Statement of Consideration (SOC)

Foster Care and Adoption SOP

The following comments were received when drafts relating to foster care and adoption were sent for field review. Thanks to those who reviewed and commented. Comments about typographical and grammatical errors have been excluded; these errors will be corrected as appropriate.

1. **Comment:** SOP 12.11.1-Regarding the #4 footnote: This needs some clarification related to what is a therapeutic child.

**Response:** Clarification has been added to the SOP regarding when a child may be determined to be therapeutic. The child’s level must be a three (3), four (4) or five (5) to be considered.

1. **Comment:** SOP 12.11.1-Add a statement that includes children being placed in respite.

**Response:** A statement has been added to Practice Guidance regarding exceptions and children in respite care.
2. **Comment:** SOP 12.11.1-If the Placement Exception Tip Sheet is not being revised, it needs to be. The last comment on the tip sheet about the DPP-112A not including one of the exception reasons is no longer true.  This tip sheet was last updated in 2005 (it appears) and the DPP 112 forms were updated in 2008.

**Response:** This statement has been removed.
3. **Comment:** SOP 13.13.1-Regarding procedure #10-The revision regarding the SSW and R&C worker meeting with the foster family 10 days after TPR is not correct. This has to do with a goal change and is not related to TPR. If a step needs to be added to include this it should occur separately.

**Response:** This statement has been revised to say “The R&C worker: Reviews the information that as addressed during the foster parent adoption education session held at goal change.”
4. **Comment:** SOP 13.13.1-**A)** Add that the swift chairperson may also be included in this discussion. **B)** Will the R&C worker be responsible for documenting this meeting in the provide case of the foster parents? This should be clarified.

**Response:** **A)** A statement has been added to Practice Guidance regarding inviting the swift chair, as appropriate, to the foster parent adoption education session. **B)** A statement has been added to this section stating that the R&C worker and SSW enter details of the foster parent adoption education session in their respective cases.
5. **Comment:** SOP 13.13.1-This comment is not related to an SOP change in red, however, I feel that the new organization of the SOP content makes this particular SOP section confusing. **A)** Procedure #2 under SSW discusses having the foster family sign the Intent to Adopt at the meeting or within 5 working days of the meeting, but there is no explanation of what meeting this refers to or WHEN in the life of the case the SSW should be having this meeting with the family.  The flow in this section is odd and seems to be out of order chronologically.  Procedure #1 is discussing signing the APA and the procedure 2 is discussing singing the Intent.  These are out of order.
**B)** Same SOP section under R&C worker procedures - #9 and #10 are completely out of order chronologically in the life of the case.  Numbers 1 through 8 are discussing things that are done after the presentation summary is complete and then #9 discusses a procedure that should have occurred at goal change and #10 needs to occur by the same date the presentation summary packet is due.  I personally think that #10 should occur within 10 days of receiving the completed presentation summary packet as it is important for the foster/adoptive family to have the opportunity to review this before making a final decision about adoption.  I also think that the 30 day time frame for negotiation of adoption assistance should start at the date the presentation summary packet is received by R&C, as in reality the R&C worker cannot start their part until that piece is complete (which is rarely within 30 days of the TPR).
**C)** Why does the SRA or designee need to retain copies of all of the adoption assistance paperwork?  There are already copies in the subsidy file kept by the R&C worker and with the billing specialist.  This seems like an unnecessary waste of paper and filing cabinets considering that each region has several hundred subsidy cases.
**D)** Same section – Footnote #4 – original adoption assistance agreements should be maintained in the adoptive family’s subsidy case file.  The child’s file will be sealed upon finalization and sent to Central Office so isn’t the best place for the originals of the agreements to be.

**Response: A)** This has been clarified by adding language regarding the foster parent adoption education session and also by renumbering and reorganizing this section.

**B)** This SOP section has been renumbered in order to correct the chronological errors.

**C)** This statement has been deleted from this section.

**D)** This footnote has been deleted.

1. **Comment:** SOP 13.15-The statement in practice guidance regarding what a worker should do if someone calls them about giving a child up for adoption and a case is not open (3rd bulleted point): I am very confused about this interpretation.

**Response:** No change was made as a result of this comment. It is the right of the birth mother to make accommodations for a child whether prior to or after the birth without having to work with this agency.
2. **Comment:** SOP 13.39-Regarding the 3rd bulleted point addressing siblings-I do not understand exactly what this means. Is it saying that if there is a case where one child is adopted, then the same birth family has another child later, the child is placed in the same foster home, TPR occurs and the same family adopts him/her that the child can be counted as a sibling, therefore qualifying for subsidy?

**Response:** Yes, based on Title IV-E requirements, if two siblings adopted by the same family, regardless of when the two adoptions occurred, the children are considered siblings and are eligible for a subsidy.