

Case Management

Permanency and Administrative Staffings, Changes in Legal Case Plan Goal

Section 100

Policy Number 034

Origination Date 12/01/03

Revision Date 5/22/14, 6/3/24

Regulation FAC 65C-28.006

Attachments KFF Permanency Staffing Form

Policy It is the policy of Kids First of Florida, Inc. (KFF) to seek and focus on permanence for children in out-of-home care. This means carefully considering and monitoring the conditions for return and legal case plan goal of the child as changes in the child's circumstances and changes in the parents' behavior and case plan compliance warrant, legally changing that goal when it appears to be in the best interest of the child to do so. KFF will create formal opportunities where dialog regarding the conditions for return, legal goal and progress of the parents in working toward that goal/behavior change may occur. KFF will remain in continual contact with Legal Services, in order to properly notify the Court of such changes. To ensure this policy is carried out, the following procedure is in effect.

Procedure

1. Conditions for return, legal goals and progress toward meeting goals, i.e., behavior change, will be monitored throughout the life of a case by the Family Services Counselor (FSC) and FSC Supervisor.
2. When a decision is made not to return a child home, The Florida Safe Families Network (FSFN) will contain an explanation and justification for the selection of an alternate method of achieving permanence and evidence of the efforts to meet Conditions for Return/reunification.
3. Permanency for the child, as required by statute, should be achieved within 12 months of child being sheltered or case initiation.
4. Supervisory dialog will occur regarding permanency at least every 90 days, or more often as indicated, through the completion and approval of a Progress Update and Supervisor Consultation to assess the parent(s) protective capacities, home environment and backgrounds.
5. Within 10 business days of starting a Progress Update to reunify, the FSC will update local criminal history checks, including required fingerprint submission for any household members 18 years of age or older.
6. The FSC shall have ongoing communication with the caregivers regarding services and benefits available to children and families with the goal of permanent guardianship.

Permanency Staffings –

1. Regularly scheduled permanency staffings provide a venue for discussing the goal(s) and progress or lack thereof. The first permanency staffing will occur 5 months after shelter or case initiation, with ongoing staffings occurring every three or six months

**Case Management
Permanency and Administrative Staffings,
Changes in Legal Case Plan Goal**

**Section 100
Policy Number 034**

depending on the child's legal status/goal.

2. Staffings will be held prior to judicial reviews and permanency hearings so information shared at the staffing can become part of the judicial review/permanency report.
3. The FSC shall assess for Conditions for Return at every staffing and hearing and on an on-going basis throughout the life of the case.
4. The Progress Update and Permanency Staffing form will be used during the Permanency Staffing.
5. Permanency staffings will be scheduled by the KFF Permanency Staffing coordinator or designee and that schedule will be provided to all parties, including but not limited to parents, attorneys, KFF staff, Guardian Ad Litem, etc. It is the responsibility of the FSC to serve as a back- up to notification, always contacting all parties to remind them of the staffing schedule.
6. Critical dialog with the parents occurs during staffings which clarify for parents the need for parents to meet the conditions for return and to remain on task with the case plan or face the possibility that other permanency options will be considered.
7. Changes to the case plan are recommended in this venue which will more effectively move a child toward permanence within the required statutory time frames.

Goal Change –

1. A change of goal may be considered by KFF, in the natural course of working a case, when it appears that such a change will move a child toward permanency in a more effective way. The change may differ from child to child; for example, from reunification to permanent guardianship or from permanent guardianship to adoption or Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement.
2. At such time as KFF finds that a change in goal may be appropriate for a particular child or sibling group or a staffing recommends such a change, KFF will make that recommendation. It is likely that discussion will continue for some period of time while all options are weighed and circumstances monitored to ensure that the goal change remains a consistent and appropriate plan.
3. With final agreement and support of the KFF Supervisor and/or the staffing, the team will prepare the necessary documentation to present the goal change for consideration at a Permanency Staffing.
4. It is advisable for the team to notify Legal Services of their goal change recommendation prior to the staffing, so Legal Services can consider any legal implications and adequately prepare for the staffing.
5. Legal Services will enter into dialog with KFF and to come to consensus about the change in goal. Legal Services will provide critical information to KFF about whether and when the change in goal can be legally accomplished.

Case Management

Permanency and Administrative Staffings, Changes in Legal Case Plan Goal

Section 100

Policy Number 034

6. The permanency staffing is the venue in which to discuss goal changes with the parents and reinforce their need to remain compliant with the case plan tasks or face the possibility of an alternative permanency plan being recommended to the Court.
7. With consensus for the goal change with Legal Services, KFF will prepare appropriate legal documentation for submission to the Court for approval.
8. KFF will adequately prepare for the Court appearance to objectively dialog with the Court regarding the benefits of such goal change and changing plan for permanence.

Origination Date 12/01/03

Revision Date 06/02/10, 5/20/14, 5/4/22, 8/8/22, 6/3/24

Regulation

Attachments

Policy

It is the policy of Kids First of Florida, Inc. (KFF), based on ethical, professional and legal responsibility, to implement a family centered approach to case planning. The system is constructed in such a manner that it involves integrity in decision-making and freedom of choice for families that moves a child toward permanence with the most expeditious path, considering safety and best interest of the child. This system is designed to not only meet the ongoing identified needs of the child, but also provides for critically needed care for periods of time when funding or a service is not immediately available. To ensure this policy is carried out, the following procedure is in effect.

Procedure General Principles and Services –

1. All judicial case plans will comply with standard Florida Safe Family Networks (FSFN) format, as required by statute and guided by Legal Services. Case plans for non-judicial cases will conform to an abbreviated format, as appropriate.
2. All case plans will describe the family situation and danger threats to the child(ren), determine the permanency goal, identify desired outcomes including parental protective capacities which need to be enhanced, identify tasks and activities, determine time frames and consequences, and identify supports and services.
3. Outcome statements will be written in behavioral, measurable terms. Tasks for all parties will be clearly identified with outcomes and time frames.
4. All case plans will be created with input from the family and child (when appropriate) at a Case Planning Meeting (CPM). Case planning also includes professionals and others involved in the case, services to meet the child's individualized and special needs and for implementation of the plan. CPMs should occur within 14 days of the case transfer staffing.
5. KFF will create and monitor individualized case plans, shall supervise the care of the child, and shall coordinate the planning and services to the child and family as stated in the case plan.
6. The service is provided through a team approach which includes KFF staff, parent(s) and foster parent(s), GAL's as well as others appropriate to the child's needs.

7. Should the parents or child require services not offered by KFF, a referral shall be made to the appropriate community provider. If the service need is critical, KFF shall ensure that the service is provided in a timely manner.
8. Mechanisms to ensure that any gaps in critically needed services are identified and filled include management review and direction, consultation with appropriate parties, case review staffings and requests for the purchase of child/client services.
9. Arrangements shall be made by KFF to maintain two-way communication with the service provider. Progress and/or lack of progress made as a result of the alternate services shall be documented in FSFN. When multiple agencies share responsibility for services, the case plan will clearly define responsibility and timelines to insure that service gaps do not occur as a result of shared planning.
10. KFF shall make provisions for any available specialized health care services which are needed. Each child in out-of-home placement shall have a dental examination once every 6 months (age 3 and up) and a physical examination annually. Psychological, psychiatric evaluation and counseling shall be provided as needed.
11. KFF shall provide assistance to foster parents, including counseling and services if needed, in order to support the placement.
12. When the case plan for the child is to return to the parents, KFF shall meet with the parent(s) and the child at least every 30 days to assess progress in the following areas:
 - a. Resolution of the problems which precipitated placement
 - b. Any difficulties in the relationship between parent(s) and child
 - c. The family's adjustment to separation
 - d. Achievement of any case plan goals.

Contact with the Family –

1. KFF shall see each child and family as often as necessary to manage the safety plan and carry out the case plan, with minimum contact according to the KFF standard and safety plan. KFF is responsible for working with both child and family, unless otherwise directed by the Court.
2. The KFF standard for face-to-face contact is once every 30 days in the home; however, KFF strives to provide multiple contacts with each child per month. All contacts must be documented in FSFN within 48 hours of the contact.
3. If the child is in out-of-home placement, contact must continue with both parents and substitute care families at least every 30 days and is based on the safety plan. All contacts must be documented in FSFN within 48 hours of contact.

4. In certain situations, such as a pandemic, KFF may be permitted by the Department of Children and Families to complete visits virtually. Virtual visits will only be completed using KFF issued devices. Documentation of virtual visits will be entered in FSFN within 48 hours. Virtual visits will be completed at the same frequency as described above. The FSC/FSCS completing the virtual visit will be mindful of confidentiality and complete the visit in an area in which client confidentiality can be maintained.
5. KFF is also responsible for maintaining contact with other individuals who support or interact with the family according to the case plan and service plan, i.e., school and day care, extended family, service/ treatment providers, etc. These contacts must be documented in FSFN.

Concurrent Case Planning –

1. KFF supports and adopts a concurrent case planning system, a process of working toward family reunification while, at the same time, developing an alternative permanent plan for the child.
2. Standard elements of sound concurrent case planning are a family assessment, differential diagnosis indicating low potential for successful reunification, immediate diligent search, education for the parents (about Plan A and Plan B) and full disclosure, a legally sufficient case plan, intensive early case work, use of foster/adoptive homes where there is low potential for reunification, scrupulous documentation, and implementation of Plan B when necessary.
3. Concurrent planning will include one of the following options:
 - a. Adoption when a petition for termination of parental rights has been filed or will be filed;
 - b. Permanent guardianship of a dependent child under s. 39.6221;
 - c. Permanent placement with a fit and willing relative under s. 39.6231; or
 - d. Placement in another planned permanent living arrangement under s. 39.6241.
4. Every case involving a child in an out-of-home placement shall be evaluated to determine if concurrent case planning is appropriate.
5. Factors for establishing a concurrent goal will include the history of child welfare involvement, severity of any mental health diagnosis, severity of substance abuse/misuse, pattern of violence, significant criminal and/or incarceration history, severity of abuse or neglect on the child, level of parental engagement with the child and quality of parent's support system.
6. When establishing a concurrent goal, all permanency options, including expectations, available supports and required timelines will be shared.
7. The appropriateness of concurrent goals shall be evaluated at each permanency staffing.

8. When recommending a concurrent goal at a permanency hearing, the new case plan reflecting the concurrent tasks should be filed before the permanency hearing. If the case plan is not filed before the hearing and the concurrent goal is approved by the court, the new case plan must be filed no later than 10 calendar days after the hearing.
9. Prior to approving case plan modifications, FSC Supervisors should determine whether there is a genuine concurrent plan that is being actively pursued and sustained in the event behavior change is not likely in a timely way.
10. When a goal other than reunification is considered, the parents will be provided information about alternative permanency options.

Case Planning, Placement Services –

1. Within 60 days of initial shelter placement (out-of-home) or petition (in-home) or 15 business days from FAST referral, a written plan (case plan) to provide a permanent home for the child within 9 months or sooner is formulated in conjunction with parents, Family Services Counselor, and with the participation of the children, where feasible.
2. Case planning activities will include reasonable efforts to prepare the child's parent or parents to resume their parental roles and responsibilities unless this is contraindicated by the case plan.
3. KFF shall help the family gain access to the services necessary to preserve and strengthen the family and accomplish the goals of the case plan.
4. KFF shall assist the family to assess the problems which brought about a need for placement (when appropriate).
5. The contents of the case plan shall include, but not be limited to:
 - a. The responsibilities of KFF staff and parent for carrying out the steps to meet the goals of the case plan.
 - b. The financial arrangements between KFF and the parents for the support of the child while in care.
 - c. The arrangement for visitation between the child and his parents, as indicated on the FSFN visitation plan and attached to the case plan.
 - d. KFF shall select the most appropriate service for the child and parent, consistent with their needs.
6. If foster care or residential care is the plan of choice, KFF shall arrange or assist in the arrangement for any specialized services the child or his family may need in order to remedy the problems which brought them to the attention of the agency.

7. KFF shall make a reasonable effort to select a placement for the child that is as home-like as possible and which is as close as possible to the home of the child's parent so that visitation between the child and his parents is possible. Consideration should also be given to placements that preserve the child in their school of origin.
8. KFF, when selecting care, shall take into consideration a child's racial, cultural, ethnic, religious heritage and sibling relationships and shall preserve them to the extent possible without jeopardizing the child's right to care or to a permanent placement.
9. KFF shall select the placement which will most effectively achieve the goals of the case plan.
10. Parents shall be involved in the placement selection, when appropriate, and the service plan consistent with the best interests of the child.
11. When the case plan for a child is foster care, KFF shall only place the child in a licensed foster home.

Case Plan Conference –

1. A case plan conference, facilitated by the KFF FTC Coordinator or the FSC, will be held to develop an initial case plan to be presented at Court.
2. The conference is normally scheduled at the initial contact with the family.
3. The conference is attended by the parents and parents' attorney(s) (when available), Children's Legal Services (CLS), the FSC, substitute care parents (if appropriate), and other support systems identified by the parents who have information relevant to the development of a comprehensive case plan.
4. Final approval for items in the case plan to be presented in Court rests with the KFF FSC, FSCS and CLS.]
5. Provisions in the case plan may be negotiated in Court as necessary if there is disagreement among the parties attending the conference.
6. The Family Team Conference Worksheet and/or Case Plan Conference Signature List, used at the discretion of KFF, may assist the KFF FSC in recording participants in the conference, development of the case plan, changes to the case plan, etc. These forms are to follow the case plan and are filed in the case plan referral section of the case file.
7. Although the Case Plan is Court ordered by the Judge in the presence of attending attorneys and others attending the Hearing, KFF strives to obtain case plan signatures of all parties. It is particularly important to encourage parents, caregivers, and children (when appropriate) to sign the case plan, noting disagreement if indicated. If the parent(s) refuses to sign the plan, their refusal to do so shall be documented on the case plan

document. If a parent's whereabouts are unknown, this should also be documented on the case plan.

Origination Date 12/01/03

Revision Date 03/15/10, 4/2/12, 6/3/24

Regulation N/A

Attachments None

Policy It is the policy of Kids First of Florida, Inc. (KFF) to interweave a data system with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and for staff members to handle all data service interruptions in a structured and expeditious manner. To ensure this policy is carried out, the following procedures are in effect.

Procedure Management of Electronic Data Collection

1. When an investigation begins at the DCF (investigations) level, DCF enters initial client data into the Florida Safe Families Network (FSFN) and maintains the data until acceptance of the case by KFF.
2. After acceptance of the case by KFF, data in FSFN will be maintained by KFF.
3. A copy of a birth certificate or birth verification shall be obtained for each child under court ordered in-home supervision within 15 days after the case transfer conference and a copy of a birth certificate or birth verification shall be obtained for each child entering out-of-home care within 15 days of initial placement.
4. The Family Services Counselor (FSC) Supervisor will provide consultation prior to approving the following: safety plans, (within 5 business days of case transfer), critical junctures, progress updates, case plans and modification of case plans, judicial reviews, case closure and case preparation activities. The FSC Supervisor will use Case Notes page FSFN utilizing the Supervisor Consultation note type.
5. For children born out-of-state or out-of-country, verification of the child's birth shall be requested by the FSC within 15 days from initial placement and documented in the case file.
6. FSFN will serve as the family's record of services and the FSC, and other KFF staff with access to FSFN, will enter case information and update client information in FSFN any time a change occurs, i.e., legal status, goal, adoption finalization, etc.
7. The FSC will report placement changes to the Placement Coordinator or designee no later than 24 hours after the change occurs.
8. All decisions made regarding case closure or redirection, along with the rationale for the decisions reached, will be clearly documented in the case record.
9. All decisions made regarding services and compliance will be clearly documented in the case record.

10. Other contacts with clients, including telephone conversations and in person and virtual visits will be clearly documented in the case record.
11. All case activities, including contacts and attempted contacts with a child, the child's parent or caregiver and collaterals will be entered into FSFN no later than 48 hours after the actual contact or other event.
12. Documentation should include:
 - a. Who was present
 - b. Where the meeting/contact occurred
 - c. Type of contact
 - d. What was discussed
 - e. Date of meeting/contact (day, month and year)
13. Pertaining to Supervisory Review, the following will be documented quarterly in each child's chronological notes utilizing the Review, Supervisor note type:
 - a. Date of Supervision and individuals present
 - b. Topics discussed including progress and barriers to permanency as it relates to the Family Plan
 - c. Tasks and who is responsible
 - d. Follow-up on tasks from previous supervision.
 - e. The FSC Supervisor must note in FSFN that a "supervisory review" has occurred.
 - f. Discussion of monitoring and oversight of safety plan management.
 - g. Discussion surrounding what should be changed in order to meet conditions for return.
 - h. Child needs.
 - i. Evaluation and scaling of protective capacities.
14. The FSC Supervisor shall review case notes to ensure timeliness of case note documentation, and ensure documentation of any completed home study is within FSFN, pursuant to 39.521, F.S., CFOP 170-1 Chapter 5 and 65C-28.012(2)
15. Information Technology (IT), in coordination with DCF, will assist in maintaining data integrity in FSFN, as well as KFF's internal data systems.

Data Interruptions

This procedure applies to all production systems and services managed by the KFF IT Department. In the event that there is a service interruption involving production systems and services managed by the Department of Children and Families (DCF), the KFF staff impacted will contact the DCF Statewide Help Desk at (850) 487-9400 or Toll Free at (855) 283-5137. In the event of a declared disaster, the KFF Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Plan will supersede this procedure.

1. When a KFF production system or service is disrupted or down, or a staff member does not have access to their applications due to system or network problems, the staff member will contact the IT Department.
2. The IT Manager is responsible for coordinating the overall response to determine and implement the best solution. The IT Manager is also responsible for facilitating the response and tracking the process.
3. If the disruption is expected to last for an extended period of time, the IT Manager will notify Senior Management about the problem and will provide updates as they occur, including corrective actions taken and when the system or service is restored.
4. During the disruption, staff may access computer applications such as FSFN, through a secure connection on an alternative device.
5. Other alternative devices that should be utilized to communicate with other staff, clients and stakeholders during a disruption, include landline and cell phones and in person communication.

Origination Date 12/01/03

Revision Date 5/4/22, 10/2/23, 6/3/24

Regulation FAC 65C-16

Attachments None

Policy It is the policy of Kids First of Florida, Inc. (KFF) to provide comprehensive foster, adoption and protective services to at-risk children and their families. With regard to adoption, it is essential to prepare a comprehensive home study to ensure a) the safety of placed children and b) an adequate and appropriate environment for the child. To ensure that this policy is carried out and to expedite the adoption home study and adoption process, the following procedure is in effect.

Procedure

Termination of Parent Rights

1. The Family Services Counselor (FSC) will ensure the following are requested and uploaded into the Florida Safe Families Network (FSFN) within 30 days of the Termination of Parental Rights Petition being filed:
 - a. The child's birth records
 - b. All health history records, school records, mental health records, hospitalization records and residential setting records
 - c. All documents referenced in the disclosure form
 - d. Shelter Petition and Shelter Order
 - e. Dependency Petition and Dependency Order
 - f. Modification Petition and Modification Order if applicable
 - g. Original Predisposition Report (Ongoing Family Functioning Assessment)
 - h. Case Plans that address the child's needs
 - i. Protective investigations identifying the child as a victim
 - j. Guardian ad Litem report filed with the court concerning the child
 - k. Psychological Evaluations and Comprehensive Assessments
 - l. Names of providers who provided services to child while in foster care

Case Assignment

1. Within 30 days of the TPR Petition being filed, the adoption FSC will be assigned as secondary. After the TPR appeal period has expired, the adoption FSC will be assigned primary for children who are placed with prospective adoptive parents who intend to adopt,

Adoption Home Study

1. Only the "Adoptive Home Application" form, CF-FSP 5071, will be required from the prospective adoptive parent prior to initiating an adoption home study.
2. If the prospective adoptive parent is the current caregiver, the adoption home study shall be completed no later than 90 days after the TPR Petition is filed.

3. The following shall be the Adoption Home Study process when the child is placed and there is a launched, completed, and approved home study in FSFN for the prospective adoptive parent:
 - Pre-Assessment with the Family
 - a. The adoption FSC will review the information from the last approved home study with the prospective adoptive parent to determine if any information has changed. This can be in person or virtually.
 - b. The prospective adoptive parent will initial the pages to confirm review. The adoption FSC will note the information that has changed. An electronic review and signature tool may be used.
 - c. The adoption FSC will ask the prospective adoptive parent whether they are willing to adopt without the subsidy and note the response.
 - d. If the prior home study is printed and reviewed with the prospective adoptive parent or an electronic review tool is used, the adoption FSC will write the following statement on the signature page, "Home Study reviewed with prospective adoptive parent on (insert date)."
 - Creation of the Adoption Home Study
 - a. The adoption FSC will update the information that the prospective adoptive parent stated has changed manually or electronically.
 - b. The adoption FSC and prospective adoptive parent will sign and date the Signature page manually or electronically.
 - c. All home studies will be uploaded in the FSFN Provider file cabinet under image category of Unified Home Study and titled "Adoption Home Study (Date)".
4. The FSC will follow all requirements outlined in Chapter 65C-16, F.A.C., for adoptive applicants who do not have the child placed with them.

References

1. A minimum of five (5) written references shall be required. Only one (1) reference may be obtained from an employer and only two of the references may be obtained from a relative. All other references must be obtained from persons who either: 1) have observed the applicants in situations that give some indication for their capacity for parenthood, or 2) who as the result of their relationship to the applicant, possess documentation or knowledge of the applicant's capacity for parenthood."
 - a. References may include child welfare professionals who have been assigned to the prospective adoptive parent.
 - b. References may include Guardian ad Litem Volunteers or Child Advocate Mangers (CAMs) who have been assigned to the prospective adoptive parent.
 - c. All references shall only be obtained verbally and documented.

Study of the Child (Child Study)

1. The adoption FSC will complete a child study on the child being adopted.

2. The adoption FSC may reference assessments and evaluations that satisfy the requirements in Rule 65C-16.002(7), F.A.C., to the extent that the documents address the child's developmental, medical, educational, or family history.
3. Any assessment or evaluation that includes the information required in 65C-16.002(7), F.A.C., may be referenced as: See "Name of Document" dated (insert date) page (insert page). For example: "See Comprehensive Behavioral Health Assessment dated 1/1/23 page 3."
4. The referenced document will be either attached or linked to the Child Study when uploaded into CCWIS.

Adoption Application Review Committee (AARC)

1. If it is determined that the adoption home study is not approved, a referral to an Adoption Review Committee (ARC) will be made by the adoption FSC.
2. While the committee is available to review any challenging case, all cases with the following issues, except as set forth below, must be referred to the committee."
 - a. "Applicants in which the Child Abuse, Abandonment, and Neglect Record Check reveals verified findings of abuse, neglect, or abandonment which did not result in a disqualifying felony conviction, and cases in which abuse or neglect was not substantiated." 65C-16.005(9)(b)(3), F.A.C.
 - I. This section applies to child abuse, abandonment, and neglect record check findings for:
 - An Applicant, not a household member;
 - An Applicant who was the alleged perpetrator or caregiver responsible in the investigation, not just mentioned in the report.
 - II. The following process shall be used to streamline the AARC staffing process:
 - The adoption FSC shall discuss the reason(s) for requesting the AARC with the Applicant and include the Applicant's feedback in section 1 of Form CF-FSP 5448 "Request for Review by Adoption Applicant Review Committee (AARC)" (Request for Review).
 - The Request for Review form and required documentation shall be submitted to the AARC members no less than seven (7) business days before the AARC convenes.
 - AARC members are responsible for reviewing documentation prior to the staffing. If additional information is needed, the request for such documentation needs to occur prior to the date of the staffing.
 - When the AARC convenes, the Chair and committee members shall not read aloud and repeat the information already reviewed by the committee but may ask questions to clarify the information previously submitted.
 - No indicator cases, cases in which the Applicant is identified as a household member, or cases in which the Applicant was not convicted, will not be addressed in the

- staffing unless one of the committee members has a clarifying question based on their review.
- After the Participants are asked to exit the meeting space to allow for additional discussion among the AARC members, each member must verbally advise of their recommendation, which shall be documented by the Chair in FSFN.
 - If the verbal recommendation of the committee is to “approve” the prospective adoptive parent’s application, the Chair shall notify the Applicant, adoption FSC, and the Guardian ad Litem Program, if assigned, the same day. The adoption application is considered “approved” as of this date, and the adoption FSC must resume steps to complete the adoption processes.
 - Each committee member shall submit Form CF-FSP 5449 “Adoption Applicant Review Committee Recommendation” with their recommendations to the Chair within five (5) business days of the AARC staffing.
- b. “If the criminal history check reveals that the applicant or other household member was convicted of a law violation listed in Section 39.0138(4), F.S., within the last five (5) years, the applicant cannot be considered for approval, until five (5) years after the date of conviction. After five (5) years have passed, the applicant shall be referred to the Adoption Applicant Review Committee if the applicant submits a new Adoptive Home Application, CF-FSP 5071, incorporated in Rule 65C-16.004, F.A.C.” 65C-16.005(9)(b)(4), F.A.C.
- An AARC is not required if the Applicant was not “convicted” of a law violation listed in Section 39.0138(4), F.S. For example: If the Applicant was found not guilty or the law violation was dropped, an AARC is not required.
 - Section 65C-16.007(2)(c), F.A.C., provides, “If the criminal records checks reveal that the applicant or household member has been found guilty or entered a plea of guilty or nolo contendere for crimes other than those listed in Section 39.0138(3) or (4), F.S., the applicant shall be evaluated as to the extent of his or her rehabilitation. Factors to be considered will include the severity of the action resulting in the record, how much time has elapsed since the offense, circumstances surrounding the incident, and whether records indicate single or repeated offenses. Referral of these applicants to the Adoption Applicant Review Committee is not required but they must be submitted to the appropriate entity in the community-based-care lead agency or designee for approval.”

Background Checks

1. For the purposed of background checks, the effective date of an adoption placement may be either the date the child is placed in the physical custody of the adoptive parent or the date the Memorandum of Agreement is signed.

2. Children Living With Adoptive Applicant. For purposes of determining the date of adoption placement to conduct state and local background checks within 90 days of that date, the “date of adoption placement” shall be:
 - a. One Application – The child will be considered to be in the physical custody of the adoptive parent when the Adoption Home Study is approved; or
 - b. Multiple Applications – The child will be considered to be in the physical custody of the adoptive parent when the Adoption Home Study is approved and the Memorandum of Agreement is signed.Therefore, a state and local background check that is completed within 90 days of the “date of adoption placement,” as outlined above, should not need to be repeated prior to finalization of adoption if completed within 12 months. For example: If there is only one application and the backgrounds were completed January 1, 2023, and the Adoption Home Study was approved March 1, 2023, the backgrounds would be valid until December 31, 2023.
3. Children Not Living With Adoptive Applicant. For purposes of determining the date of adoption placement to conduct state and local background checks within 90 days of that date, the “date of adoption placement” shall be the date the child is physically placed with the adoptive applicant.