

Recruitment and Selection Committee

Tips for Caseworkers



What Is the Selection Committee?

The child's or youth's best interest (www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/best_interest.pdf) is the primary consideration in selecting an adoptive or guardianship placement. Placement decisions should be considered throughout concurrent planning and based on the individual child's or youth's identified needs, including those for life-long safety, well-being and permanency, and the prospective families' understanding of and potential capacity for meeting those needs.

Using a committee or team process to make placement decisions minimizes the impact of individual biases and increases the diversity of perspectives. When only one placement is being considered, the team approach can help identify the unique needs of the child, youth, and family and proposing supports to help make the placement successful. The Identifying Adoptive Families policy must be followed throughout this process.

What should I do to recruit for a child or youth who needs a permanent home?

- Ensure all relatives, suitable others, current caregivers, and caregivers of siblings (if siblings are separated) are considered first. All search efforts must be documented in FamLink.
- Talk to the local adoption employee regarding any possible adoptive families who may be a fit for the child or youth.
- Consult with your regional placement unit, state licensing, and/or Child Placing Agencies (CPAs) as additional avenues to identify potential families.
- If a child or youth is not yet legally-free, request permission from the court and/or biological parent to begin recruitment services that will include registration with WA Access through Northwest Adoption Exchange (NWAE) (www.nwae.org/login), Northwest Adoption Exchange (www.nwae.org), Wendy's Wonderful Kids (WWK), and What is Adoption Consortium? DCYF CWP_0071 publication as a guide, found at www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pubs/CWP_0071.pdf. No special permission is required to access these services if the child or youth is legally-free. Both biological parents must consent to recruitment services and must complete and sign the Release and Consent for Child Specific Recruitment DCYF 09-611 form found at <http://intranet.dcyf.wa.gov:8090/drupal-8.4.0/sites/default/files/forms/09-611.pdf>.
- The caseworker may have discussions with the child or youth regarding what qualities and characteristic they wish for in a prospective family. The caseworker can utilize the Child Family Preferences DCYF 09-030E form found at http://intranet.dcyf.wa.gov:8090/drupal-8.4.0/forms?field_form_number_value=09-030E&title= when talking to the child or youth.



- Review Child-Specific Recruitment Services in Washington State CWP_0054 publication found at www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pubs/CWP_0054.pdf to ensure all forms of recruiting are utilized.
- Check with your local resources such as your Regional Adoption Program Manager (RAPM) or designee regarding other types of recruitment activities or events such as photoshoots or Family Fest or Kids Fest to identify potential families.
- The RAPM or designee will verify a family has an approved adoption home study before being considered for placement of a legally-free child or youth. Prospective adoptive families must be licensed as foster parents with a home study approving the family for adoption.
- Gather home studies and profiles (if available) of all interested families.
- Refer to “Recruitment Strategies and Placement Considerations Flowchart CWP_0076 publication found at www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pubs/CWP_0076.pdf for further guidance.

I have a number of home studies.

What do I do now?

- Identify the needs of the child or youth and have an idea of what type of family and/or skills would be necessary to parent the child or youth through adulthood. Use the form Child Family Preferences DCYF 09-030E form found at http://intranet.dcyf.wa.gov:8090/drupal-8.4.0/forms?field_form_number_value=09-030e&title=.

- Do not rule out any families until you have thoroughly reviewed the home studies. The best practice is to review the home studies through the lens of what is in the child’s or youth’s best interest.
- Ensure any family interested has enough information about the child or youth through a conversation with the family and/or sharing redacted documents to make a good decision as to fit. Having honest discussions upfront with a family can minimize problems in the future.
- It is imperative discussions with the prospective family are strength’s based while also providing context as to why the child may be exhibiting some behaviors (e.g. a child who hoards food may do so due to not getting enough to eat in their home of origin).
- If there is only one remaining family, staff with your supervisor and adoption supervisor to assist in determining fit. You may choose to interview the family to determine if this is a match, utilize the Selection Committee process to ensure the family is the best fit for the child or youth, or proceed to a Family Team Decision Making Meeting (FTDM) (www.dcyf.wa.gov/1700-case-staffings/1720-family-team-decision-making-meetings) to begin discussions on transition.
- If you have more than one family, refer to the Selection Committee, per the Identifying Adoptive Families policy.
- Communicate updates to the families throughout the matching process.



What happens during a Selection Committee, and how should I prepare?

- Contact your local RAPM or designee to schedule a Selection Committee.
- Be prepared to talk about your child or youth. Provide the RAPM with any important documents regarding the child or youth to include CHiPR, psychological evaluations, medical information, educational information, etc., as needed. If age and developmentally appropriate, discuss with the child or youth what they would like to see or want in a family. This could include a two-parent home, living in an urban area, hobbies/interests, has animals, etc. Use Child Family Preferences DCYF 09-030E form available online at http://intranet.dcyf.wa.gov:8090/drupal-8.4.0/forms?field_form_number_value=09-030e&title= to help guide this discussion with the child or youth to help identify their wants and needs.
- It is **critical** that all participants in a Selection Committee thoroughly review the home studies before the initial meeting. Ensure at least one member has reviewed the family's provider file in FamLink to identify any pending or current infractions or investigations and current licensing placement capacity.
- Typically, the initial Selection Committee meeting is internal only and is comprised of various DCYF staff (caseworker, supervisor, CFWS staff, adoption staff, interns, etc.). This meeting is scheduled to determine the child's or youth's needs by evaluating various areas of need using Family Selection Criteria DCYF 09-030A form available online at http://intranet.dcyf.wa.gov:8090/drupal-8.4.0/forms?field_form_number_value=09-030a&title=. This may include whether or not the child or youth needs to be an only child, can be around animals, needs to remain in contact with the biological family, etc. This is then evaluated by what each of the potential adoptive families can provide for the child or youth using Home Study Review and Placement Considerations CWP_0064 publication available online at www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pubs/CWP_0064.pdf. This meeting typically lasts approximately two hours. DCYF Selection Committee members need to commit to participation in both the initial meeting and all family interviews.
- Once this portion of the process is complete, the top-scoring families will be invited to another meeting that may include external partners (e.g., CASA, GAL, Tribe, child's or youth's attorney). Ensure you have obtained permission from each of the families being considered if you involve external partners. To download Consent DCYF 14-012 form, go to www.dcyf.wa.gov/forms?field_number_value=14-012&title=. Once permission is given, you will provide each external partner a copy of the family's home study to review before the second Selection Committee meeting.
- During the second Selection Committee meeting, committee members will be involved in asking predetermined questions before any interviews with families. All families will be asked the same set of questions by using Interview Questions and Scoring DCYF 09-030C form available online at <http://intranet.dcyf.wa.gov:8090/drupal-8.4.0/sites/default/files/forms/09-030C.pdf>. Allow at least one hour per family for the interview.
- Each participant in the committee will score the families individually by using Interview Questions and Scoring DCYF 09-030C form available online at <http://intranet.dcyf.wa.gov:8090/drupal-8.4.0/sites/default/files/forms/09-030C.pdf>. These scores will be combined for each family. They will then be used to determine the final best fit and possible alternative placements by completing Selection Committee Interviews-Prospective Families DCYF 09-030D form available online at <http://intranet.dcyf.wa.gov:8090/drupal-8.4.0/sites/default/files/forms/09-030D.pdf>.
- Ensure all families are informed about what is occurring (whether they are ruled in or ruled out) and inform the families within 10 days or less of the decision. It is the responsibility of the caseworker or supervisor to inform these families of their status. This is not the responsibility of partners such as the Wendy's Wonderful Kids (WWK) recruiter, CASA, etc.
- The final decision must be entered into FamLink through a Shared Planning Meeting/FTDM. All Selection Committee documents will be stored centrally with the RAPM or designee.

The Selection Committee has chosen a top family. What happens next?

- You will schedule an FTDM involving the chosen family, current placement, and all other case parties to begin discussions on a transition plan. Each transition plan is based on the needs of the individual child or youth and must always consider the child's or youth's best interest. It may help to engage the placement unit and/or licensing to ensure appropriate approval before placement and there are no barriers to continued transition and placement.
- If placement is not successful with the top family, you may consult with your supervisor to consider alternative families interviewed. You may also initiate the search process again and hold another selection committee.



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