

# Due Diligence Procedures

C300-121 | Revision Date: 06/04/2025

## Overview

This policy provides procedures for staff conducting due diligence searches to locate the current whereabouts and/or identity of a parent/legal guardian.

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## Version Summary

This policy guide was updated from the 06/14/2001 version, to incorporate current practice utilized by Due Diligence Search Clerks (DDSC), Adoption Assistants (AA), and Dependency Investigation Assistants (DIA), when conducting due diligence searches for a parent or legal guardian whose whereabouts and/or identity are unknown; as well as when creating the Declaration of Due Diligence.

## POLICY

A **Declaration of** Due Diligence report documents the systematic effort made by the Department of Children and Family Services to locate a parent(s) or legal guardian(s) whose whereabouts and/or identity are unknown. A due diligence ensures that all legal

notice requirements are met and helps ensure that child welfare services are provided in accordance with the law.

DDSCs, AAs, and DIAs are responsible for processing the [DCFS 136, Search Request](#).

The Declaration of Due Diligence document is only valid for six (6) months from the date that the search was initiated. Any submission after six (6) months is not valid and will not be accepted or found complete by the court.

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## PROCEDURE

### Searching to Locate Parents or Guardians Whose Whereabouts and/or Identity are Unknown

#### Due Diligence Search Clerk (DDSC)/Adoptions Assistant (AA)/Dependency Investigation Assistant (DIA) Responsibilities

1. Receive the DCFS 136 from the CSW.
2. Review the form to ensure that it has all relevant information in order to complete a thorough search.
  - a. If information is missing that can be obtained from CWS/CMS, access the case and retrieve the information necessary to complete the form and the search.
  - b. If information is missing that only the CSW can provide, contact the CSW and request the needed information.
3. Access CWS/CMS and the case's Document Tracking Page; document the date the DCFS 136 was received.
4. Complete the following searches, and document them in the CWS/CMS Search Log and Declaration of Due Diligence:
  - Department of Justice (DOJ) CLETS
  - [Department of Motor Vehicles \(DMV\) Clearance](#)
  - Registrar of Voters
  - [Postmaster](#)
  - [Military Service](#)
  - Jail Clearance (For all seven (7) Contiguous Southern California Counties)
  - Probation Index
    - All due diligence support staff that need to obtain Adult Probation information, must call their request to the Probation Information Center:
      - (866) 931-2222 during business hours (8:00 am to 5:00 pm)
      - (323) 226-8506 after hours (outside business hours)

- All clerks and staff needing Probation information must first log into FCI (Family and Children's Index) and establish a security question. (The establishment of a security question is only done once, initially when FCI access is given).
  - Probation staff will ask the caller for their FCI security question to verify the caller's identity. After verifying identity, Probation staff will provide the information being requested.
  - If unable to obtain the information by telephone, locate and download the [DCFS 4389-1, Declaration in Support of Access to Probation Records](#).
- State Prison/Parole Index
  - If the parent or legal guardian is detained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), use the [Online Detainee Locator System](#) or call ICE Detention Reporting and Info Line at (888)351-4024. You must have the person's A-Number (nine-digit identification number assigned by immigration) or the first and last name, date of birth and the country of birth.
  - If the missing parent or legal guardian is incarcerated in a California state prison, contact the following and provide all known information on the parent or legal guardian, including their full name and date of birth and/or the CDCR number:
    - [Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department-Inmate Information Center](#) or call (213)473-6080
    - [California State Department of Corrections Identification](#) or call 916-445-6713.
      - Verify the location of the parent/guardian.
  - [Federal Prison Record Check](#)
  - [CalSAWS/LEADER Replacement System \(LRS\)](#)
  - Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS)
  - Receipt of the child's birth certificate and/or Vital Statistics Inquiry (VSI)
  - [California Department of Child Support Services Statewide System \(CCSAS\)](#)
  - [Global Locate](#) (also known as Aristotle or GovernmentRecords.com)
  - Use of Technology, including use of [Social Media](#)
  - [Online Telephone Directory or Information](#)
  - [CLEAR](#)
  - [Los Angeles Superior Court Portal \(JPP\)/JV-140](#) (AA/DIA only)
  - Send Contact Letters

## **Documenting Search Efforts**

### **Due Diligence Search Clerk (DDSC)/Adoptions Assistant (AA)/Dependency Investigation Assistant (DIA) Responsibilities**

1. Document search efforts and results in CWS/CMS, on the case's Search Log Page. Provide the following information in the specified fields:

- a. Description
  - Enter a description of the search conducted. For example, “Searched the New York City telephone directory” or “Request for records.”
- b. Results
  - **Enter** a description of the results of the search. For example, “No record found” or “The search revealed the following information” (**enter** information found).
- c. NOTE: The CWS/CMS Search Log Page does not include a drop-down menu choice for all specified search areas. For these searches, use the menu choice of “Other Search Sources.”

## **Reviewing and Creating the Declaration of Due Diligence**

### Due Diligence Search Clerk (DDSC)/Adoptions Assistant (AA)/Dependency Investigation Assistant (DIA) Responsibilities

1. Prior to creating the Declaration of Due Diligence, review the Search Log Page to ensure that all search efforts have been documented. If necessary, update the Search Log Page. This will ensure that the fields populated by the database will be accurate.
2. Review the online case record to ensure that all identifying information including names, addresses, and court information are recorded and current.
3. Ensure that only current (i.e., no older than six months) search efforts are displayed on the Search Log Page. The information documented on the Search Log Page will populate into the “Search Efforts” section of the Declaration of Due Diligence document.
  - NOTE: If new information is added to the Search Log Page after the Declaration of Due Diligence is created, that information will not populate into that document. In order for that information to populate, remove and recreate the Declaration Regarding Due Diligence.
4. Create the Declaration of Due Diligence document.
5. Complete all appropriate fields on the Declaration of Due Diligence, not populated by the database. Provide the following information in the indicated fields:
  - a. Search Identifiers/Parameters: Provide the name(s) and job title of all individual(s) who conducted any of the searches displayed in the Due Diligence Search document.
    - i. Enter: “The following individual(s) conducted one or more of the searches listed below.”
  - b. Summary: Enter a brief summary of the search results.
    - i. For example, “The above-cited search efforts to locate (enter person’s name) were not successful. The parent’s/legal guardian’s whereabouts remain unknown.”
    - ii. Successful example: “The above-cited search efforts located (enter parent’s/legal guardian’s name) at (enter complete address). (Enter

parent's/legal guardian's name) was notified by (enter means of notification, e.g., in-person, telephone, mail, etc.) of the legal status of his or her child(ren) and the date, time and place of today's hearing."

6. Review the Declaration of Due Diligence for accuracy and completeness.
  - a. If the data elements are not accurate, update as needed.
7. Below the "I declare under penalty of perjury..." signature block, type a sentence indicating the search source numbers that correspond to the searches you conducted.
  - Example:
    - I conducted the following searches: 1-5, 8 and 10.
    - If more than two staff members conducted one or more of the search efforts, copy and paste additional signature blocks as needed.
8. **Print** the Declaration of Due Diligence document.
9. **Sign** the Declaration of Due Diligence document.
10. **Submit** the signed hard copy of the Declaration of Due Diligence and all supporting documents (e.g., search results) to the CSW.

## Assembling the Due Diligence Folder

The Search Folder (gray) must contain a separate Due Diligence Folder for each absent parent.

### Due Diligence Search Clerk (DDSC)/Adoptions Assistant (AA)/Dependency Investigation Assistant (DIA) Responsibilities

1. File the following documents in the Due Diligence Folder:
  - a. Copies of the DCFS 136, letters and forms sent (left side)
  - b. Search results and replies received (right side)
  - c. Copies of the Declaration of Due Diligence (right side)

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## APPROVALS

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None

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## HELPFUL LINKS

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### Forms

CWS/CMS

Search Log Page

Declaration of Due Diligence  
Document Tracking Page

LA Kids

[DCFS 136](#), Due Diligence Search Request

[DCFS 142](#), Postmaster

[DCFS 230](#), Request for Verification/Certificate of Evidence

Hard Copy

DCFS 9-6, Search Folder

## **Referenced Policy Guides**

[0300-306.75](#), Due Diligence

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