

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, California 95814

**REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL**

- State Law Change
- Federal Law or Regulation Change
- Court Order
- Clarification Requested by
One or More Counties
- Initiated by CDSS

March 25, 2004

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 04-10

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL CHILD WELFARE SERVICE
PROGRAM MANAGERS
ALL JUVENILE COURT JUDGES
ALL CHIEF PROBATION OFFICERS

SUBJECT: **PERIODIC REASSESSMENT OF ALL APPROVED
RELATIVE/NON-RELATED EXTENDED FAMILY MEMBERS
FOSTER FAMILY HOMES**

REFERENCE: ACL 00-85 ASFA Regulations: Approval of Relative Caregivers and
Certification Pending Licensure of Non-Relative Caregivers
ACL 01-85 AB 1695 Clarification of Conformance of State Statutes to
Same Standards for the Licensing or Approval of FFH Consistent
With Federal ASFA of 1997
ACL 02-58 Effect of AB1695 on FC and Suggested Guidelines for
Verification of Approved FFH's
ACL 02-59 ASFA and AB1695 Periodic Inspection and Evaluation of
Approved Relative/NREFM Homes
ACL 02-78 Assessment of Relatives/NREFM for Approval as FC
Providers; Plans of Correction
ACL 02-97 Deadline for Assessments of Relative Homes
ACL 04-02 Periodic Reassessment of Relative/NREFM Foster Care
Providers

This letter is to announce that funding will be restored for the current fiscal year to ensure that all approved relative and non-related extended family members (henceforth, "relative caregiver") are reassessed on an annual basis. These homes are to be reassessed no less frequently than annually using the required SOC 815, 817, and 818 forms in order to verify that the relative caregiver's home continues to meet all approval requirements necessary to support Title IV-E eligibility and compliance with Higgins v. Saenz. Information regarding funding and specific claiming instructions to counties will be forthcoming in a subsequent County Fiscal Letter.

Counties are instructed to immediately take action to ensure reassessments are performed on all previously approved relative caregivers' homes that have not been reassessed within one year of the most recent approval/reassessment. Priority should be given to reassessments of homes where assessment/approval documentation is not recorded on the mandated forms.

Every home requiring a reassessment must be examined as outlined in the All County Letter 04-02. It is understood that some counties may have reduced reassessment activities for approved relative caregivers based on reduced funding. However, now that funding is being restored to provide for at least annual reassessments for all cases, required reassessments for all approved caregivers, to bring every home into compliance with reassessment requirements must be completed expeditiously.

Please note that the information in this letter does not pertain to periodic visits/reassessment of licensed foster care facilities, including homes of relative caregivers that are also licensed. Counties were given instructions for licensed facilities previously through a November 7, 2003 letter from the Community Care Licensing Division addressed to all county foster family home licensing supervisors.

If you have any questions regarding this All County Letter, please contact Lou Del Gaudio, Manager of the Kinship Policy Unit at (916) 651-7393 or at lou.delgaudio@dss.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

BRUCE WAGSTAFF
Deputy Director
Children and Family Services Division