

# Foster Family Home/Facility Vacancy Search: Foster Care Search System (FCSS) **Auto 280**

E090-0580 | Revision Date: 01/28/22

## Overview

This policy guide provides instruction for conducting vacancy searches in the Foster Care Search System (FCSS).

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### [Policy](#)

[Foster Care Search System \(FCSS\) Auto 280](#)

### [Procedure](#)

[Conducting a Vacancy Search](#)

[TA/EW Responsibilities](#)

[Eligibility Supervisor or Designee Responsibilities](#)

## Version Summary

This policy guide was reformatted from the 05/01/2015 version, as part of the Foster Care Eligibility Policy Redesign. It has been updated to clarify current practice and the title has been changed to: Foster Family Home/Facility Vacancy Search: Foster Care Search System (FCSS) Auto 280.

## POLICY

### **Foster Care Search System (FCSS) Auto 280**

To assist with locating potential placement homes/facilities that have a vacancy, the Department has developed a software application called the Foster Care Search System (FCSS) **and Auto 280**. The FCSS is accessed through LA Kids and provides the user with an easily accessible and user friendly application to aid in locating potential placement options for children in need of out-of-home placement. **For more information, access the [FCSS Training Resources](#) on the [FCSS Logon Page](#).**

The Technical Assistant Eligibility Worker (TA/EW) is assigned the task to complete searches, which provide the CSW with a selection of potential placement homes/facilities. The Children's Services Worker (CSW) will provide the Technical Assistant Eligibility Supervisor (ES) with the FCSS **Auto 280**, Technical Assistant Action Request, which provides the TA/EW the search criteria to be used when looking for a potential placement.

[Back to Policy](#)  
[Back to Top](#)

# PROCEDURE

To receive FCSS Alerts, Outlook email must be open.

## Conducting a Vacancy Search

### TA/EW Responsibilities

1. Upon receipt of an Auto 280 email requesting a search take the following steps:
  - a. Click on the Foster Care Search System (FCSS) link in the email.
    - i. Log-in to open the Assignment
2. Review the specifics of the type of placement requested for the child and if there are any areas where clarification is needed, clarify with the CSW/SCSW prior to beginning the search.
3. Conduct the Search by selecting the "Search for Homes" tab located at the bottom of the screen.
4. In the Search Results screen document your efforts in locating a placement and that you have provided the CSW with potential placement openings.
  - Per departmental standards: Fifteen (15) placement homes/facilities or until the need is met, based on vacancy availability on the FCSS.
  - a. After making contact with the caregiver, document this in FCSS:
    - i. Click on the blue highlighted "Edit" button and select the appropriate choice from the down menu, (for example: A Possible Match, etc.)
    - ii. Add information in the Additional Notes section and click on the blue highlighted "Update" button.
    - iii. Select a possible match, and the possible matches table will be populated.
    - iv. To continue this placement search and document the efforts made, utilize the process outlined above.
      - As soon as it is known that a hard-to-place child will be needing placement and the child is already in the regional office, the CSW may also notify the Accelerated Placement Team (APT) no earlier than 2pm and they will add their search efforts to those of the TA/EW. For children known to be difficult to place and who need placement/replacement but who are not in the office, the CSW may also notify APT to assist the regional TA/EW in search efforts at any time. All emergency placement searches received after 5:00pm will be referred to APT/ERCP by the CSW.
      - The TA/EW cannot provide further information regarding child characteristics, other than what the CSW has provided on the

FCSS DCFS 280. If the caregiver requests further information, advise them to contact the CSW for child specific information.

- It is the Department's policy that the maximum number of children placed in one foster family home/facility cannot exceed six, including their biological and adopted children. In addition, there cannot be more than two children with a specialized care increment. Under certain circumstances, there may be exceptions i.e., sibling placements.
  - Due to the limited number of homes/facilities that can care for children with special needs or older foster youth, finding 15 potential placement homes/facilities is often not possible. The TA/EW will closely work with the CSW to modify the search criteria or when a home/facility for this population is located and provides them with information as soon as possible. This may include when only 1 (one) possible vacancy is located as these types of homes/facilities are much in demand and quickly filled. This does not mean that the TA/EW will stop when one (1) home/facility is located; they will continue to find additional homes/facilities, based on availability, until the list is exhausted or the CSW indicates that there is no further need to continue the search.
5. Once you have located a suitable list of possible placements with vacancies, click on the TA/EW Summary button. This takes you to the Search Efforts Summary page where you click the Complete Request button. A green banner indicates you completed the request; it indicates that an email was sent to the CSW and SCSW for placement home selection.
6. If unable to find fifteen (15) potential placement homes/facilities, notify the CSW to modify the search criteria.
- a. Using the modified search criteria, as each matching home/facility is found, immediately send the information to the CSW.
7. No more than seventy-two (72) business hours from the time you gave the CSW the potential placement information; contact the CSW to find out if any of the placement options were a good match for the child.
- a. If the CSW was able to place the child in one of the homes/facilities, the search request will end when the CSW submits the placement packet request.
  - b. If the CSW indicates that they were not able to utilize any of the homes/facilities you provided, request a return of the FCSS DCFS 280 and continue to search for additional placement homes/facilities. (Follow above steps to continue searching).

## **Eligibility Supervisor (ES) or Designee Responsibilities**

1. Within one (1) hour of receipt of an Auto 280 requesting a search, review and assign. Office Protocols regarding coverage apply when full staffing is not available. For example, the ES will inform the Assistant Regional Administrator (ARA) that there are not enough TA/EWs to conduct the requested search(es). An ARA from the office needing help will assess with the ES if there are local resources that can assist in the search, and if not, then the ARA will contact an ARA in another office (same SPA *spell out*) to request assistance on a temporary basis.

[Back to Procedure](#)  
[Back to Top](#)