

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

744 P Street, Sacramento, California 95814



December 27, 2002

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 02-97

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS  
ALL ELIGIBILITY SUPERVISORS  
ALL CHILD WELFARE SERVICES PROGRAM MANAGERS  
ALL COUNTY LICENSING PROGRAM MANAGERS  
ALL CHIEF PROBATION OFFICERS

SUBJECT: DEADLINE FOR ASSESSMENTS OF RELATIVE HOMES

REFERENCE: ALL COUNTY LETTER NOS. 00-85, 01-85, 02-58, 02-59, 02-78  
COUNTY FISCAL LETTER (CFL) 01/02-61 AND ERRATA DATED  
AUGUST 30, 2002

The purpose of this All County Letter (ACL) is to transmit information on the Federal Title IV-E funding of relative homes that have not been reassessed using the criteria outlined in ACL 01-85, and to provide policy on the use of a mandated form issued via ACL 02-78.

Assessment (and Reassessment) of Relative Homes

Pursuant to ACL 02-58 and Assembly Bill (AB)1695, in order to bring relative homes that were approved for placement prior to the issuance of ACL 02-58 into conformity with new documentation requirements under the federal Adoptions and Safe Families Act (ASFA), counties were instructed to reassess these homes by August 18, 2002 and complete the approval document. The California Department of Social Services recognizes the tremendous effort of counties as they complete this process.

**In response to the Federal Department of Health and Human Services deferral of Title IV-E funds, effective January 1, 2003, relative homes that have not been assessed to meet AB 1695 standards shall not be eligible to Title IV-E funding. For those homes that were not assessed to meet AB 1695 standards during the year of 2002, counties must follow the claiming instructions outlined in CFL 01/02-61 and the errata dated August 30, 2002. As previously stated in ACL 02-78, for reassessment purposes when there are children in care and**

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

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

**correctable deficiencies are noted, the home can be reapproved with a corrective action plan put in place at the same time as the reapproval is given, provided the deficiencies cited do not present imminent danger to children in care. The worker must later verify that the prescribed corrective action was taken within the prescribed time period. If so verified, and if the reapproval is made within 30 days, the relative or nonrelative extended family member placement would continue to be eligible for Title IV-E funding.**

Documentation Requirement for Approved Homes

The ACL 02-58 instructs counties that once a home has been approved and a placement made, the approval document must be completed and sent to the eligibility worker for placement in the income maintenance file. A sample approval document was provided to counties for their use (SOC 815, Approval of Family Caregiver Home). Pursuant to ACL 02-78, beginning on November 1, 2002, counties must use the mandated forms issued in the letter for documenting the initial assessment of a relative and a non-relative extended family member prior to placement, the annual reassessment of existing relative placements, and the assessment of previously approved homes that have not yet been reassessed.

The mandated SOC 815 provides verification that the standards regarding criminal record clearances, caregiver qualifications, and safety of the home and grounds were met. This form contains all of the necessary information for relative or non-relative extended family member approval verification. Therefore, commencing November 1, 2002, counties must replace all versions of the sample approval document with the SOC 815 form.

As a reminder, the SOC 815 must be sent to the eligibility worker for placement in the income maintenance file for all approvals for which a placement has been made, including the reassessment of previously approved homes, and for annual reassessments. The beginning date of Title IV-E eligibility for all new approvals will continue to be the date in which the approval standards and all other eligibility criteria are satisfied.

If you have any questions regarding this ACL, please contact your Foster Care Eligibility representative at (916) 324-5809. Any questions concerning CFL 01/02-61 can be directed to your Fiscal Policy Bureau Analyst at (916) 657-3440.

Sincerely,

***Original Signed by Sylvia Pizzini***

SYLVIA PIZZINI  
Deputy Director  
Children and Family Services Division