



# Mariposa County County Staff, Resource Family and Birth Parents Partnership Agreement

Mariposa County QPI Brand Statement.

Mariposa County is a partnership of invested individuals who strive for quality parenting through communication, respect, honesty, and a safe, supportive environment for children and families to flourish.

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## The partnership between Mariposa County Child Welfare, Probation, and resource families is grounded in the following beliefs:

We believe families can keep their children safe with support.

And if they can't...

We believe children should be cared for in a familiar, nurturing and safe environment.

And while they are in care...

We believe every child is entitled to thrive through stability (health, education, and placement), family connections, extra-curricular activities, quality parenting and a voice in planning, including participation in child and family team meetings.

We believe, through partnership and support, parents can grow and change in order to safely parent their children.

And if the children cannot return home...

We believe all children deserve a sense of belonging, and a permanent and unconditional commitment in a lifelong family.

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X \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
ACCEPTANCE OF AGREEMENT, *Resource parent*

X \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
ACCEPTANCE OF AGREEMENT, *Resource parent*

X \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
ACCEPTANCE OF AGREEMENT, *Birth Parent*

X \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
ACCEPTANCE OF AGREEMENT, *Birth Parent*

X \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
ACCEPTANCE OF AGREEMENT, *County Staff*

X \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
ACCEPTANCE OF AGREEMENT, *RFA Social Worker*

## **EXPECTATIONS OF RESOURCE PARENTS**

### **Resource Parents and County Staff Work Together as Respected Partners**

- Resource parents will conduct themselves in a professional manner and will work together with county staff as a respected partner.
- Resource parents will share all relevant information and will provide input for the child's case and needs and services plans.
- Resource parents will respect the privacy and confidentiality of all case specific information related to the child and family. Any disclosures or sharing of information will be respectful, necessary to the care of the child, limited to relevant information about the child's needs, and shared only with relevant parties.
- Resource parents will participate in child and family team meetings.
- Resource parents have a right to participate in court hearings and submit JV290 requests to support the child. This form gives the caregiver an opportunity to submit information to the court that will be considered at the next hearing.
- Resource parents will obtain, maintain and share records that are important and relevant to the child's well-being. Examples include maintaining records of the child's primary connections, achievements, and milestones, and completing a Life Book.
- Resource parents will resolve conflicts and challenges by working directly with their social worker or probation officer. If additional support and problem solving is needed, resource parents will engage county staff to identify the primary issues leading to conflict to stop the problems escalating.

### **Nurturing Children and Youth**

- Resource parents will provide quality parenting by being trauma informed.
- Resource parents will participate in services related to the child's needs, which may include but is not limited to, therapy and developmental services, medical and dental appointments, and school-related meetings.
- Resource parents must be willing and able to learn about the child's culture, ethnicity and religion to support the child's connections to his/her family and culture.
- Resource parents will fully incorporate the child into their family activities, including vacations, and support the children's participation in extracurricular activities.
- Resource parents will work to the best of their ability to maintain the children in the home and to communicate with county staff if conflicts arise.
- Resource parents will participate and adhere to the child's transition plan developed with child and family team members.
- Resource parents will be informed about LGBTQ issues and accepting of LGBTQ youth or state otherwise during their RFA.

- Resource parents are expected to take advantage of all trainings.

### **Supporting Families**

- Resource parents will work with county staff to develop a plan for engagement with the child's birth family and will support reunification services and activities.
- Resource parents will facilitate continuity for the child with the birth family by encouraging birth parent participation in medical-related care, school, and other important activities.
- Resource parents will facilitate a smooth transition to another placement by sharing information about the needs of the child.
- Resource parents will respect and support the child's ties to family (parents, siblings, extended family members) and other significant relationships, and will assist the child in maintaining these relationships through facilitating appropriate visitation, transporting the child to visits, and supporting communications in accordance with the case plan.
- Throughout the reunification process, resource parents will remain in a supportive relationship with the child (when it is in the child's best interest) and with the birth family to support continuity and successful reunification where possible.
- Resource parents will request approval from the birth family and county staff regarding haircuts and ear/ body piercing.
- Resource parents will educate the child/youth on age-appropriate contraception education.
- Resource parents will regularly communicate information and highlights about the child's life with the child's birth family in a manner appropriate to the placement, to benefit the family relationship.

### **Strengthening Communities**

- Resource parents will advocate for children with county staff, the court, and community agencies.
- Resource parents will work in consultation with county staff when advocating on behalf of the child.
- Resource parents will support the child's school success, including participating in IEP meetings, attending school events and school conferences, assisting with school assignments, and supporting tutoring and homework assignments.
- Resource parents will provide developmentally appropriate opportunities to allow children and youth to learn and practice life skills and have hands-on experiences in preparation for the transition to adulthood.

## **EXPECTATIONS OF COUNTY STAFF**

### **County Staff and Resource Parents Work Together as Respected Partners**

- County staff will conduct themselves in a professional manner and will work together with resource parents as a respected partner.
- As it comes to their attention, county staff will share all relevant information regarding the child and family within the county's established guidelines and in accordance with ACIN 1-05-14. Relevant information includes: the child's needs and services plan; the reason the child entered care; current and past behaviors; physical, medical and mental status; school of origin; attorney name; court case number; and court hearing dates. Staff will seek court or parental authorization when the disclosure of confidential information is relevant to the care of the child.
- When detention or placement changes occur, a child and family team meeting will be held as soon as possible, and will include both the birth family and resource parents to support a partner relationship.
- County staff will support and facilitate resource parent participation in all team meetings and court hearings, and will seek resource parent input in the child's action plan.
- As soon as they receive notification, county staff will provide notification to the resource parent for team meetings and court hearings and their recommendations to the court.
- Court notifications and child and family team meeting action plan notes will be mailed to the resource family.
- County staff will provide an alternative way for resource parents to participate in all team meetings if the resource parent cannot be present.
- County staff will respond to requests for information and contact within 24 business hours, and will provide contact information for his/her supervisor who should be reached in case of an emergency or a time-sensitive issue.
- County staff will request resource parent availability to assist in visitation, medical appointments, and other service delivery planning, and strive to schedule appointments based on resource parent availability.
- County staff will resolve conflicts and challenges by working directly with the child's resource parents.
- County staff will honor and respect a resource parent's right to take respite and will encourage them to take respite when they need it.

### **Nurturing Children and Youth**

- County staff will provide resource parents with the services and support they need to be quality parents.
- County staff will plan and assist in successful partnering between the birth family and resource parents to support the child's stability.
- County staff will support resource parents in overcoming barriers to the child's full participation in family life and activities.
- County staff will participate and adhere to the child's transition plan developed with the resource parent and other team members.
- County staff is expected to remain current on trauma-informed practice.
- County staff will support the child's connections to culture, ethnicity, and religion.

### **Supporting Families**

- County staff will support resource parents by working together as a team and by communicating the family's reunification plan.
- County staff will support a smooth transition plan for the child by sharing information about him/her, and will support contact between the child and the resource family.
- County staff will provide resource parents with information, guidance, and support. County staff will support the continued engagement of resource parents in the life of the child as it benefits the child and birth family, including post-reunification.

### **Strengthening Communities**

- County staff will support the resource parent's role as an advocate and respect their input.
- County staff will share with resource parents information about the child's health and wellbeing.
- County staff will support and facilitate the resource parents' participation with all of the child's educational needs.
- County staff will support resource parent's decisions that meet the prudent parent standards.
- County staff will work with resource parents in facilitating appropriate opportunities to allow children and youth to learn and practice life skills and have hands-on experiences in preparation for transition to adulthood.

## CO-PARENTING AGREEMENTS

### **Birth Parents and Resource Family Resource parents agree to :**

- Speak positively about each other in front of the child and model partnership to decrease confusion and anxiety for children.
- Collaborate on and participate in services and resources to meet the child's needs.
- Strive towards addressing partnership challenges with each other in a respectful and solution-focused manner.
- Strive to prioritize visitation schedules to ensure consistency and predictability for the child.
- Share transitional and other important objects/items to increase child comfort in out-of-home care.
- Respect each other's right to privacy, but share relevant family and child history in order to provide high quality care.
- Collaborate together about sleeping schedules, food, and snacks during visits for consistency.
- Respect each other's boundaries and develop mutually agreed upon plans for communication and information sharing.