, to be decided on a case by case basis.
7. Work with COUNTY in "family finding" activities for youth, to nurture all potential but untapped permanent connections for the child.
8. For all children placed with the FFA who do not already have an alternate and identified permanent plan, the FFA social worker will participate with COUNTY in discussing the foster family's willingness and appropriateness to be the child's adoptive or guardianship family. The FFA and COUNTY social worker will agree on an appropriate timeframe and manner to approach the family about a permanent plan for the child. The FFA will participate in discussion with the foster family regarding their interest and ability to become the child's permanent family.

II. QUALITY OF CARE PRACTICE PROTOCOLS

Permanency (Cont.)

9. Conference with the COUNTY social worker and foster parents regarding the legal, financial and other information relevant to adoption or guardianship, including Fresno County adoption placement policies. A financial benefit comparison between adoption, guardianship, and foster care may be found at http://calswec.berkeley.edu/CalSWEC/04_Financial_chart_Sups_v1_1.doc
10. Work with COUNTY to ensure that an adoptive home study is completed for the identified family, either by the FFA, if licensed as an adoption agency, by COUNTY, or by contracting with another agency.
11. If the foster parents are not appropriate for or interested in adoption or guardianship of the child, COUNTY may initiate a search for a family that can provide permanence for the child.
12. If appropriate, the FFA will cooperate and enlist the family's cooperation in selecting an alternative permanent family for the child should the foster family be unwilling or inappropriate for adoption. This could include having the foster family participate in pre-adoption activities such as visits by prospective adoptive families, impart information regarding the care of the child, or transport the child to Adoption Matching Picnics.
13. For all children, the foster family will always be asked to consider committing to a life-long relationship or a permanent connection for the child, regardless of whether or not the family wants to maintain the child in their home permanently. The more strong, healthy, and positive relationships each foster child has, the better chance the child will have to achieve successful independence as an adult.
14. If adoption is the permanent plan and the FFA has performed the adoptive home study, the FFA will:
 - a. Enter a cooperative adoptive placement with the foster family and DCFS.
 - b. Advocate for and assist the foster family with Adoption Assistance Program application.
 - c. Cooperate with preparation of finalization paperwork and interface with court as decided upon with DCFS and the foster parents.
 - d. Assist the foster parents in the transition from foster to adoptive status.
 - e. Connect foster parent with relevant community resources and appropriate resource directory.
 - f. Empower the foster parent to function independently from FFA assistance.
15. If guardianship is the permanent plan, the FFA will:
 - a. Work with the foster family to assist with transition from foster care to guardianship status.
 - b. Connect foster family with relevant community resources.
 - c. Empower the foster family to function independently from FFA assistance.

II. QUALITY OF CARE PRACTICE PROTOCOLS

Wellbeing

Shared Responsibilities

1. Share communication and monitor practice to result in a positive working relationship by responding to any concerns brought forth by either party.
2. Communicate on a regular basis in a positive manner regarding the best interest of the dependent child(ren).
3. Ensure that foster child(ren) are treated with respect and dignity.
4. Ensure foster child(ren) are treated fairly in the home based on needs.
5. Ensure interaction with foster child(ren) is accomplished by communicating in a nurturing, caring, and encouraging manner.
6. Ensure that foster child(ren) participate in family activities in and out of the home, such as family vacations, trips, and outings.*

*COUNTY requires 25 working days notice in advance of any planned out of state/country travel.

7. Reject the use of respite care as a temporary placement for any dependent child or as a temporary measure to hold a child while pending placement change.

COUNTY Responsibilities

1. Seek input from foster child when making contact visits.
2. Ensure that a clean and nurturing home environment is provided and that the foster child is treated with respect and dignity.
3. Coordinate TDM meetings and TDM action plans with FFA and parties connected to the child, and follow the action plan designed in the TDM.
4. Minimize (if reasonable) movement of any child by coordinating a TDM meeting or staffing with FFA and parties connected to the child.
5. Coordinate Icebreakers within 7 to 14 days from date of child's placement.

FFA Responsibilities

1. Work with the foster parents to ensure collaboration with the COUNTY and any other agency that can serve the child.
2. Work with the foster parents to ensure that the foster child receives positive feedback regarding their birth family.
3. Ensure that foster children receive a weekly allowance, and in the same manner that the foster parents' birth children.
 - a. Recommended allowances:
 - Kindergarten through 3rd grade \$5/week;
 - 4th grade through 7th grade \$10/week,
 - 8th grade through 12th grade \$15/week.

II. QUALITY OF CARE PRACTICE PROTOCOLS

Wellbeing (Cont.)

- b. Where birth children in the home receive an allowance based on a different structure, foster parents can adjust the recommended allowance to ensure that the foster children and the birth children receive an allowance in an equal manner, which may result in the foster children either receiving less or more than the recommended rate.
- c. Foster parents may provide more than the recommended allowance and may provide financial rewards for such things as extra household chores, good grades, etc.
- d. Ensure that FFA foster families
 - 1. Participate in Icebreakers, joint meetings with birth families and quarterly, or more frequent, team meetings.
 - 2. Participate in TDM meetings and implement TDM action plans finalized by COUNTY.
 - 3. Participate in all Permanency Team meetings; may include FFA social worker if so desired.
 - 4. Meet the foster child's medical, dental and emotional needs. This includes the requirement to make sure that medical, dental, school and therapy appointments are met, as well as, advocate for the child when required.
 - 5. Obtain approval from COUNTY social worker prior to placing child in respite care; inform the COUNTY social worker why respite care is required and provide anticipated length of stay.

Wellbeing - Medical, Dental & Mental Health

COUNTY Responsibilities

The COUNTY social worker will respond timely to requests for authorization to provide treatment (i.e. medical or dental needs), including securing signed releases, vacation travel requests, and initiating approval for psychotropic medication* to avoid disruption of child's medication schedule as follows:

- 1. Work with FFA to ensure child is either receiving prescribed psychotropic medications or is linked to immediate psychiatric services.
- 2. Initiate approval within 24 hours of request or by the next working day for emergency authorization.. **Process medication applications through the juvenile court system within 24 hours of filing the JV220 petition*
- 3. Initiate approval within 7 calendar days for non-emergency authorization.
- 4. Initiate approval for psychotropic medications pursuant to standing court order.
- 5. Renew medication orders no less than every 6 months through the JV220 process.
- 6. Provide FFA with any changes or updates in therapeutic mental health treatment.

FFA Responsibilities

FFA will work with the foster parent(s) to ensure that the foster child medical, dental and emotional needs are met. Foster families shall set medical, dental and mental health appointments as necessary and ensure that scheduled appointments are met.

II. QUALITY OF CARE PRACTICE PROTOCOLS

Wellbeing: Education

Shared Responsibilities

The County and the FFA are jointly responsible for the education and stability of foster youth.

COUNTY Responsibilities

The DCFS case manager will

1. Adhere to AB490 and make sure that the movement of a foster youth from one educational institution to another will not occur without consideration of:
 - a. The best interest of the child.
 - b. The proximity of the placement to the child's current school.
 - c. The impact on the educational stability of the child.
2. Notify the child's attorney, consult the Foster Youth Educational Liaison, and coordinate an agreement, if appropriate, with the child and the Educational Rights holder.
3. Notify an FFA who is assigned as the Educational Rights Holder within 7 calendar days from initial placement or any time the Educational Rights Holder changes.
4. Take all necessary steps to assist the caregiver in obtaining relevant education information, and seek to involve the child's birth parent whenever possible and appropriate.
5. Notify the DCFS Educational Liaison at least 24 hours prior to approval of a school change or immediately thereafter.
6. Provide the Special Education Local Plan Area a 10 day notice if child is in special education or has a suspected disability.
7. Assist the FFA in acquiring and maintaining the following records for the foster child:
 - a. Transcripts
 - b. Attendance records
 - c. California High School Exit Examination Results
 - d. Individual Education Plan and Psycho-educational Report (most recent)
 - e. 504 Accommodation Plan (if applicable)
 - f. Calculation of Full and Partial Credits Earned
 - g. Discipline Records
 - h. Report Card
 - i. Immunization Records
 - j. Outstanding Fees Report
 - k. Enrollment and Disenrollment Dates
 - l. Student Study Team Meeting Notes
 - m. School and Home Communication
8. Request a meeting with the school, the birth parent, and foster parent should any of the following conditions be present:
 - a. The child has a grade point average of 2.0 or lower, and/or
 - b. The child has 2 or more Fs on his/her report card.
 - c. The child is not making adequate progress.

II. QUALITY OF CARE PRACTICE PROTOCOLS

Wellbeing: Education (con't)

FFA Responsibilities

1. Will not change schools of any foster youth without prior notification of the COUNTY social worker and approval from applicable parties.
2. Identify and keep the educational rights folder updated.
3. Notify COUNTY if an Educational Rights Holder has not been identified.
4. Monitor the educational progress of the child towards the goal of obtaining a high school diploma.
5. Notify the COUNTY social worker if
 - a. The child has a grade point average of 2.0 or lower, and/or
 - b. The child has 2 or more Fs on his/her report card.
 - c. The child is not making adequate educational progress.
6. Attend all school meetings relating to the needs for improving the child's academic success including behavioral modification. This includes, but is not limited to, participation with the Educational Rights Holder to discuss the development of the individual education plan, 504 plans or to discuss a plan to improve behavior that may be negatively influencing academic success. The FFA will also engage and support the child's birth parent's involvement and their advocacy for the child in the educational setting.
7. Assume financial responsibility to ensure that each child is provided school and/or team photos, graduation photos, field trips, clothing, or uniforms as needed to participate fully in school activities in the same manner as other children.
8. Actively participate in the child's school activities, such as Back-to-School nights, open house and holiday programs.
9. Foster parents shall keep all special items for the child, such as report cards, pictures, letters, awards, special school assignments, etc. in the child's life folder, or life book. Special scrapbooks or other creative ways to showcase the child's special memories or milestones are recommended.
10. Foster parents shall attempt to acquire and maintain the following records:
 - a. Attendance records
 - b. Transcripts
 - c. California High School Exit Examination Results
 - d. Individual Education Plan and Psycho-educational Report (most recent)
 - e. 504 Accommodation Plan (if applicable)
 - f. Calculation of Full and Partial Credits Earned
 - g. Discipline Records
 - h. Report Cards
 - i. Immunization Records
 - j. Outstanding Fees Report
 - k. Enrollment and Disenrollment Dates
 - l. Student Study Team Meeting Notes
 - m. School and Home Communication

II. QUALITY OF CARE PRACTICE PROTOCOLS

Wellbeing: Independent Living Skills

COUNTY Responsibilities

1. Beginning at age 14 years offer the youth linkage to ILP services at least once every six months while in foster care. (ILP services are optional and based on the youth accepting such services)
2. Provide regular and ongoing opportunities for siblings to have contact with one another.
3. Support educational attainment for all eligible foster youth through academic support and educational coaching.
4. Assure that all youth have equal opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities and milestone events with their peers.
5. Assist enrolled youth to prepare for develop independent living skills to include academic and employment skills, budgeting and fiscal management, healthy and safe behaviors, housing options, self care, and making life-long connections.
6. Complete a Transitional Independent Living Plan (TILP) with the youth when services are initiated for needs identification and goal setting, with a plan update every six months to measure progress toward goals.
7. Complete an Efforts to Outcomes Assessment with enrolled youth, update the plan every six months and at emancipation for the purpose of longitudinal studies of outcomes for foster youth.
8. Identify and enroll those youth aged 18 to 21 for whom after care services, such as housing, health or employment services will be required.
9. Conduct a Transition Conference with youth prior to the youth/s 17th birthday and again prior to emancipation to assure each youth has a purposeful plan for self care when exiting the foster care system.

FFA Responsibilities

1. Ensure that foster families provide for those youth aged 14 years and older, transportation to and from school and social activities, up to an including, public bus passes.
2. The FFA shall prepare for and develop independent living skills for youth ages 12 and older prior to exiting the foster care system as follows:
 - a. Self-Care - Prepare youth for maintaining proper hygiene, understanding how to access health, dental, and mental care when needed.
 - b. Daily Living - Prepare youth to understand nutritional value and healthy life style eating habits, hoe to prepare meals, clean kitchen, do laundry, learn proper table manners, how to access the Internet and maintain personal safety.
 - c. Housing and Money Management -Teach youth how to open a bank account, develop a budget to plan for expenses, and balance an account.
 - d. Social Relationship - Provide guidance to youth on how to share feelings with others, practice positive interactions with others, and seek outside counseling as needed.

II. QUALITY OF CARE PRACTICE PROTOCOLS

| |
|---|
| Wellbeing: Independent Living Skills (con't) |
|---|

- e. Career Planning - Prepare youth for career planning by monitoring and aligning educational goals with career goals, improve youth's reading and math skills, introduce educational opportunities and resources, and develop job seeking skills.
 - f. Work Life - Prepare youth for work life by providing reasonable household chores demonstrating the importance of completing a task, stress punctuality on the job, and common courtesy practiced in the work place
3. Pregnant or parenting teens -
- a. Foster families will work to support the teen's development as a parent, and progressing the teen's ability to both bond and care for his/her child, including how to secure good medical care for the child.
 - b. The FFA is may participate in the Whole Family Foster Care program by completing the shared responsibility paperwork with COUNTY.
 - c. Foster parent(s) shall also help to provide good medical care for pregnant teens, opportunities for the teen to develop parenting skills, identify other appropriate supportive resources and provide advocacy for the teen in her educational setting.

III. CASE MANAGEMENT PRACTICE PROTOCOLS

Initial Placement

The primary goal of the COUNTY is to keep children with kin or non-related extended family members, or county foster homes in the same community from which the child comes. If the COUNTY is unable to place with kin or non-related extended family members, or with county homes due to the special needs of the child, then the COUNTY may refer to the FFA for a suitable placement. Placements may be as short as one day, or as long as the child is a dependent of Juvenile Court.

DCFS Responsibilities

1. Simultaneously provide a Placement Request (Form 6252) by email to each FFA when a child is in need of a placement.
2. COUNTY shall confirm the primary language spoken in the foster home prior to placement. Child(ren) of any age may be placed in a home in which the foster parents primary language matches the foster child's primary language.
3. For consideration of placement acceptance, as soon as possible and within a mutually agreed upon time frame, but no less than 48 hours, COUNTY shall provide potential foster parents complete background information including but not limited to:
 - a. Educational, including current school address and cross streets
 - b. Medical
 - c. Placement history
 - d. Family and behavioral history
 - e. Suspected or known dangerous propensities
 - f. Extended family and/or significant adults in the child's life.
 - g. Reason for initial and current removal.
3. On placement acceptance, County shall:
 - a. Sign all required Fresno County and FFA forms, including the clothing inventory, and provide copies to the FFA staff.
 - b. Confirm foster home swimming pool safety compliance with CCL Standards.
 - c. Provide emergency numbers to FFA to secure an immediate response to crisis calls.
 - d. Ensure internal documentation of placement in CWS/CMS, the placement agreement and SOC158 form are initiated within 48 hours and submitted to the AFDC-FC Eligibility Worker so that payment will occur in a timely manner.
 - e. Assist the FFA in obtaining the child's school records, including special education records and information.
 - f. Provide foster parents with the "Child's Folder" which will be maintained by each FFA and shared with each subsequent FFA or other placement provider by COUNTY.
 - g. Assist the FFA social worker to complete the Needs and Services Appraisal (State Form LIC625), the outcomes desired, including concurrent plan when applicable.
 - h. Coordinate an icebreaker meeting with the birth parent(s) and foster parents within 7 to 14 days from the date of placement..
 - i. Provide FFA social worker with the child's TDM Action Plan.
 - j. On request, provide the FFA with the name and phone number of the child's legal counsel.
 - k. COUNTY Child Focus Team shall screen each child aged 0-5 and within 14 calendar days of when the child becomes a dependent of the COUNTY, mail the Ages and Stages Questionnaire or Ages and Stages Questionnaire-Social Emotional (ASQ/ASQ-SE) to the foster parent.

III. CASE MANAGEMENT PRACTICE PROTOCOLS

| |
|----------------------------------|
| Initial Placement (con't) |
|----------------------------------|

FFA Responsibilities

1. Provide the COUNTY FPR Unit with an email address to receive Placement Requests.
2. Call the FPR Unit if a placement option is identified subsequent to a Placement Request.
3. Accept children whose needs can be met (consider the needs of other children in the home.)
4. Placement into any specific foster home will be mutual agreed between FFA and COUNTY.
5. Provide complete information about the prospective foster parents at the time the child is referred for consideration for placement.
6. Be fully knowledgeable about their families when working with COUNTY at the time of placement consideration and ensure that they are able to do all the parenting activities that each child placed in their home would require.
 - a. Assure the foster parent's primary language spoken in day to day activities matches the child's primary language.
 - b. FFA must disclose to COUNTY at the time of consideration of placement:
 - i. If the home also maintains a daycare.
 - ii. Any obligation that the family has, such as the number of children in the home and their sports/school schedules.
 - iii. Any challenge which would prohibit the family from being fully available to the new foster child who will have their own set of needs and requirements.
 - iv. If the potential foster family has had no prior foster placements. This would not preclude placement, but alerts the COUNTY that extra support and communication with this family would be appropriate.
 - c. FFA will meet or have a phone conversation with the prospective foster parent and the COUNTY social worker to explore all possible issues prior to placement, including COUNTY'S case plan and desired outcomes.
7. At the time of placement, FFA will
 - a. Complete an inventory of the child's clothing and belongings and obtain signature of the COUNTY social worker.
 - b. Assist the foster family in purchasing any clothing needed to bring the child's clothing items up to the required inventory.
 - c. Establish a mechanism by which the FFA social worker shall maintain a QUARTERLY clothing inventory checklist to be provided to COUNTY on request.
 - d. Ensure that clothing in the child's home fit, are in good condition, and meet basic inventory requirements.
 - e. Ensure that the placement agreement documentation is completed and signed by the placing COUNTY social worker.
8. Assist the foster parents in making arrangements for transportation and supervision for placed foster children to and from school of origin or current school, all medical and dental appointments, and visitation with immediate family or non-extended family members.
9. Complete a Needs and Service plan in conjunction with the COUNTY social worker within 30 days of placement.
10. Agree to notify County of Supplemental Security Income or any income generated by the child that may affect the case.

III. CASE MANAGEMENT PRACTICE PROTOCOLS

Initial Placement (con't)

11. Ensure authorization via court order is obtained prior to any non-routine, non-emergency medical, psychological, or psychiatric treatment, including psychotropic medication.
12. FFA Social Worker will conduct assessments as follows:
 - a. Complete intake assessments within 30 days of placement for children aged 8-18 that include the age appropriate Ansel Casey Life Skills Assessment, available at <http://www.caseylifeskills.org/>
 - b. Supplemental pregnant or parenting assessment is additionally required, where appropriate.
 - c. Two optional assessments which may be used for the intake assessment, CAFAS and JIFF, are attached. These assessments can provide important information about the child's level of functioning according to several critical domains. These assessments are available at <http://fasoutcomes.com/>
 - d. Subsequent quarterly reports will use the same tools as the initial placement assessment.
13. Foster parents shall complete an ASQ/ASQ-SE for each child aged 0-5 in their home within 30 days of placement and return to the Child Services Coordinator at 2011 Fresno Street, Suite 105, Fresno, CA 93721-1722. <http://agesandstages.com/asq/chart.html>
14. Provide information necessary for DCFS social worker to obtain authorization for treatment; i.e. psychotropic medications, surgery and any other treatment outside the scope of routine medical treatment.
15. FFA will review the Foster Youth Rights with each child at placement. <http://www.fosteryouthhelp.ca.gov/publications.htm>

III. CASE MANAGEMENT PRACTICE PROTOCOLS

Placement Changes

COUNTY Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the COUNTY to know the whereabouts of all children and youth in their care and to have in place policies and procedures that ensure all children can be located and accounted for in the event of a natural or manmade disaster.

FFA Responsibilities

Except in the case of emergency, the FFA will not move any foster child without prior authorization of the DCFS social worker, participation in staffing or TDM, and approval from County.

1. In the case of an emergency, defined as a matter of immediate and urgent necessity related to the safety of the child or a crisis in the FFA home, the FFA may move a child to another certified home and notify the COUNTY social worker as soon as possible and no later than the next working day when a child is moved.
 - b. Notify both the FPR liaison and the child's social worker of the move by phone or fax during normal working hours. (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.)
 - c. Notify the COUNTY Careline (559-255-8320) in the event of an after-hours emergency AND leave a phone message for the COUNTY social worker.
 - d. Within 3 working days, hold a team decision making staffing that includes the FFA, the FFA foster parent, COUNTY Social Worker, child's therapist and others, to ensure that the child is in an appropriate placement.
2. Will not use respite as a temporary measure to hold a child while pending another placement.
3. Inform as to reason for, and acquire authorization from, the COUNTY social worker prior to placing child in respite care, and provide anticipated length of stay in respite care.

III. CASE MANAGEMENT PRACTICE PROTOCOLS

Termination/Discharge from Placement

DCFS Responsibilities

Placement terminations may occur as the result of reunification, emancipation, a move to a permanent placement, or because of placement disruption or running away. Communication protocols are intended to facilitate these transitions for youth and to minimize disruption for youth and their families.

1. A TDM is the preferred planning method to develop a mutually agreeable pre-placement plan (TDM Action Plan), and will be scheduled whenever possible prior to a placement status change.
2. When provided a 7 day notice, develop a transition plan and terminate placement timely.
3. Assist the foster parents to maintain connections with the child after placement termination, when appropriate, in consultation with the FFA.
4. Notify the FFA social worker when the foster placement has officially ended.
5. Review the clothing inventory form with the FFA social worker and take possession of children's abandoned clothing and ensure the property is passed on appropriately
6. Runaway placement termination: FFA and COUNTY shall negotiate the bed closure date immediately. This shall be narrated in CMS, and confirmed in an email between the FPR worker, COUNTY case worker, and FFA social worker immediately. The COUNTY social worker must immediately email the ETA placement inbox as well.

FFA Responsibilities

1. Provide immediate notice to the COUNTY social worker regarding the termination of placement.
2. Attend a TDM prior to placement change to assess the possibility to stabilize the current placement or to develop a transition plan to another foster home within the FFA, subsequent FFA or other placement.
3. Provide seven (7) calendar days notice, if requesting non-emergency removal. EXCEPTION: In cases where the COUNTY has failed to disclose information of a dangerous propensity of the child or when the placement creates a safety risk, a seven-day notice will not apply.
4. Assist in the implementation of COUNTY plans that lead to discharge and termination of placement.
5. Provide a written discharge summary with all pertinent information within 14 calendar days from the date of discharge that:
 - a. Uses the same assessment tool used for the initial placement assessment and
 - b. Contains information about the child's functioning in the following domains: school, home, community, behavior towards others, mood/emotions, self-harmful behavior, substance abuse, AND cognitive functioning.
6. Ensure the child's personal belongings, personal property, medical information, Child's Folder, and documents etc. are provided to COUNTY social worker at the time of discharge.
7. Ensure that the child's clothing is provided to the child on discharge and complete the final clothing inventory

III. CASE MANAGEMENT PRACTICE PROTOCOLS

| |
|-------------------|
| Case Plans |
|-------------------|

DCFS Responsibilities

1. Collaborate with the FFA social worker in the development of the needs and service plan.
2. Provide information on changes in treatment needs and service plan for the child and work with the FFA and foster parents to implement modified service plans.
3. Attach a copy of the FFA quarterly progress report using standardized assessment tools to the COUNTY Review of Dependency Status (RDS) report prior to the submission of the report to the juvenile court. .
4. Discuss possible modifications on request of the FFA social worker and work with the FFA to implement modified case plans as needed.

FFA Responsibilities

1. Provide services as described in the FFA's Program Statement and in compliance with Title 22 in the California Code of Regulations.
2. Provide quarterly reports to the DCFS social worker detailing the child's progress in his/her treatment plan and overall growth and development each quarter.
 - a. Quarterly reports shall coincide with the child's court review hearings.
 - b. Reports shall include the ACLSA-short assessment.
 - c. Reports shall utilize a standardized assessment tool, or, at a minimum, address the child's functioning according to the following domains: school, home, community, behavior towards others, mood/emotions, self-harmful behavior, substance use, cognitive functioning, etc.
 - d. Provide information regarding changes in the case plan and treatment needs and work with COUNTY to modify the treatment and case plans.
3. Work with COUNTY and the foster parents to implement COUNTY'S modified case plans and agree to discuss additional modifications on request of COUNTY social worker.

IV. CASE MANAGEMENT PRACTICE PROTOCOLS

| |
|--------------|
| Court |
|--------------|

Information from the FFA and foster parents is crucial to the court hearing process. COUNTY and FFA shall collaborate to ensure the inclusion of this information in the court reports. The foster family and FFA social worker are encouraged to attend court hearings.

DCFS Responsibilities

1. Send notice to the foster parents within 15 days prior to court hearing date.
2. Notice the FFA, foster parents and minor child of 10 years or older or his or her right to attend and participate in the scheduled court hearings.
3. Include FFA quarterly reports in court reports, as well as any other pertinent information provided by the FFA.
4. Prepare recommendations to the court and provide the FFA necessary and appropriate information for the care of the child.
5. Provide appropriate minute orders from the hearings. Examples of appropriate minute orders are those that indicate that the foster parent has been given the educational rights of the child, or can seek medical treatment.
6. Foster parents are encouraged to attend court hearings. However, COUNTY is prohibited from providing court reports to the foster parents or the agency.
7. Provide the foster family with the Child's Provider of Care Questionnaire by mail or hand delivery with the Notice of Hearing. Request the caregiver to complete the form and return by mail for inclusion in the Court Report.

FFA Responsibilities

1. Develop the needs and service plan in collaboration with the COUNTY social worker.
2. Return the Child's Provider of Care Questionnaire by mail in the self-addressed envelope provided within 7 days of receipt, and no later than 10 days prior to a hearing.
3. Bring their foster child, aged 10 years or older, if he/she would like to attend the hearing and/or not prohibit their foster child, aged 10 years or older, from attending a hearing if he/she wants to attend.
4. FFA and COUNTY social workers will consult, if necessary, prior to any court hearing where transportation is a concern.
5. Use the private District Attorney Court entrance and waiting room until such a time as supervised visitation orders are lifted.
6. Provide quarterly reports using a standardized assessment tool to the COUNTY social worker within 7 days of notice. Information pertinent to the child shall include at a minimum, the child's functioning according to the following domains: school, home, community, behavior towards others, mood/emotions, self-harmful behavior, substance use, cognitive functioning.

V. PARTNERSHIP SUPPORT PROTOCOLS

DCFS Responsibilities

1. Facilitate financial and operational audits as scheduled to assure program and fiscal integrity.
2. Provide an outcome report template to the FFA.
3. Schedule home visits to foster homes in advance with the FFA social worker to
 - a. Coordinate home visits with FFA and COUNTY social workers for foster parent convenience and
 - b. Ensure the family and child are at home for the visit.
4. COUNTY reserves the right to make unannounced home visits if there are concerns of safety or wellbeing. In such instances, the FFA social worker will be notified immediately following the visit, either by phone or e-mail to clearly outline the reason for the unplanned visit, and the results of the visit.

FFA Responsibilities

1. With notice, help facilitate the coordination of the home visits and to the extent possible, include the COUNTY social worker in visits to avoid multiple visits.
2. Permit unannounced visitation by DCFS social worker as needed.

VI. CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROTOCOLS

DCFS Responsibilities

1. Designate an FPR Liaison to act as a broker to the FFA to maintain ongoing communication and facilitate conflict and compliance resolution between COUNTY and FFA.
2. Notify the FFA of the assigned Liaison within 30 days of approval of the Master Agreement.
3. Coordinate and conduct a meeting with FFA to resolve any conflict between COUNTY and the FFA within 14 work days from date of request.
4. Coordinate and conduct meeting with FFA to resolve any compliance concerns brought forth by COUNTY or the FFA.
5. Establish reasonable corrective action plans to regain compliance status by either party.
6. Decline placements to, or remove from Master Agreement, any FFA failing to meet compliance or respond diligently to corrective action plans.

FFA Responsibilities

1. Alert any or all COUNTY staff, COUNTY social worker, COUNTY supervisor, and/or FPR Liaison, of compliance issues or conflict concerns.
2. Attend any and all meetings scheduled by FPR Liaison to resolve compliance or conflict concerns.
3. Cooperate with FPR Liaison in developing reasonable corrective action plans, as needed.
4. Comply with completion of approved corrective action plan.

VII. ADMINSTRATIVE PRACTICE AND PROTOCOLS

Shared Responsibilities

1. County and FFA will work together to maintain compliance with practice and regulatory requirements to include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Community Care Licensing (California Code of Regulations, Title 22).
 - b. California Department of Social Services, Foster Care Rates Bureau.
 - c. California Department of Social Services, Manual of Policy and Procedures, Division 31, Child Welfare Services Regulations.
 - d. Educational legislation pertaining to foster youth, including but not limited, to Assembly Bill 490 – (Steinberg 2003-2004).
 - e. The Foster Care Non-Discrimination Act (Assembly Bill 458).
 - f. Foster Youth Rights including but not limited to AB 899 (2001)
<http://www.fosteryouthhelp.ca.gov/publications.htm>
2. Release of Information:

A release of information form will be completed by each foster home for licensing or certification history. The County and FFA will share information with each other according to the provisions of the release prior to the certification.

COUNTY Responsibilities

1. Share information with FFA as required pursuant to California Welfare Institutions Code Section 827.
2. Return phone calls from FFA staff and foster parents within 24 hours.
3. File documentation received from FFA in appropriate case file within 30 days of receipt.
4. Provide the FFA an employee roster quarterly that includes social worker name, telephone number, and County email address beginning January 10, 2010 no later than the 15th of each quarter.
5. Develop a curriculum specifically to address parenting techniques for children ages 0-6.
6. Notify FFA of training opportunities that may impact FFA. This shall include but be not limited to infant mental health, 0-6, Ages and Stages Questionnaire, Permanency Teaming.
7. Foster Family Decertification and “Rollovers”
 - a. If a family decertifies with one FFA to join another FFA (rolling over), with or without dependent children, the COUNTY FPR Liaison will coordinate and conduct a meeting with the COUNTY social worker, current FFA, prospective or new FFA, and foster parents.
 - b. For families with placed children, the COUNTY has discretion to, but does not guarantee, continued placement with the family “rolling over.”
 - c. For families with placed children who intend to decertify and NOT join another FFA, the COUNTY FPR Liaison will coordinate and conduct a meeting with the COUNTY social worker, current FFA and foster parents to discuss the best interest of the child prior to removal of said child.

VII. ADMINSTRATIVE PRACTICE AND PROTOCOLS (Con't)

FFA Responsibilities

1. Provide the COUNTY with information updates on its certified family homes (i.e. , telephone numbers, and composition of the home).
2. Identify one or more target group in their respective program statements and recruit families to serve that group of children. Changes in program statements will be sent to the FPR liaison via email to FosterParentResour@co.fresno.ca.us within 30 days from change of program statement.
3. Require foster families who have children between the ages of 0-6 to attend additional specialized training. Additional training hours to be determined by the COUNTY.
4. Provide training on the Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale (CAFAS) to FFA social workers. Information regarding the CAFAS Training Guide and Assessment Tool can be accessed via the Internet at <http://www.cafas.com>.
5. Maintain licensure in good standing in accordance with all State requirements, including all applicable statues and regulations.
6. Foster Family Decertification and "Rollover"
 - a. Notify FFA foster parent that they can not "roll over" with any child without approval by COUNTY.
 - b. Notify FPR Liaison within 60 days upon knowledge of, or a request of, any foster parent who currently has a foster child, to roll over to another agency. The current FFA will attend a meeting with COUNTY, prospective FFA, and foster parents to discuss the best interest of the child. COUNTY will have discretion to determine appropriate or continued placement with the family.
 - c. Notify FPR Liaison within 60 days prior to any foster parent decertification. To ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of the child is met, provide a synopsis to COUNTY of foster family seeking decertification. COUNTY will have full discretion to determine appropriate or continued placement with foster family.
 - d. Submit monthly a listing of decertified families. The monthly listing shall be sent to the Foster Parent Resource Unit via email to FosterParentResour@co.fresno.ca.us no later than the 10th day of each month. The report shall list the names of the decertified families as well as the reasons they decertified.
 - e. Submit monthly a listing of certified families accepted having previously decertified from other agencies to the COUNTY via email, at the address above.

| |
|--|
| Payments/Underpayments/Overpayment Prevention, Collection and Redistribution of Foster Care Funds |
|--|

PAYMENTS

The Fresno County Department of Employment and Temporary Assistance (E&TA) is the agency responsible for the determination and issuance of foster care benefits for dependents or wards of the Superior Court of Fresno County, Juvenile Court Division. In this role, E&TA is committed to timely determination of Title IV-E foster care eligibility, Adoption Assistance, and/or other State or County funded foster care reimbursement to the foster care provider. .

All foster care placements will be paid in arrears, for the prior month (i.e., foster care grant will be received by March 15th for services provided in February).

COUNTY Responsibilities

Department of Employment and Temporary Assistance (E&TA)

1. Issue payment for placement of Juvenile Wards or Dependents in such a manner that the FFA will be issued AFDC-FC check(s) on the 10th of each month to be received no later than the 15th day of the calendar month.
2. On receipt of appropriate documentation, determine the eligibility of a minor within the first 45 days of detention, barring unforeseen delays.
3. Issue payment for child's initial placement within 45 days. Payment at that time will be retroactive to the first date of placement.

Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)

1. Ensure that placement documents (i.e. placement agreement, SOC 158 form) are completed with the approved foster family agency AFDC-FC rate, as established by California Department of Social Services.
2. Provide documents within 48 hours to the E&TA Department foster care eligibility unit.
3. Complete and sign the placement agreement documentation, to include the state approved AFDC-FC rate.
4. Maintain telecommunication resources, including a dedicated phone line with voice mail and a dedicated fax machine located in the Foster Parent Resources Unit, to assist the FFA in reporting any placement changes.
5. Report to the E&TA Department any changes to the status of the child.

FFA Responsibilities

1. Notify DCFS via email at FosterParentResour@co.fresno.ca.us within 10 working days if there is a change in rate (either increase or decrease).
2. Notify DCFS within 24 hours when a child has left the FFA. This includes voluntary or involuntary termination of services and when a child runs away. If the child has run away, the FFA must also alert law enforcement.
3. E-mail E&TA at ETAFosterCarePlaceme@co.fresno.ca.us when a child moves or the level of care changes. Said email will include the child's name and birth date.

VII. ADMINSTRATIVE PRACTICE AND PROTOCOLS (Con't)

Over (Under) Payments

1. County and FFA mutually agree that an overpayment occurs when the FFA receives foster care funds to which they are not entitled.
2. It is further agreed that funds issued resulting in an over (or under) payment are client specific and may not be used to offset over or under payments for services to a different client.
3. An overpayment occurs in the following ways:
 - a. There is a computation error, e.g. number of days paid.
 - b. The incorrect rate is paid (higher or lower).
 - c. Foster family does not advise DCFS and ET& A within 24 hours of a run-away or emergency placement move.
 - d. The DCFS Social worker does not advise ET & A of a reported change in client placement status within 24 hours.

E & TA Responsibilities

1. E & TA shall inform DCFS of FFA overpayments.
2. E & TA will work with DCFS to create and institute a payment tracking system.

DCFS Responsibilities

1. On notification by E & TA, inform FFA of the overpayment, indicating the nature of the payment error, days over/under paid, and any amount to be returned to the County.
2. Communicate to ETA the FFA response and plan to correct the overpayment.
3. Work with the FFA to remedy the situation within 45 days.

FFA Responsibilities

1. If the FFA identifies that an overpayment has occurred prior to receiving notice of overpayment from the COUNTY, the FFA will return incorrect checks to:
 - a. Fresno County Department of Employment & Temporary Assistance, Attention: E&TA Fiscal/Commissary Building, P.O. Box 1912, Fresno, CA 93718-1912, Attention: Social Services Accounts Receivable; or
 - b. In person to the E&TA Fiscal Department located at 4449 E. Kings Canyon, Commissary Building, 1st Floor.

Note: If FFA returns full check to E&TA Fiscal/Commissary prior to receiving overpayment notification from the COUNTY, the response time to reissue the correct check should occur promptly.

2. If the FFA receives and cashes a check to which it is not entitled, all or a portion thereof, the FFA agrees to reimburse the COUNTY all such amounts. The FFA agrees to repay the COUNTY in full within 30 days of FFA discovering, or being notified by the COUNTY, of such overpayment.
3. On receipt of notice from the COUNTY that an over or under payment has occurred, the FFA has 90 days to appeal per the conditions outlined on the Notice of Action.
4. On receipt of an under payment the FFA has 90 days to appeal per the conditions outlined on the Notice of Action.