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Relative/NREFM Placement Assessments

Purpose	To provide guidelines for relative and non-relative extended family member (NREFM) assessments and reassessments.
Approved	This policy was approved by Gary Taylor, Director of CFS, on February 14, 2014. *Signature on file*.
Most Recent Revision	This revision of the Policy and Procedure (P&P) includes amended NREFM definition as a result of the passage of Assembly Bill (AB) 545, Chapter 294, Statutes of 2013.
Background	Assembly Bill (AB) 1695, enacted into law in 2001, outlined the California legislature's intent to promote the placement of foster children with relatives and established NREFMs as a new caregiver type. In addition, AB 1695 provided: • Foster homes, whether licensed or approved, meet the same health and safety standards • Approved relative/NREFM caregivers receive the same reimbursement rate as licensed foster family homes (FFHs) • Juvenile Courts order the parents of a detained child to disclose the names and addresses of the child's relatives • Possession of a foster family license or relative/NREFM home approval is not entitlement to placement of a child

As outlined in California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Manual of Policy and Procedures (MPP) Division 31-405, priorities for assessing and placing children in out-of-home care include non-custodial parents, followed by preferential relatives, other relatives to the 5th degree, NREFMs, licensed foster homes, Foster Family Agency (FFA) homes, and group homes. Relative/NREFM homes assessed for placement are approved rather than licensed, using the same health and safety standards as those used to assess homes for foster care licensure.

Within Children and Family Services (CFS), relative and NREFM assessments and approvals are conducted by social work staff in Placement Coordination Services (PCS).

Definitions

For purposes of this P&P, the following apply:

Corrective Action Plan (CAP): An arrangement developed with a relative/NREFM describing actions the relative/NREFM will take to remedy deficiencies to bring a home into compliance with approval standards. CAPs address two types of deficiencies:

- Immediate impact deficiencies that if not corrected would have a direct and immediate risk to the health, safety, or personal rights of a foster child
- Potential impact deficiencies that without correction could become a risk to the health, safety, or personal rights of a foster child

Documented Alternative Plan (DAP): Written authorization for a foster home to use in limited circumstances a different, yet equally protective, method to meet the intent of a specified core health and safety standard within CCL Title 22, Division 6, Chapter 9.5, Article 3.

Non-Relative Extended Family Member (NREFM): Per WIC Section (§) 362.7, an adult caregiver who has an established familial relationship with a relative of the child, as defined in WIC § 361.3(c)(2), or a familial or mentoring relationship with the child.

Preferential Relative: Per WIC §§ 319 and 361.3, an adult relative who is a grandparent, aunt, uncle, or sibling of a child given preferential consideration for placement (i.e., first individual considered and investigated or assessed).

Relative: Per WIC § 361.3, an adult who is related to the child by blood, adoption, or affinity within the fifth degree of kinship, including stepparents, stepsiblings, and relatives whose status is preceded by the words "great," "great-great," or "grand," or the spouse of any of these persons, even if the marriage was terminated by death or dissolution.

POLICY

When to Assess

Pursuant to Title 22, Division 6, Chapter 9.5, § 89317, any adult will be permitted to apply for a license or approval regardless of age, sex, race, religion, color, political affiliation, national origin, disability, marital status, actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, HIV status, or ancestry.

A. **Relatives:**
Per WIC §§ 309, 319, 361.3 and *Cesar V. v. Orange County Social Services Agency (2001) 91 Cal. App. 4th 1023*, relatives to the 5th degree, regardless of immigration status, will be assessed for possible placement when:

- A child is removed from parental custody, –or–
- A change in a child's current placement is needed, –or–
- A request is made by a relative, regardless of whether a new placement is needed

If more than one relative is available for, or requests, placement consideration, per WIC § 361.3, preferential relatives (i.e., an adult grandparent, aunt, uncle, or sibling) will be assessed first.

In addition to evaluating as a placement resource, assessments assist in identifying ways in which the relative may support the child in out-of-home care (e.g., maintain a connection, education advocate, supervise visitation, future placement option, etc.).

Relative consideration is not required when parental rights have been terminated, unless as outlined in ACL 08-43, the child meets criteria specified in WIC § 361.3(f) and is removed from the home of an adoptive parent.

B. **NREFMs:**

As indicated in WIC §§ 309, 361.2, and 361.45, NREFMs identified by parents and children will be assessed for placement when no preferential relative or relative to the 5th degree is willing or able to provide care for the child, and:

- A child is removed from parental custody, or
- A temporary placement is needed on an emergency basis

Note: Placement assessments requested by NREFMs for dependent children not in need of a placement change are not required, unless ordered by Court. However, best practice supports the consideration and assessment of an appropriate NREFM, if available, in lieu of placement with a caregiver unknown to the child or child's family.

CFS will verify the existence of a NREFM relationship through interviews with the parent and child and/or with one or more third parties, which may include relatives of the child, teachers, medical professionals, clergy, neighbors, and family friends.

Per CFS policy, Diversion staff is responsible for determining if an individual meets NREFM status. The assessing social worker will:

- Consult with a Senior Social Services Supervisor (SSSS) and/or Program Manager (PM) during the verification process
- Document factors aiding in the determination of a NREFM relationship on *Verification of Non-Relative Extended Family Member (F063-04-75C)*

Factors to consider when verifying the existence of a NREFM relationship may include:

- Nature and duration of the relationship between the NREFM and the child or child's family/parents
- Involvement of the NREFM and any siblings to the child
- Potential benefit to the child and siblings
- NREFM's ability to provide the child with familiar adults, familiar surroundings, or familial history
- NREFM's ability to provide the child with a culturally-sensitive and-affirming environment
- NREFM's commitment to the goals of family reunification or permanency

- Child's special medical needs and difficulty locating suitable placement as a result

Referral for Assessment

Assigned social workers will notify Diversion of relatives or NREFMs in need of assessment by submittal of *Relative/NREFM Clearance and Placement Assessment Referral (F063-04-815A)*.

For emergency placements, assigned social workers will notify Diversion as soon as practically possible upon leaving a child in a home for completion of an Immediate Placement Assessment (IPA) and final approval by Diversion within 24 hours.

Placement Decision/ Responsibilities

Per WIC § 16507.5, placement decisions are based on the child's best interests. Approval of a home assessment does not guarantee a child will be placed in that home. Refer to CFS P&P Out-of-Home Placement (K-0208) for guidance on the placement of a child into out-of-home care.

Per CFS policy, the following placement responsibilities apply:

When an emergency relative/NREFM placement is needed, Diversion will complete an IPA, decide whether to place the child, and complete the placement process. Diversion will attempt to consult with the assigned social worker and/or SSSS throughout the assessment and placement process.

When a non-emergent relative/NREFM placement is needed, the assigned social worker, in consultation with Diversion, will make the decision regarding placement. Diversion will complete the placement process if a decision is made to place. **Exception:** Specialized Family Services (SFS) Placement Coordinator will complete placements involving children with special medical needs.

Documentation of completed relative assessments will include factors considered for placement outlined in WIC § 361.3 (a) and will be submitted to the assigned social worker for inclusion in the Jurisdictional/Dispositional Hearing Report or other reports submitted to court that address placement. See CFS P&P Jurisdictional/Dispositional Hearing Report (G-0310).

To assist relatives/NREFMs in meeting approval standards, CFS will provide available services when needed, including assistance in completing CAPs. Services and assistance provided will be documented.

Relative Notification

Pursuant to WIC § 309(e), within 30 days of a child being placed into protective custody, CFS will attempt to identify and locate adult relatives of the child for notification purposes.

Per CFS policy, Diversion will forward identifying information on adult relatives collected during the assessment process to the Search Unit. *Relative Information List (F063-25-628)* may be used to document collection of information.

Temporary/ Emergency Placement

Per Division 31-410.5 and ACL 07-39, a detained or dependent child may be temporarily placed, on an emergency basis, in an assessed relative/NREFM home prior to final approval if the following criteria have been met:

A. In-home inspection to assess the safety of the home (document on *Checklist of Health and Safety Standards for Approval of Family Caregiver Home [SOC 817]).* No CAP addressing an immediate impact deficiency identified.

B. Assessment of the relative/NREFM's ability to provide care for the child's needs (document on *Relative/Non-Relative Extended Family Member Caregiver Assessment [SOC 818])*.

C. Criminal and child abuse record checks:

1. California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (CLETS) on all persons 18 years of age or older residing in the home, including completion of *Out-of-State Disclosure & Criminal Record Statement (LIC 508D)* and exemptions, if needed, pending receipt of fingerprint (Live Scan) clearance. See CFS P&P CLETS (B-0116).

2. Child Abuse Central Index (CACI) check and CWS/CMS search for allegations of child abuse or neglect of all persons 18 years of age or older residing in the home. A CACI listing does not necessarily preclude placement. See CFS P&P Clearances—Relative Assessment (K-0101) for relevant factors to consider.

   Exception: Pursuant to Health and Safety Code (HSC) §§ 1502.7(b)(2) and 1522(b)(1)(B), non-minor dependents (NMDs) already residing in the prospective relative/NREFM home are exempt from background clearances, unless the home is licensed as a family day care home.

D. Per CFS policy, emergency placements will be approved by a supervisor (document on *Emergency Placement Approval Relative Assessment [F063-04-815B])*. If initial approval is provided verbally, the supervisor will follow up with a written signature authorizing the placement.

Per ACL 07-39, for a dependent child, once the emergency is resolved, the assigned social worker will determine whether it is in the child's best interest to remain with the relative/NREFM or be returned to placement with the original caregiver.

Prior to returning the child to a previous placement, the following factors will be considered:

- Whether previous caregiver remains licensed or approved
- Child's relationship to the previous caregiver and to the temporary relative/NREFM caregiver
- Child's placement preference (if of an appropriate age and ability to provide input)

Initial Orientation and Training

As part of the assessment process, CDSS MPP Division 31-445 mandates relative/NREFM caregivers receive an orientation on the child welfare system, the caregiver's role and responsibilities, and a summary of approval standards for foster homes.

Per CFS policy, the orientation requirement will be met by review, completion, and/or distribution of the contents of CFS-assembled relative/NREFM assessment packets. In addition to state required assessment forms, the assessment packets may include checklists, informational forms and brochures on topics such as kinship care, the Court, permanency options, and available community resources. See Attachment 3—Relative/NREFM Assessment/Reassessment Packets.

CAPs

Per ACLs 05-13 and 05-13E (ERRATA) (February 15, 2006), the following CAP guidelines apply:

A. The prospective caregiver and assessing social worker will develop a plan for correcting each deficiency identified, as described on *Checklist of Health and Safety Standards for Approval of Family Caregiver Home (SOC 817)*.

B. Deficiencies not corrected during a visit will be documented on *Corrective Action Plan (CAP) Relative Assessment*

(F063-04-817A). CAPs will be completed within 30 calendar days following the date of the visit, unless the assessing social worker determines the deficiency requires a longer completion date.

C. The assessing social worker is responsible for monitoring the completion of CAPs which may be verified by either an in-home visit or by acceptable documentation provided by the caregiver.

D. For initial assessments, CAPs addressing immediate and potential impact deficiencies will be corrected prior to the placement approval and eligibility for foster care funding.

E. For reassessments, approval may be granted and a child may remain in the home pending CAPs addressing potential impact deficiencies. Immediate impact deficiencies will be corrected promptly or the child will be removed from placement until the deficiency is corrected.

DAPs

Pursuant to CCL Title 22, Division 6, Chapter 9.5, Article 3, ACLs 05-13 and 05-13E (ERRATA) (February 15, 2006), DAPs:

- May only be applied for CCL Title 22, Division 6, Chapter 9.5, Article 3 § 89373 Telephone Service and § 89387 Buildings and Grounds (bedroom space)
- Do not expire unless the specific situation changes
- Once approved, indicate a home meets approval standards

Per CFS policy, DAPs will be approved by a supervisor (document on *Documented Alternative Plans (DAP) Relative Assessment [F063-04-817B])*.

Swimming Pool/Body of Water Authorization

Pursuant to CCL Title 22, Division 6, Chapter 9.5, Article 3, swimming pools and similar bodies of water located on caregiver's property will be inaccessible to foster children less than 10 years of age or who have special needs. Refer to CFS P&P Bodies of Water Enclosures/Covers (K-0104).

Per CFS policy, bodies of water authorizations will be documented on *Swimming Pool Authorization—Relative Assessment (F063-04-817C)*. Approval from the Deputy Director (DD) of Family Assessment and Shelter Services or Deputy Director on Duty (DDOD) is required when safety precautions other than an approved enclosure or pool cover are authorized.

Assessment Approval

Per CDSS MPP Division 31-445, approval of a relative/NREFM assessment is based on:

A. Prospective caregiver's understanding of and ability to meet the child's specific needs and comply with requirements for care, as outlined and documented on *Relative/Non-Relative Extended Family Member Caregiver Assessment (SOC 818)*.

B. Results of the criminal and child abuse records check as listed and documented on *Approval of Family Caregiver Home (SOC 815)*.

- Adults live scanned and results received
- Out-of-state child abuse and neglect registry check (Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act), if applicable
- Per CFS policy, search of California Megan's Law Sex Offender Locator Database and CA DMV. See CFS P&P DMV Clearances (B-0107).

Additional public access records checks (e.g., OC Superior Court or OC Sheriff websites, etc.) may be conducted, as needed.

C. In-person verification that the home meets health and safety standards set forth in CCL Title 22, Division 6, Chapter 9.5, Article 3 and documented on *Checklist of Health and Safety Standards for Approval of Family Caregiver Home (SOC 817)*, including CAPs.

D. Verification the caregiver received information regarding the personal rights of foster children, CCL approval standards, and orientation as documented on *Approval of Family Caregiver Home (SOC 815)*.

Approval of Family Caregiver Home (SOC 815) requires entry of the date the assessing social worker certifies the caregiver meets home approval standards. The date of certification will coincide with the date the assessing social worker signs the completed *Approval of Family Caregiver Home (SOC 815)* and will:

- Begin eligibility for federal or state funding, and
- Determine the annual reassessment time line

The supervisor will sign *Approval of Family Caregiver Home (SOC 815)* after verification of assessment activities and review of forms for accuracy and thoroughness.

See Attachment 1—Suggested Guidelines for Completion of Relative/NREFM Assessments and Reassessments.

Assessment Denial or Disapproval

Per Harris v. CDSS et al (2012) and ACL 12-71, an individual who is denied assessment due to lack of standing as a relative/NREFM or denied approval following a completed assessment will be notified of the denial and right to a state hearing utilizing *Notice of Action-Denial of Home Assessment/Approval (NA 1271)*. Refer to CFS P&P State Hearings (B-0122) for information on the state hearing process.

A *Notice of Action-Denial of Home Assessment/Approval (NA 1271)* will be completed by the CFS staff who:

- Denied assessment due to determination the individual does not meet the definition of relative or NREFM
- Denied a home assessment/reassessment approval

For guidelines on *(NA 1271)* completion, see Attachment 2—Guidelines for NOA Completion and Harris Hearing Preparation.

Assessment Approval with Delayed Placement

Per CFS policy, an approved relative/NREFM assessment is valid 180 days. If an assessment is approved, and one or more of the children included in the assessment is not immediately placed, the following apply:

A. If other dependent children have been in the approved home and there has been regular, in-home contact with the caregiver, a child may be placed up to 180 days following assessment approval.

B. If other children have not been placed in the approved home, a child may be placed up to 180 days following assessment approval only after a screening of the caregiver and caregiver's home is conducted. Diversion will complete the screening and *Relative/NREFM Delayed Placement Assessment Checklist (F063-25-649)* to determine whether any changes exist which require attention.

C. Placement of a child identified on the approved assessment beyond 180 days requires a new assessment.

Caregiver Move

When an approved relative/NREFM caregiver moves to a new home (i.e., changes residences), the physical environment will be assessed to evaluate the home meets CCL Title 22, Division 6, Chapter 9.5, Article 3 health and safety standards, as indicated in CDSS MPP Division 31-445. Per CFS policy, a new assessment will be completed, as follows:

A. The assigned SSW will complete and submit *Relative/NREFM Clearance and Assessment Referral* (*F063-04-815A)* to Relative Assessment Unit (RAU).

B. RAU will assess the new home within 10 calendar days of the date the child moves into the home.

   Note: If there is a swimming pool or body of water in the new home, and the dependent child is under the age of 10 or has special needs, the home will be assessed prior to the child moving into the home.

C. The assessment of the new home and all related forms will be completed following the process for an initial assessment. The placement is not eligible for federal or state funds until the assessment is complete, including CAPs.

New Adult in the Home

If a new adult is added to the household of an approved home, per CDSS MPP Division 31-445, child abuse and criminal history clearances will be completed on each new individual. As soon as practically possible upon becoming aware of an uncleared adult in an approved home, the assigned social worker will notify RAU to request background clearances.

New Child in the Home

Per CDSS MPP Division 31-445, approvals for relative/NREFM placements are child specific. If an approved home is being considered for placement of a new child, an assessment will be completed for that child to evaluate the caregiver's ability to meet that specific child's needs.

Note: A new assessment may also be completed for children already placed to coincide with reassessment timeframes for all children in the home.

Out-of-County/ State Assessments

When considering an out-of-county or out-of-state placement with a relative/NREFM, CFS staff will follow guidelines set forth in:

- CFS P&P Courtesy Supervision (K-0501)
- CFS P&P Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) (K-0502)

Per CFS policy, RAU will complete relative/NREFM assessments for incoming courtesy supervision requests. The designated ICPC home study worker will complete relative/NREFM assessments for incoming ICPC requests.

ICWA

Per ACL 05-13, the California relative/NREFM assessment and annual reassessment approval standards do not apply to tribally approved homes with the exception of background checks. Criminal and child abuse clearances indicated on *Approval of Family Caregiver Home (SOC 815)* are required on all individuals residing in a tribally approved home.

When determining placement options for an Indian child, including relative/NREFM homes, CFS staff will adhere to guidelines detailed in CFS P&P Indian Child Welfare Act (G-0309).

Annual Reassessment

Pursuant to ACL 02-59, RAU will reassess approved relative/NREFM homes on an annual basis to evaluate quality of care and to assess continued compliance with CCL Title 22, Division 6, Chapter 9.5, Article 3 health and safety standards.

CFS policy considers a reassessment timely when the reassessment is completed by the end of the 12th month from which the prior assessment was completed. For example, if the previous *Approval of Family Caregiver Home (SOC 815)* was signed on June 15, 2012, the reassessment is due by June 30, 2013.

Per CFS policy, reassessments include:

A. In-home inspection documented on *Checklist of Health and Safety Standards for Approval of Family Caregiver Home (SOC 817)*. Documentation of DAPs or CAPs, as appropriate.

B. Assessment of caregiver's continued ability to meet child's needs documented on *Relative/Non-Relative Extended Family Member Caregiver Assessment (SOC 818)*.

C. Verification of criminal and child abuse records documented on *Approval of Family Caregiver Home (SOC 815)*.

- Adults with documented evidence of prior live scan with subsequent arrest reports do not require new clearances
- Any adults who have moved into the home and have not been cleared, will be cleared
- New CWS/CMS, DMV, and Megan's Law clearances on all adults in the home

D. Review and/or distribution of the contents of CFS-assembled relative/NREFM reassessment packet which may include current information regarding personal rights of foster children, CCL approval standards, informational forms and brochures on topics such as kinship care and available community resources.

E. Supervisor approval of reassessment activities (document on *Approval of Family Caregiver Home [SOC 815])*.

See Attachment 1—Suggested Guidelines for Completion of Relative/NREFM Assessments and Reassessments.

Documentation

CDSS MPP Division 31-075 requires documentation of relative/NREFM assessment activities in the child's electronic and written case record. Per CFS policy and PCS program protocol, the following documentation responsibilities are shared by clerical and social work staff within Diversion and RAU:

A. **Within CWS/CMS:**

- State assessment forms, and as applicable, CFS assessment forms of homes approved and selected for placement
- Placement with the approved caregiver
- Contacts with prospective caregivers and others in the child's Collateral Notebook (e.g., individual assessed but not approved, interested in providing support to child yet not placement, future placement option, etc.)
- Reassessment activities

B. **Within child's service folder:**
Hardcopy versions of assessment and placement forms or other applicable written documents filed on *Relative Acco (F063-25-1119)*, *Placement Acco (F063-25-106)*, or as directed on the form, regardless of the disposition of the assessment.
Note: RAU will store criminal background clearance information in a secured, confidential file.

REFERENCES

Attachments and CWS/CMS Data Entry Standards

Hyperlinks are provided below to access attachments to this P&P and any CWS/CMS Data Entry Standards that are referenced.

- Attachment 1—Suggested Guidelines for Completion of Relative/NREFM Assessments and Reassessments
- Attachment 2—Guidelines for NOA Completion and Harris Hearing Preparation
- Attachment 3—Relative/NREFM Assessment/Reassessment Packets

Hyperlinks

Users accessing this document by computer may create a direct connection to the following references by clicking on them.

- CFS P&P Clearances—Relative Assessment (K-0101)
- CFS P&P Out-of-Home Placement (K-0208)
- CFS P&P Courtesy Supervision (K-0501)
- CFS P&P Jurisdictional/Dispositional Hearing Report (G-0310)
- CFS P&P Bodies of Water Enclosures/Covers (K-0104)
- CFS P&P Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (K-0502)
- CFS P&P Indian Child Welfare Act (G-0309)
- CFS P&P DMV Clearances (B-0107)
- CFS P&P State Hearings (B-0122)
- CFS P&P CLETS (B-0116)

Other Sources

Other printed references include the following:

None.

FORMS

Online Forms

Forms listed below may be printed out and completed, or completed online, and may be accessed by clicking on the link provided.

Form Name	Form Number
Relative Information List	F063-25-628
Verification of Non-Relative Extended Family Member	F063-04-75C
Emergency Placement Approval—Relative Assessment	F063-04-815B
Documented Alternative Plans—Relative Assessment	F063-04-817B
Swimming Pool Authorization—Relative Assessment	F063-04-817C
Out-of-State Disclosure and Criminal Record Statement	LIC 508D
Emergency Plan for Relative/NREFM Placement Homes	F063-04-78
Relative/NREFM Delayed Placement Assessment Checklist	F063-25-649

Hardcopy Forms

Forms that may be completed in hard copy (including multi-copy NCR forms) are listed below. ***For reference purposes only,*** links are provided to view these hard copy forms, where available.

Form Name	Form Number
Corrective Action Plan—Relative Assessment	F063-04-817A
Relative Acco	F063-25-1119
Placement Acco	F063-25-106

CWS/CMS Forms

Forms that may **only** be obtained in CWS/CMS are listed below. ***For reference purposes only,*** links are provided to view these CWS/CMS forms, where available.

Form Name	Form Number
Relative/NREFM Clearance and Assessment Referral	F063-04-815A
Approval of Family Caregiver Home	SOC 815
Checklist of Health and Safety Standards for Approval of Family Caregiver Home	SOC 817

Relative or Non-Relative Extended Family Member Caregiver Assessment	SOC 818
Notice of Action–Denial of Home Assessment/Approval	NA 1271
Notice of Action–Denial of Home Assessment/Approval (Spanish)	NA 1271Sp

Brochures

Brochures to distribute in conjunction with this policy may include:

Brochure Name	Brochure Number
Caregiver and Children and Family Services Partnership, Coordination of Care Guidelines	F063-28-348
Caregiver and Children and Family Services Partnership, Coordination of Care Guidelines (Spanish)	F063-28-348SP
Important Information for Kinship Caregivers	F063-28-335
Important Information for Kinship Caregivers (Spanish)	F063-28-335Sp
Caregivers and the Courts	F063-28-347
Caregivers and the Courts (Spanish)	F063-28-347Sp
Giving a Child a Permanent Home: Choices For Relatives	Pub. 344
Giving a Child a Permanent Home: Choices For Relatives (Spanish)	Pub. 344SP

LEGAL MANDATES

Family Code (FC) Sections (§§) 7950 and 7951 indicate when a foster placement intended to exceed 30 days is needed, the placement will, if possible, be made in the home of a relative, unless the placement would not be in the best interest of the child.

Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) § 16000 describes legislative intent to preserve and strengthen a child's family ties when removed from parental custody, that preferential consideration be given to placement with relatives, and that placement be in a safe setting that is the least restrictive or most family-like.

WIC §16507.5(b) indicates the granting of an approval status does not entitle the caregiver to the placement of a specific child as placement decisions are based on the child's needs and best interests.

WIC § 309(d) authorizes emergency assessment and temporary placement with a relative/NREFM pending an Initial Petition hearing and describes assessment requirements, including an in-home inspection and background clearances.

WIC § 309(e) provides that within 30 days of a child being placed into protective custody, an investigation be completed to identify and locate grandparents, adult siblings, and other adult relatives of the child, for notification purposes.

WIC § 319(f) indicates at an Initial Petition hearing, Court may order placement of a child in the home of an assessed relative/NREFM. WIC § 319 also defines relative and identifies which relatives are given preferential consideration for placement.

WIC § 361.2(e) includes relatives, regardless of immigration status, and NREFMs as two of the placement options a social worker may use when Court orders removal of a child.

WIC § 361.3(a–c) mandates when a child is removed from parental custody, consideration be given to a relative for placement, regardless of the relative's immigration status, and outlines factors to consider when determining whether placement with a relative is appropriate.

WIC § 361.3(d) mandates when a new placement of a dependent child is needed, consideration be given to suitable relatives who will fulfill the child's reunification or permanent plan requirements. In addition to the factors described in WIC § 361.3(a), the social worker will consider whether the relative has established and maintained a relationship with the child.

In re Joseph T. (2008) 163 Cal. App. 4th 787 held the WIC § 361.3 relative placement consideration applies at least through the family reunification period and regardless of whether a new placement is needed.

Cesar V. v. Orange County Social Services Agency (2001) 91 Cal. App. 4th 1023 indicates the WIC § 361.3 relative placement consideration applies up to termination of parental rights.

WIC § 361.3(f) permits the search for birth relatives if a previous dependent and adopted child is removed from the adoptive home, the adoption failed, or was set aside, and no appropriate prospective relative/NREFM caregiver exists within the adoptive family.

WIC § 362.7 defines NREFM and the NREFM home evaluation process.

WIC § 361.45 authorizes assessment and temporary placement of a court-dependent child with a relative/NREFM when the sudden unavailability of a foster caregiver requires a change in placement on an emergency basis.

WIC § 11402.4 prohibits the postponement or termination of payment to an approved relative/NREFM home due to a delay in the completion of the annual reassessment. If circumstances lead to a delay in reassessment, a reassessment must occur no less than once every 24 months.

Health and Safety Code (HSC) §§ 1502.7(b)(2) and1522(b)(1)(B), exempt non-minor dependents (NMDs) residing in a prospective relative/NREFM home from background clearances, unless the home is licensed as a family day care home.

California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Manual of Policy and Procedures (MPP) Division 31-410.5 outlines guidelines for placement assessments of relative/NREFM homes pending a Detention hearing.

CDSS MPP Division 31-445 specifies the requirements for approval of relative/NREFM homes for placement.

CDSS MPP Division 31-405.1(b), (c) and (d) list preferential relatives, relatives, and NREFMs as placement considerations.

CDSS MPP Division 31-075 describes the content and retention requirements of child welfare services case records.

CDSS All County Letter (ACL) 12-71 explains the right for relatives/NREFMs to appeal denial of an assessment or approval through the state hearing process.

CDSS ACL 08-43 allows preferential consideration to a birth relative if a previous dependent and adopted child is removed from the adoptive home, the adoption failed, or was set aside, and no appropriate relative/NREFM caregiver exists within the adoptive family.

CDSS ACL 07-39 outlines the process for temporary placement of a dependent child in out-of-home care with a relative/NREFM on an emergency basis.

CDSS ACL 05-13 and 05-13E (ERRATA) (February 15, 2006) provide answers to frequently asked questions regarding relative/NREFM approvals.

CDSS ACL 02-59 addresses periodic inspection and evaluation of approved relative/NREFM homes.

CDSS MMP Community Care Licensing (CCL) Title 22, Division 6, Chapter 9.5, Article 3 provides the core regulations, health, and safety standards of relative/NREFM caregivers.

CDSS MMP CCL Title 22, Division 6, Chapter 9.5, § 89317 addresses non-discrimination of prospective caregivers.