

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

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Issue 22-12 (REV)

Date: 6/3/22

RESOURCE FAMILY APPROVAL (RFA) EMERGENCY CAPACITY INCREASES

This is to clarify the process for making emergency placements for new children or youth into a County approved Resource Family Home (RFH) that is currently at capacity. The placing Children's Social Worker (CSW) may seek an emergency capacity increase in order to keep siblings together or to place children with relatives or non-related extended family members (NREFMs). In order to comply with the law and the best interests of the child(ren), a process has been designed to enable DCFS social workers to seek emergency approval to increase capacity of existing approved RFHs.

When a family is Resource Family Approved (RFA), a RFA Certificate (RFA 05A) is issued which indicates the total capacity of how many children may reside in the home. Children are allowed to be placed in the home on an emergency basis even if it exceeds the family's capacity, as long as there is a "compelling reason", such as keeping siblings together or placing in a relative's home.

A RFH may request that their home be placed on inactive status for up to two-years if they are not caring for a child. While under inactive status, the RFH is not eligible to provide foster care and is not subject to RFA requirements. In such situations, there is no Resource Family Support (RFS) CSW assigned to the case. There are occasions that an RFH in inactive status wants to return to active status to care for a relative or NREFM. RFA Written Directives allow a child to be placed with a relative, non-related extended family member (NREFM), or a Resource Family 'who is considered critical to the best interest of the child', while on inactive status. However, the Written Directives require the County immediately initiate an update to ensure the home meets RFA requirements. Therefore, the placing CSW should contact RFS Division as described below to coordinate the placement and temporarily lift the hold on CWS/CMS.

Process: To make the request to have a child(ren) placed in the home on an emergency basis that requires either a capacity increase or reactivate an Inactive Hold the placing CSW must (1) verify there are no safety risks in the home, (2) request approval from their Supervising Children's Social Worker (SCSW) for the child that needs placement, (3) complete the [Emergency Request to Change RFA Capacity or Reactivate an Inactive RFA Home](#) form, and (4) submit the form to the RFS Division Inbox at RFSPD@dcfs.lacounty.gov (DCFS has two divisions involved with RFHs: Resource Family Approval, which works with families pre-approval, and Resource Family Support (RFS), which works with RFH after approval; Capacity increases are handled by RFS Division.) Once the form is received and no safety risks have been identified, the RFS Division SCSW will temporarily change the capacity to accommodate the child(ren) and notify the placing CSW or SCSW that the capacity has been changed. The RFS Division will respond as soon as possible, but no later than the next business day. The child can physically be placed prior to RFS Division changing the capacity on CWS/CMS, but the placement paperwork will not be able to be generated.



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The placing SCSW may then authorize the Technical Assistant (TA) to create placement documents and obtain MediCal benefits for the child/ren. Placement documents should be generated within 24 hours of hold being lifted, and the hold will be reinstated thereafter.

The RFS CSW then has 30 days to assess the home to determine if the capacity increase can remain. If the assessment finds that RFS cannot approve the capacity increase due to safety reasons, the child(ren) may need to be replaced. The physical capacity of the home shall not be the sole reason to deny placement of a sibling group if each child in the home has an age-appropriate place to sleep and there are no other safety risks.

If the court orders emergency placement of a child or children into an Resource Family Home that will exceed the capacity, the placing CSW must make a request for an emergency RFA capacity increase to the RFS Division Inbox (RFSPD@dcfs.lacounty.gov) within 1 business day. After sending the e-mail, the placing CSW should also contact the assigned RFS CSW and RFS SCSW as identified on CWS/CMS; see FYI 18-19 on how to find the assigned RFS CSW.

Requesting an Emergency RFA Capacity Increase prior to placement

If the placing CSW knows ahead of time that placement may be needed in a home that is inactive or does not have enough capacity, a request for an Emergency RFA Capacity Increase may be made to the RFS Division Inbox (RFSPD@dcfs.lacounty.gov) using the attached request form ([Emergency Request to Change RFA Capacity or Reactivate an Inactive RFA Home](#)). The RFS Division will respond as soon as possible, but no later than the next business day.

Requesting an update when there is a change in circumstances on an RFA approved home

CSWs visiting RFA homes may note new circumstances, which require an update to the RFA assessment. Such changes include a new non-dependent child or adult living in the home, moving to a new address, or other change in circumstance affecting the household or RFA status. When new circumstances are noted, the CSW should submit the new information to the RFS Division Inbox (RFSPD@dcfs.lacounty.gov). The RFS CSW will be alerted and work to complete the RFA Update.

Q&A:

How do I Determine if the Home is RFA Approved?

- Have your Technical Assistant look in CWS/CMS Resource Management to see who the RFA/RFS CSW is for the Resource Family Home and verify with that assigned worker the status of the home.
- Call the **DCFS Caregiver WarmLine** at (877) 323-7165 or by email at warmline@dcfs.lacounty.gov between the hours of 1pm to 11pm and provide the RFA number or Caregiver's Name/Address to verify if this home is RFA approved.

How Do I Find the Resource Family Support Worker for a Family?



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- Approved RFA homes with children in the home are monitored and updated by RFS CSWs. Please refer to [FYI 18-19 Supporting Resource Families](#) for instructions on looking up the RFS CSW.
- The RFA family may contact the **DCFS Caregiver WarmLine** at (877) 323-7165 to ask for general afterhours assistance or for help in obtaining contact information for their Resource Family Support CSW

My Technical Assistant (TA) is Unable to Create/Print a Placement Packet to Add Another Child into this RFA Approved Home.

- Office TAs **will not be able** to create a Placement Packet if the capacity of an RFA home is exceeded. There are no exceptions to this.
- The placing CSW may make a request to the RFS Inbox (RFSPD@dcfs.lacounty.gov) for a temporary capacity increase to make an emergency placement using the [Emergency Request to Change RFA Capacity or Reactivate an Inactive RFA Home](#) form.
- The placing CSWs are encouraged to request an RFA capacity increase in advance, whenever possible, so that a Resource Family Support CSW may initiate this request within five days and work to complete an emergency capacity increase assessment. Once there has been a temporary capacity increase for emergency placement or the RFA home has been updated and is approved for a capacity increase, then a placement packet may be processed. TAs should not be creating new homes, which will cause duplicate homes in the system.

What do I need to do to request an update on an RFA home that is Out of County?

- Follow the same process above to request a capacity increase for an approved Out of County RFA home. If Los Angeles County is the supervising agency, the RFS Division will update the home. If another County has authority over the home, then the RFS Out of County (OOC) liaison will forward the request to the supervising county.

Additional Policies and FYIs Related to RFA Placements

- [FYI 19-28: BACKGROUND CHECKS AND INITIAL HOME INSPECTION PRIOR TO EMERGENCY PLACEMENT WITH RELATIVES/NREFMs](#) (Issue Date 8/30/19) provides procedures for ER/CSW about the need to conduct and document background checks, and the initial home inspections prior to emergency placements of children when placing a child in the home of a relative or NREFM.
- [Policy #0100-520.05: PLACEMENT PRIOR TO RESOURCE FAMILY APPROVAL](#) reviews the process for an emergency placement or a placement based on a compelling reason with relatives and nonrelative family members.
- **California State CDSS RFA Written Directives, Version 7.0 (Section 9-02): Update of Resource Family Approval**
 - (a) At least once every 24 months a County shall update the approval of a Resource Family



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(b) A County shall complete an update for a Resource Family, as specified in Subsection (d), when any of the following occur:

- (1) A significant change has occurred in the Resource Family Circumstances, as determined by a County.
 - (A) An update due to a significant change shall begin within 30 calendar days of a County's knowledge of the change.
- (2) Relocation to a new home.
 - (A) A County shall begin an update to the Resource Family's approval within 30 calendar days of being notified that the Resource Family has moved.
- (3) A Resource Family who is approved for a specific child or non-minor dependent requests to care for additional children or non-minor dependent.
 - (A) A County shall begin an update specified in paragraph (5) within five business days of the placement of another child or non-minor dependent.
- (4) A Resource Family request to end inactive status pursuant to Section 10-02(e) or (f).
 - (A) A County shall complete an update to end inactive status within 30 calendar days of the placement, unless good cause exists, pursuant to Section 10-02(d). (i) If good cause exists, a County shall document the reasons for the delay beyond the 30 calendar days and generate a timeframe for completion of the update.
 - (B) If the request to end inactive status is pursuant to Section 10-02(e), a County shall initiate a home health and safety assessment pursuant to Section 6-02(a)(2) within 5 calendar days of the placement and complete an update within 30 calendar days of the placement, unless good cause exists. (i) If good cause exists, a County shall document the reasons for the delay beyond the 30 calendar days and generate a timeframe for completion of the update.
- (5) It has been 24 months since the Resource Family was approved and no updates as specified in paragraphs (1-4), or Sections 9-03 and 9-04 have been completed since their date of approval; or it has been 24 months since any type of update (regardless of their approval date), as described in paragraphs (1-4), or Section 9-03 and 9-04 has been completed.
 - (A) A 24-month update shall be completed no sooner than 60 calendar days prior to the 24-month due date and no later than 30 calendar days after the 24-month due date.

RESOURCES: DCFS Caregiver WarmLine phone number: **877-DCFS-165** or (877) 323-7165 (or by email: warmline@dcsf.lacounty.gov)

FORM: [Emergency Request to Change RFA Capacity or Reactivate an Inactive RFA Home](#)



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