

July 8, 2021

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 21-80

This All County Letter (ACL) is to inform child welfare agencies, juvenile probation departments, foster care and adoption agencies, and Tribes of the termination of certain Emergency Orders and temporary policy flexibilities due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.



KIM JOHNSON
DIRECTOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
744 P Street • Sacramento, CA 95814 • www.cdss.ca.gov



GAVIN NEWSOM
GOVERNOR

July 8, 2021

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 21-80

TO:

- ALL FOSTER CARE MANAGERS
- ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
- ALL CHIEF PROBATION OFFICERS
- ALL CHILD WELFARE SERVICES PROGRAM MANAGERS
- ALL INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM MANAGERS
- ALL INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM COORDINATORS
- ALL TRANSITIONAL HOUSING COORDINATORS
- ALL LICENSED ADOPTION AGENCIES
- ALL LICENSED FOSTER FAMILY AGENCIES
- ALL TITLE IV-E AGREEMENT TRIBES
- ALL ADOPTION FACILITATORS
- ALL CDSS ADOPTION REGIONAL OFFICES
- ALL DELEGATED COUNTY ADOPTION AGENCIES
- ALL ADOPTION SERVICES PROVIDERS
- ALL LICENSED ADOPTION AGENCIES
- CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF ADOPTION AGENCIES

SUBJECT: TERMINATION OF TEMPORARY POLICY FLEXIBILITIES
RELATED TO COVID-19 IMPACTS

REFERENCE: ALL COUNTY LETTERS [20-25](#), [20-56](#), [20-70](#), [20-92](#), [20-123](#), [20-124](#), [20-130](#), [21-08](#), [21-18](#) AND [21-26](#)

The purpose of this All County Letter (ACL) is to provide county child welfare agencies, juvenile probation departments, foster care and adoption agencies, and Tribes with guidance regarding the termination of certain Emergency Orders enacted by Governor Newsom as a result of the declared California State of Emergency due to the outbreak of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). As a result of the expiration of the Statewide Color Tier System and Executive Orders (EO), many of the temporary policy flexibilities that were implemented as a result of the declared California State of Emergency, will be rescinded and all prior statutory, regulatory, and written guidance requirements modified shall be reinstated immediately. This letter is intended to address EOs that are effective through July 31, 2021 and thereafter expire.

Subsequent letters will be released regarding additional expiring EOs and impacts to subsequent policy flexibilities allowed during the COVID-19 emergency.

Caseworker visitation

The waivers, flexibilities and tier-based guidelines in [ACL 20-25](#) dated March 21, 2020, and subsequently in [ACL 20-70](#), [ACL 20-130](#), [ACL 21-08](#) and [ACL 21-18](#) allowed for caseworker visits to be accomplished through videoconferencing, rather than in-person, on a case by case basis and included:

- Family Maintenance visits
- Monthly caseworker visits
- Visits with foster youth
 - Non-Minor Dependents (NMDs)
 - Youth placed out of state
 - Foster youth in non-related legal guardianship
- Post-placement supervision of adoptive placements
- Periodic caseworker visits

Waivers and flexibilities related to caseworker visitation are effective through July 31, 2021, and thereafter all existing statutory, regulatory and written guidance is to be reinstated, without exception, for the COVID-19 state of emergency.

Agency Adoptions Procedures and Independent Adoption Program Requirements

The flexibilities and waivers in [ACL 20-56](#) (May 18, 2020) and subsequently in [ACL 20-92](#), [ACL 20-123](#), [ACL 20-124](#) and [ACL 21-26](#) allowed exceptions to in-person requirements related to independent and agency adoptions for the execution of any relinquishment for adoption, consent to adoption, adoption placement agreement, waiver of the right to revoke such consent or relinquishment, waiver of right to further notice of adoption planning, or statement of understandings in instances where the birth parents are known or are reasonably expected to be, infected with the virus that causes COVID-19. These flexibilities also extended to certain face-to-face visits in independent adoptions. This waiver included the physical presence of a representative of CDSS and other witnesses at the time of signing these documents. The provision of flexibilities and waivers are effective through July 31, 2021. Thereafter all existing statutory, regulatory, and written guidance is to be reinstated, without exception, for the COVID-19 state of emergency.

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Additional information regarding EOs and guidance that are effective through September 30, 2021 and thereafter expire will be forthcoming. If you have any questions or need additional guidance regarding the information in this letter, contact the Children and Family Services Division at CFSD@dss.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By

ANGIE SCHWARTZ, Deputy Director
Children and Family Services Division