

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814



January 15, 1987

ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. 1-02-87

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS  
ALL COUNTY COUNSELS

SUBJECT: CHAPTER 640: (AB 2645)

The purpose of this All County Information Notice is to summarize statutory changes to Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) Section 361 enacted by Chapter 640:1986 (AB 2645) effective January 1, 1987.

Chapter 640 adds WIC Section 361.3 to require that whenever a child is removed from home pursuant to Section 361, preferential consideration shall be given to the request of a relative for placement of the child with that relative. It defines "preferential consideration" to mean that the relative seeking placement shall be the first placement to be considered and investigated. It defines relative for purposes of the Section as an adult who is a grandparent, aunt, uncle, first cousin, or sibling.

Counties should also be aware of other requirements imposed by WIC Section 361.3. In determining whether a placement with the relative is appropriate, the probation officer and court should assess the ability of the relative to exercise proper and effective care and control of the child, to provide a home and the necessities of life for the child, to facilitate visitation with the child's other relatives and to facilitate reunification efforts with the parents. This section also stipulates that consideration shall be given to attempting to place siblings and stepsiblings in the same home. In the event that more than one relative requests preferential consideration, this statute requires the probation officer and the court to consider the best interests of the child in determining which of the relatives is most likely to satisfy the factors mentioned above.

If you have any questions, please contact your Adult and Family Services Operations Consultant at (916) 445-0623.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Loren D. Suter".

LOREN D. SUTER  
Deputy Director  
Adult and Family Services

cc: CWDA