

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, California 95814



March 10, 2001

All-County Letter No. 01-20

To: All County Welfare Directors
All County Family Preservation and Support
Program Coordinators

Reason for this Transmittal

- State Law Change
 Federal Law or Regulation
Change
 Court Order
 Clarification Requested by
One or More Counties
 Initiated by California Department of
Social Services

Subject: Guidelines for the Family Preservation and Support Program
County Plan Updates

Reference: Welfare and Institutions Code Section 16600-16605,
All County Letter 00-17, County Fiscal Letter 99/00-30

The Adoptions and Safe Families Act of 1997 (Public Law 105-89) amended the title of the Family Preservation and Support Program to the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program. The California Department of Social Services continues to have oversight responsibility for California's implementation of this federal program and will continue to title the program the Family Preservation and Support Program.

This letter is to provide counties with instructions for the development and submission of the Family Preservation and Support Program county plan updates for Federal Fiscal Year 2001 and anticipated activities for Federal Fiscal Year 2002. Additionally, this letter contains important information regarding the use of Family Preservation and Support Program funding to support both Adoption Promotion and Support and Time-Limited Family Reunification activities.

County Plans:

Each year, in the State's Child and Family Services Plan (Title IV-B Plan), the Department is required to submit information to the federal government illustrating how Family Preservation and Support Program funding has impacted program design, the delivery of services, and the quality of life for the children and families served. As a result, the information contained in each year's county plans is incorporated by the Department into the State's Child and Family Services Plan (Title IV-B Plan) and Annual Progress and Services Report update.

This year's consolidated Child and Family Services Plan (Title IV-B Plan) must be submitted by the Department to the federal government no later than June 30, 2001. In order for the California Department of Social Services to meet this deadline, Family Preservation and Support Program county plan updates must be completed and submitted to the Department timely.

Counties are to send two copies of the plan update to the following address no later than April 13, 2001:

California Department of Social Services
Attn: Family Preservation and Support Program
Children's Services Operations Bureau
744 P Street, MS 19-90
Sacramento, California 95814

Instructions for the completion of this year's county plan updates are attached to this letter.

Use of Family Preservation and Support Program Funds for Time-Limited Family Reunification and Adoption Promotion and Support Services:

The Adoptions and Safe Families Act of 1997 (Public Law 105-89) specifies that not more than 10 percent of expenditures under the Family Preservation and Support Plan for any fiscal year shall be for administrative costs and that the remaining expenditures shall be for programs of family preservation, family support, time-limited reunification, and adoption promotion and support services, with significant portions of such expenditures for each such program.

Based upon this law, the federal Department of Health and Human Services has instructed states to allocate a significant portion of their funds to each service category: family preservation, family support, adoption promotion and support, and time-limited family reunification.

States are expected to allocate 20 percent to each category or have a strong rationale if the allocations are below 20 percent for any one of the service categories. Counties must operate their programs accordingly. Counties that are not currently allocating a significant portion of 20 percent in each service category, must provide a plan describing how the county will progress to a significant portion of 20 percent in all four service categories by Federal Fiscal Year 2004.

Achieving the 20 percent allocation in all four service categories statewide will require a joint effort by counties and the California Department of Social Services. The Department will begin exploring alternatives that could provide for increased activities at the State level in time-limited family reunification and adoption promotion and support services.

All County Letter No. 00-17 explains that California's statutory definition of family preservation is broad enough to include time-limited family reunification and adoption promotion and support services, and that the definition of family support does not preclude support for adoptive families. Therefore, efforts should be made to encourage families needing time-limited reunification or adoption services to utilize family preservation and support services.

County Fiscal Letter 99/00-30 provides the appropriate claiming codes for the two new services. The claiming code for adoption promotion and support services is 675 and the claiming code for time-limited family reunification is 676.

It is critical that counties use the appropriate Family Preservation and Support Program codes for the appropriate component expenditures when claiming so that spending in all four service categories can be accurately identified. As a result, if they have not already done so, Family Preservation and Support Program county planning bodies should begin allocating a significant portion of their program funding to all four service categories or be prepared to provide a strong rationale for not doing so.

If you have any questions regarding the development of this year's county plan update or need clarification regarding the allocation of Family Preservation and Support Program funds for the two new service categories, please contact Lisa Straus of the Child Welfare Services Policy Bureau at (916) 324-6795.

Original Signed by:

SYLVIA PIZZINI
Deputy Director
Children and Family Services Division

Attachment

c: County Family Preservation and Support Program Coordinators
County Welfare Directors Association

Family Preservation and Support Program

Instructions for Developing County Plan Updates For Federal Fiscal Year 2002

A. In order to meet new federal Title IV-B Plan guidelines and requirements, information must be obtained from counties regarding programs and services in relation to outcomes. As a result, counties should categorize services and programs according to how they fulfill the seven federal required outcomes. Those outcomes are:

- Reduce the recurrence of child abuse and/or neglect.
- Reduce the incidence of child abuse and/or neglect in foster care.
- Increase permanency for children in foster care.
- Reduce time in foster care to reunification without increasing re-entry.
- Reduce time in foster care to adoption.
- Increase placement stability.
- Reduce placements of young children in group homes or institutions.

The information needed under each of the identified outcomes is as follows:

1. Reduce the recurrence of child abuse and/or neglect.
 - Describe the Family Preservation and Support Program services being provided in your county to reduce the recurrence of child abuse and/or neglect. For each service being provided, include the service site, the service provided and target population.
2. Reduce the incidence of child abuse and/or neglect in foster care.
 - Describe the Family Preservation and Support Program services being provided in your county to reduce the incidence of child abuse and/or neglect in foster care. For each service being provided, include the service site, the service provided and target population.
3. Increase permanency for children in foster care.
 - Describe the Family Preservation and Support Program services being provided in your county to increase permanency for children in foster care. For each service being provided, include the service site, the service provided and target population.

4. Reduce time in foster care to reunification without increasing re-entry.
 - Describe the Family Preservation and Support Program services being provided in your county to reduce time in foster care to reunification without increasing re-entry. For each service being provided, include the service site, the service provided and target population.
5. Reduce time in foster care to adoption.
 - Describe the Family Preservation and Support Program services being provided in your county to reduce time in foster care to adoption. For each service being provided, include the service site, the service provided and target population.
6. Increase placement stability.
 - Describe the Family Preservation and Support Program services being provided in your county to increase placement stability. For each service being provided, include the service site, the service provided and target population.
7. Reduce placements of young children in group homes or institutions.
 - Describe the Family Preservation and Support Program services being provided in your county to reduce placements of young children in group homes or institutions. For each service being provided, include the service site, the service provided and target population.

If there are no services addressing one of the above listed federal outcomes for children and families, please address the outcome with “no applicable services.”

Describe all other services that promote safe and stable families that do not fit into the above seven federal outcomes. When describing these services, include the following:

Service site - describe where the service is provided, for instance, at a school, a Family Resource Center, etc.

Services/programs provided - describe all the services that address each specific federal outcome for children and families.

Target population - describe the target population for the service.

Desired service outcome - State the outcome to be achieved by delivering the service/program.

The following additional categories and specific descriptions must be included:

- B. **Planning Bodies:** Describe any significant changes in the local planning bodies or the collaborative planning process.
- C. **Objectives:** Utilizing measurable data, describe progress in achieving objectives. Note any changes in methods and tools used to gather data and measure results.
- D. **Staff Training:** Describe staff development and training activities that support the Family Preservation and Support Program plan goals and objectives.
- E. **Technical Assistance:** Describe technical assistance given by the county that supports service providers and the Family Preservation and Support Program plan goals and objectives.
- F. **Baseline Data:** Describe collected county baseline data and how it is being used for evaluations and plan modifications. Provide data analysis and interpretation in regards to outcomes and measures.
- G. **Evaluation Processes:** Describe progress towards program and service evaluation, including the varying methods that may be used for evaluation such as client satisfaction surveys and on-site reviews. In addition, include any key results that have been collected from evaluation processes. Provide all existing data analysis and evaluation reports.
- H. **Service Category Allocation:** List the percentage of funding allocated for each of the four service categories. Where family preservation and family support services are provided to reunifying and adoptive families, including for example, costs for outreach and education, break out these amounts and include them in the total allocation for time-limited family reunification and adoptions promotion and support.

If allocation percentages are significantly above or below 20 percent, provide target percentages for Federal Fiscal Year 2003 that will bring the county's allocations for the four service categories closer to the 20 percent requirement.

<i>Service Category</i>	<i>Allocation Percentage for Federal Fiscal Year 2002</i>	<i>Target Allocation Percentage for Federal Fiscal Year 2003</i>
Family Preservation		
Family Support		
Adoption Promotion and Support		
Time-Limited Family Reunification		

For counties whose allocation percentages for Federal Fiscal Year 2002 are below 20 percent, describe how service needs are being met using other funds or provide a strong rationale for the allocation percentages.

- I. Linkages: Describe the linkages developed between and among the services under these four categories and other service systems. Of particular interest are any linkages with CalWORKS, substance abuse and mental health treatment systems.