

MARIN COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

CFS OPERATIONS MANUAL

SHARING INFORMATION WITH CAREGIVERS

Purpose	The California Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) requires that caregivers be provided with information about children placed in their homes, which includes certain medical and education information, dependency court status, needs of the children, and particular types of behavior and historical background, required services and contact information. The information is to be provided to caregivers within a specified time. Sharing information regarding the child with the caregiver is a critical component of effective service delivery as it better enables them to meet the needs of children and youth living in their home. This policy identifies both when and what information child welfare workers are to share with caretakers. The details are outlined in a <i>REFERENCE GUIDE</i> below. This guide is not intended as a substitute for legal counsel.
Approved	This reference guide was approved by CFS Director on May 31, 2016. Signature on file.
Most Recent Revisions	The most recent revisions of the Policy and Procedure (P&P):
Background	The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) advises child welfare agencies that sharing specified information is permitted and in some circumstances required . Furthermore, child welfare agencies engaging in the Quality Parenting Initiative (a collaborative effort of the Youth Law Center, the County Welfare Directors Association, and CDSS) have discussed the importance of sharing information with caregivers in order to make the caregiver a partner in the child's case. As a result, CDSS has also issued an All County Information Notice (ACIN No: 1-05-14) to provide guidance around information sharing.
POLICY	
Child's Information	Information regarding the child's educational, medical, dental and mental health history and current needs will be shared so that the caregiver can appropriately care for the child and fulfill his or her obligation to cooperate with the child's case plan. Information about relatives, including siblings, with whom the child may have contact, will be provided to the caregiver, especially when the caregiver is

Parent's Information	<p>participating in scheduling or supervising visitation between the child and the family. The California Department of Social Services (CDSS), along with the All County Information Notice (ACIN) encourages the worker to provide the caregiver with information regarding the child's family background, essential to the caregiver providing quality care to the child.</p>
	<p>However, the age of the child must be consulted before certain information is released. Minors of any age can consent to pregnancy related care (contraception, pregnancy testing, abortion, prenatal care). Furthermore, minors age 12 and older can consent to mental health, sexually transmitted diseases and certain other forms of health care treatment such as medical, substance abuse treatment, and HIV antibody test results. With minors who have the right to consent, the worker will need to obtain the minor's consent or court order before releasing information pertaining to the areas described above.</p>
REFERENCE GUIDE	<p>In addition, informing the caregiver of upcoming court hearings, the recommendations at those hearings and the manner in which the caregiver can provide information to the court and/or participate in those hearings increases the caregiver's ability to be a partner in the child's case. This information will be provided by the agency to the caretaker before the scheduled hearing, within the statutorily established timeframes for notice of each hearing.</p>
	<p>The law does not provide for the same level of information sharing about the parent. Recognizing that some information about family history is necessary to provide appropriate care to the child, the CDSS regulations require the worker to share only pertinent family background with the foster parent when making a placement. The worker will need to gain the written consent of the parent prior to disclosing other sensitive information, such as any medical, substance abuse, and mental health treatment of the parent (Authorization to Release Confidential Information Form MC3363 and Authorization to Release Protected Mental Health Information Form MC 3362). When sharing such information would benefit the child and the family, the worker is to obtain a signed release from the parent.</p>
<p>The written release should be explicit about the type of information to be shared, the persons with whom the information will be shared, and the purpose of sharing the information and how long the release is expected to remain in effect. If the worker cannot obtain the parent's written consent, seeking an order from the court is another acceptable method to gain authorization to share confidential information.</p>	

	<p>The following is the information to be provided to the caregiver within allotted timeframes for disclosure. It is expected that a guide of this sort cannot fully cover all possible scenarios. If at any time there is a doubt as to whether specific information can be shared, the worker should consult with a supervisor.</p>
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TYPE OF INFORMATION	DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS	LEGAL AUTHORITY
Child's current medication and medical treatments.	Within 48 hours of placement <u>prescribed medications</u> for the Child in the possession of the agency and in effect at the time of the placement, AND <u>any medical treatments</u> the agency knows are in effect at the time of the placement. Please note that for children who have the right to consent for treatment, a signed release or court order must be obtained before the information is provided.	WIC §§16010(a), 16010.4(e), 16010.5
Child's known medical problems.	Within 30 days from initial placement. Can be included in Health and Education Passport. Please note that for children who have the right to consent for treatment, a signed release or court order must be obtained before the information is provided.	WIC §16010(a)
Child's past health problems and hospitalizations.	Within 30 days from initial placement. Can be included in Health and Education Passport. Please note that for children who have the right to consent for treatment, a signed release or court order must be obtained before the information is provided.	WIC §16010(a)
Child's relevant mental health history, known mental health conditions and medications.	Within 30 days from initial placement. Can be included in Health and Education Passport. Please note that for children who have the right to consent for treatment, a signed release must be obtained before the information is provided. Please note that for children who have the right to consent for treatment, a signed release or court order must be obtained before the information is provided.	WIC §16010(a)

Child's immunization record and allergies.	Within 30 days from initial placement. Can be included in Health and Education Passport.	WIC §16010(a)
Names/Addresses of Child's Health, Dental and Educational Providers.	Within 30 days from initial placement. Can be included in Health and Education Passport. Please note that for children who have the right to consent, a signed release or court order must be obtained before the information is provided.	WIC §16010(a)
Child's school documentation	Within 30 days from initial placement. Any documentation or proof of the Child's age necessary to enroll the child in school or activities that require proof of age.	WIC §16010.5
Child's school records (grade level, progress, and performance).	Within 30 days from initial placement. Included in Health and Education Passport.	WIC §16010(a)
Child's school transfer history	Within 30 days from initial placement. Can be included in Health and Education Passport.	WIC §16010(a)
Child's birth certificate, passport, or other identifying documentation as may be required for enrollment in school and extracurricular activities.	Copy must be provided within 30 days of Agency's receipt.	WIC §§ 16010.4(e), 16010.5
Child's Medical (Medi-Cal) Identification Number or Group Health Insurance Plan Number and State DSS ID Number.	As soon as available, if the child does not yet have Medi-Cal, otherwise as soon as possible.	WIC §16010.4(e)
Child's social worker and social workers' supervisor	Name, mailing address, phone number, and fax number must be provided as soon as possible.	WIC §16010.4(e)
Child's attorney and CASA	Name, mailing address, phone number and fax number must be provided, once the attorney and CASA are assigned.	WIC §§ 16010.4(e), 16010.5
Juvenile Court where case is pending	Name, address, department number must be provided once detention is obtained.	WIC §16010.4(e)
Notice regarding Court hearings.	Should be advised of right to receive notice of all Review and Permanency Hearings concerning the Child during placement and right to attend Hearings or submit relevant	WIC §16010.4(f) Form: JV-290

	information to Court in writing by use of the Caregiver Information Form within timeframes for hearings.	
Information on services available to assist the caregiver.	Including transportation, translation, training, forms and other available services, provided during caregiver contacts.	WIC §16010.4(f)
Plan outlining child's needs and services.	<p>Must include information on family and sibling visitation, once the visits are being scheduled.</p> <p>As applicable, include information on problems with socialization, emotional and mental health issues, physical needs and functioning. This information should be provided as the agency becomes aware and during each contact with the caregiver. Please note that for children who have the right to consent for treatment, a signed release or court order must be obtained before the information is provided.</p>	WIC §16010.4(e)
Sibling Information and Contact	Any known siblings or half-siblings of the child, whether the child has, expects, or desires to have contact or visitation with any or all siblings, and discussion as to whether the caregiver will facilitate contact with siblings. This must be given prior to caregivers facilitating any forms of sibling visitation.	WIC §16010.4(f)
Caregiver's Obligations regarding Reunification	Obligation to cooperate with any reunification, concurrent or permanent planning for the child, upon the child entering the home.	WIC §16010.4(f)
Copy of the child's case plan	Upon arranging child's placement.	MPP 31-405(r)
Child's family and behavioral background. This refers to areas of abuse and neglect that the child has experienced. For parent's background a signed release from the parents must be obtained.	Upon arranging child's placement.	MPP 31-405(s)
Any known or suspected dangerous behavior of the	Upon arranging child's placement.	MPP 31-405(t)

child.		
Copy of the child's transitional independent living plan, when applicable.	Upon arranging child's placement.	All County Information Notice 1-05-14
Petition and Court Reports, Substance abuse Treatment Records or parent or child, HIV test results, etc.	Information expressly requiring consent or court authority to release	ACIN, Attachment B Fam Code 6924 H&S Code 124260, etc

	<i>When in doubt regarding release of information, seek consent or court order under WIC 817</i>
Attachments	Attachment 1-All County Information Notice No: 1-05-14 http://www.cdss.ca.gov/lettersnotices/entres/getinfo/acin/2014/l-05_14.pdf
Hard Copy Forms	MC-3363 Authorization to Release Confidential Information MC-3362 Authorization to Release Protected Mental Health Information