



# FOR YOUR INFORMATION

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Issue 26-09

Date: 06/09/2026

## SPECIAL PLACEMENTS – POLICY & USE OF DCFS 4213/4213-A

This FYI is a reminder to Children’s Social Workers (CSWs), Supervising Children’s Social Workers (SCSWs), Assistant Regional Administrators (ARAs) and other required approvers regarding the requirements for requesting or approving Special Placements in accordance with [DCFS Policy 0100-510.35](#), Special Placements policy.

A *Special Placement* refers to a non-contracted Group Home (GH), Small Family Home (SFH), Regional Center vendorized home, licensed adult facility, Foster Family Agency (FFA), or specialized treatment/residential/in-patient facility identified as necessary to meet the unique needs of a child.

### Key Reminders:

- Exhaust Contracted Resources First: Contracted resources must be explored and exhausted first through the [Centralized Placement Program \(CPP\)](#). Documentation must clearly demonstrate that an extensive search was completed and that no appropriate contracted placement exists to meet the child’s needs. CSWs’ case notes/contacts and documentation may be attached to submission to demonstrate the exhaustive search for suitable placement without success and that the proposed special placement is the only appropriate placement that exists to meet the child’s specific needs.
- All Special Placements require completion and approval of the [DCFS 4213, Special Placement – OR – 1-on-1 Services Request](#) (or [DCFS 4213-A](#), Special Placements for Fost-Adopt/Pre Adoptive Placement for Fost-Adopt/Pre-Adopt). Complete all applicable areas of the DCFS 4213 (or DCFS 4213-A for Fost-Adopt) thoroughly including: Section F – how placement meets the special needs of the child, all current efforts exhausted to locate placement, and ensure document is signed by all required parties.
- **DCFS Medical Director pre-approval** is required for inpatient facilities; for University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) Neuropsychiatric Institute (NPI), court approval must follow Medical Director’s review.
- For non-contracted GHs / SFHs, the [DCFS 6082 Special Placement Agreement](#) must also be signed before placement.
- Attach the most current required supporting documents if available: [Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths \(CANS\) Assessment](#), Qualified Individual (QI) Assessment, Needs and Services Plan (NSP), Placement Planning and Intervention Meeting (PPIM), Level Up and the Education section, Individualized Educational Plan (IEP), Regional Center letters, Supplemental Security Income (SSI) status (if 16.5+), medical/psych evals, [Child and Family Teams \(CFT\)](#) notes, and last transition/exit plan from previous placement.
- Most Special Placements are approved for 3 to **6 months** and may not exceed **12 months** (except Regional Center/specialized).



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- Renewals require a new DCFS 4213 and a CFT meeting (before expiration). Documentation must be submitted at minimum two weeks in advance for processing to avoid overpayment once the DCFS 4213 expires.
- All youth placed in Out-of-Home Care, including youth placed in non-contracted GHs, Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Programs (STRTPs), and SFHs must be informed of their [Foster Youth Bill of Rights](#), as well as their right to contact the [Auditor-Controller's Group Home Ombudsperson](#) and given contact information.
- CSWs must complete a facility/home safety assessment prior to placement and on a monthly basis continuously assess for safety, quality of care, and service delivery.
- CSWs must review iTrack reports and request a Needs and Services Plan for each child placed, which describes the child's service needs completed by the SFH provider.
- CSWs must transition children to contracted placements when available and as soon as possible in the best interest of the placed child. (It is recommended that the non-contracted placements have an increased program oversight by Regional Staff and a strong partnership with any applicable Team and CFT while the youth is placed.)

For assistance with completing the DCFS 4213/DCFS 4213-A, please utilize the [Special Placement \(DCFS 4213\) Desk Guide for CSWs](#), [Small Family Home Approval Process attachment](#) and/or contact the **DCFS 4213 Desk** at [DCFS OHCD4213](#).

Attachments:

[Special Placement \(DCFS 4213\) Desk Guide for CSWs](#)

[Small Family Home Approval Process attachment](#)

If you have any questions regarding this release, please email your question to:  
[Policy@dcfs.lacounty.gov](mailto:Policy@dcfs.lacounty.gov)