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DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
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FRESNO COUNTY ANNUAL REVIEW REPORT

August 4, 2020

The Resource Family Approval (RFA) County Review, as authorized in Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) Section 16519.5 (f)(6), requires the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to provide for the oversight and monitoring of the RFA Program implemented by the counties. Welfare and Institutions Code also requires that the county implement, enforce, and comply with all California State laws, rules, standards, policies and procedures pertaining to the approval of Resource Families. This review is conducted to support the county in their continued implementation of the RFA Program.

During the current state of emergency in California due to COVID-19, CDSS and County partners continue to remain critically responsible to ensure that children are safe from abuse and neglect and that their overall health, safety, and well-being are protected. As a part of that process, CDSS provides guidance for the operation of the RFA program, as well as conducts RFA annual reviews. During this time an adjusted RFA annual review of the county RFA implementation program has been modified to maintain and support the shelter-in-place guidelines. This report is reflective of these changes surrounding travel restrictions and safety for all parties during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The RFA Program County Liaison Martha Jue and Program Manager Dora Hesla wish to express their appreciation to Fresno County for their participation in the county review, and goodwill in showing flexibility and cooperation in order to complete the review during the state-wide shelter-in-place order. The county leadership and staff worked with the county liaison in reviewing cases by allowing access to the Resource Family (RF) files through Virtual Desktop Interface (VDI).

SUMMARY OF THE REVIEW

The county RFA Annual Review was conducted via VDI to review the Resource Family (RF) files. Prior to the annual review, the county was supplied with the RFA review tool as well as a list of 15 RF files.

Fifteen files were reviewed as follows: eight approved; one placement prior to approval; one Annual Update, two denied approvals; and three approvals approved for probation.

The county was provided with a copy of the RFA draft report and copies of the RFA file review tools during the Microsoft Teams Exit Conference, which explains the findings to support the county in their continuous implementation of the RFA Program.



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The following RFA program areas were found to be notable/highlights:

- The county continues to make significant progress in converting the Foster Family Homes to Resource Family Homes (RFH). Per the Foster Family Home Licensing Review Tool submitted by the county, as of July 23, 2020, of the 42 homes left to convert, 34 the have submitted a conversion application. The conversion process is being completed by contracted agencies and the county.
- The county no longer relies entirely on contracted agencies for the completion of the Family Evaluation; and has increased accountability for timely and more completed work by the contracted agencies.
- Due to COVID-19, the county is conducting the orientation in the home.

The following RFA program areas were found to be challenges:

RFA File Review #1

- RFA 02 date of when California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (CLETS / Child Abuse Central Index (CACI) was done was not listed.
 - The RFA 02 is a mandatory form and must be complete. Refer to Written Directives V6.1 (WD) Section 3-02(a)(3) – Forms
- Capacity on RFA 05A includes biological children.
 - The certificate should only include the number of children and/or non minor dependents for which the resource family is approved for. Refer to WD Section 6-08(a)(2) – Resource Family Approval Certificate
- RFA 05A has relative placements as a condition on the approval.
 - Provided all applicants meet the standards to be approved, the county may place a condition on the approval such as restricting who may transport the children due to driving record. Refer to WD Section 6-08(a)(2)(G) – Resource Family Approval Certificate and 6-07(d) - Written Report

RFA File Review #2

- RFA 05A has Mentor placement as a condition of approval including other information as weapons/firearms, bodies of water, client group, complaints.
 - Provided all applicants meet the standards to be approved, the county may place a condition on the approval such as restricting who may transport the children due to driving record. Refer to WD Section 6-08(a)(2)(G) – Resource Family Approval Certificate and 6-07(d) - Written Report



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- Approval past 90 calendar days of the placement and reason for delay not documented.
 - If the county is unable to complete the Comprehensive Assessment within 90 calendar days, the County shall document the reasons for the delay, if the delay was due to a good cause reason and generate a timeframe for completion. Refer to WD Section 4-08(d)(1) - Placement Prior to Approval – Emergency Placement
- RFA 03 completed for the purpose of Emergency Placement (ER).
 - The RFA staff must initiate a Home Environment Assessment and shall document the date on which the health and safety assessment of the home and grounds, outdoor activity space, and storage areas of the home is conducted. Refer to WD Section 4-08(c)(2) - Placement Prior to Approval – Emergency Placement
- RFA 07 completed for adults residing in the home.
 - The RFA 07 is only required for each applicant. Refer to WD Section 5-03A(a)(9)(B) - Application Requirements-Applicant
- Control of property not verified.
 - Documents verifying that an applicant owns or rents the home in which the applicant resides or has written permission to reside at the residence by the owner of the home is required. Refer to WD Section 5-03A(a)(9)(E) - Application Requirements-Applicant
- RFA 01B not completed for the two adults that reside in the home.
 - A County shall obtain from an applicant and all adults residing or regularly present in the home a completed RFA 01B. Refer to WD Section 6-03A(b)(1)(A) – Background Check
- RFA 02 an applicant was granted an exemption but not entered. Also, an applicant was listed as an Adult residing in the home but should be listed under applicant.
 - The RFA 02 is a mandatory form and must be complete. Refer to WD Section 3-02(a)(3) – Forms
- Interview requirement for adults residing in the home not met in that interviews were conducted by phone.
 - Interviews may only be conducted via web-based audio-video communication for other adults when the RFA program staff is unable to meet with the other adults face to face. Refer to WD Section 6-05(a) - Family Evaluation
- No documentation found establishing specific child approval.
 - Specific child approval means that the applicants meet all the standards, a concern exists, but that concern is outweighed by the significance of the



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familial relationship. Refer to WD Section 6-07(b)(10) and (e) - Written Report

- Background check did not address the possible CACI match
 - The county must consider all substantiated allegations of child abuse and severe neglect listed on the CACI, pursuant to Health and Safety Code section 1522.1, to determine whether the individual poses a risk or threat to the health and safety, protection, or well-being of a child, nonminor dependent, or other individual is required. Refer to WD Section 6-03A(b)(2) – Background Check and Refer to Background Assessment Guide Revised 6/12/20 (BAG), section 107 CHILD ABUSE CENTRAL INDEX (CACI)

RFA File Review #3

- RFA 05A – states weapons/firearms, bodies of water, client group, complaints.
 - Provided all applicants meet the standards to be approved, the county may place a condition on the approval such as restricting who may transport the children due to driving record. Refer to WD Section 6-08(a)(2) - Resource Family Approval Certificate and 6-07(d) - Written Report
- Employment not verified.
 - When the applicant is employed, verification of current employment is required. Refer to WD Section 5-03A(a)(9)(C) – Application Requirements
- RFA 01B not obtained for the applicant and for an adult residing in the home.
 - A County shall obtain from an applicant and all adults residing or regularly present in the home a completed RFA 01B. Refer to WD Section 6-03A(b)(1)(A) – Background Check
- RFA 03 does not state if the Health and Safety standards have been or not been met.
 - The county must document compliance by ensuring the form reflects meets or does not meet in the certification section of the form. Refer to WD Section 6-02(a)(2) – Home Environment Assessment
- No verification that the applicant received a copy of the written report.
 - County shall obtain an applicant’s signature acknowledging receipt of the Written report. If applicant is unwilling to sign the Written Report, RFA Program staff may document the refusal in the signature space. Refer to WD Section 6-07(h)(1) – Written Report



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RFA File Review #4

- RFA 01A two were completed.
 - The applicant is only required to submit one application. Refer to WD Section 5-03A(a)(1) - Application Requirements-Applicant
- RFA 05A has Mentor placement as a condition of approval including other information as weapons/firearms, bodies of water, client group, complaints.
 - Provided all applicants meet the standards to be approved, the county may place a condition on the approval such as restricting who may transport the children due to driving record. Refer to WD Section 6-08(a)(2) – Resource Family Approval Certificate and 6-07(d) - Written Report
- Approval past 90 calendar days of the placement and reason for delay not documented.
 - If the county is unable to complete the Comprehensive Assessment within 90 calendar days, the County shall document the reasons for the delay, if the delay was due to a good cause reason and generate a timeframe for completion. Refer to WD Section 4-08(d)(1) - Placement Prior to Approval – Emergency Placement.
- RFA 03 completed for the purpose of Emergency Placement (ER).
 - The RFA staff must initiate a Home Environment Assessment and shall document the date on which the health and safety assessment of the home and grounds, outdoor activity space, and storage areas of the home is conducted. Refer to WD Section 4-08(c)(2) - Placement Prior to Approval – Emergency Placement
- RFA 03 completed due to the relocation not signed by second applicant.
 - All applicants must sign the form. Refer the RFA 03 form
- Employment and income verified for only one of the applicants.
 - Verification of current employment and income is required. Refer to WD Section 5-03A(a)(9)(C) and (D) – Application Requirements-Applicant
- Control of property not found for address the certificate was issued to.
 - Documents verifying that an applicant owns or rents the home in which the applicant resides or has written permission to reside at the residence by the owner of the home is required. Refer to WD Section 5-03A(a)(9)(E) - Application Requirements-Applicant
- Unclear if individual interviews were conducted according to 6-05(a) as all names listed in same line in the Written Report.
 - It is recommended that each interviewee is listed on its own line on the Written Report. If the interview was joint, then both would be listed on the



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same line. This will show who was interviewed and whether it was individually or jointly. Refer to WD Section 6-05(a) - Family Evaluation

- Reason for specific child approval not documented.
 - For child specific approvals, the Written Report must specify the reason the approval is child specific, which would mean that the applicants meet all the standards, a concern exists, but that concern is outweighed by the significance of the familial relationship. Refer to WD Section 6-07(b)(10) and (e) - Written Report
- No Longer Interested (NLI) for background check not found for adults no longer residing in the home.
 - Department of Justice must be immediately notified by either submitting the notification through the Applicant Agency Justice Connection (AAJC) or by sending the No Longer Interested (NLI) Notification (BCIA 8302) form to DOJ once a determination has been made that the individual will not be returning to the resource family home. Refer to BAG Section 126 RECORD RETENTION AND STORAGE, subsection b.

RFA File Review #5

- RFA05A – states weapons/firearms, bodies of water, client group, complaints.
 - Provided all applicants meet the standards to be approved, the county may place a condition on the approval such as restricting who may transport the children due to driving record. Refer to WD Section 6-08(a)(2) - Resource Family Approval Certificate and 6-07(d) - Written Report
- Adoption Home Study [family evaluation] from outside agency was completed but it was not signed by agency employee or applicants. There is not a written report in the file.
 - A County shall complete form RFA-05: Resource Family Approval Written Report or an equivalent report of the Comprehensive Assessment of an applicant. Refer to WD Section 6-07(a) – Written Report

RFA File Review #6

- RFA 01C used and it is obsolete.
 - The RFA 01A includes the information from the RFA 01C. Refer to RFA 01A
- RFA 05A has Relative placement as a condition of approval including other information as weapons/firearms, bodies of water, client group, complaints.
 - Provided all applicants meet the standards to be approved, the county may place a condition on the approval such as restricting who may



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transport the children due to driving record. Refer to WD Section 6-08(a)(2) – Resource Family Approval Certificate and 6-07(d) - Written Report

- RFA 03 completed for the purpose of Emergency Placement (ER).
 - The RFA staff must initiate a Home Environment Assessment and shall document the date on which the health and safety assessment of the home and grounds, outdoor activity space, and storage areas of the home is conducted. Refer to WD Section 4-08(c)(2) - Placement Prior to Approval – Emergency Placement
- Approval past 90 calendar days of the placement and reason for delay not documented.
 - If the county is unable to complete the Comprehensive Assessment within 90 calendar days, the County shall document the reasons for the delay, if the delay was due to a good cause reason and generate a timeframe for completion. Refer to WD Section 4-08(d)(1) - Placement Prior to Approval – Emergency Placement
- RFA 07 completed for adults residing in the home.
 - The RFA 07 is only required for each applicant. Refer to WD Section 5-03A(a)(9)(B) Application Requirements-Applicant
- RFA 01B not completed all adults that reside in the home.
 - A County shall obtain from an applicant and all adults residing or regularly present in the home a completed RFA 01B. Refer to WD Section 6-03A(b)(1)(A) – Background Check
- RFA 02 only has entries for the Megan, LAARS, LIS and DMV checks.
 - The RFA 02 is a mandatory form and must be complete. Refer to WD Section 3-02(a)(3) – Forms
- Unable to determine if separate interviews were conducted for adults residing in the home.
 - A minimum of one separate face-to-face interview of all other adults is required and, if unable to meet the adult face to face, the county may conduct the via web-based audio-video communications, but if an adult residing in the home is unable to participate in an interview due to a compelling circumstance, a County shall determine if the interview is necessary to assess the applicant’s ability to be approved as a Resource Family. Refer WD Section to 6-05(a) - Family Evaluation
- Child Welfare history included in the exemption process but there is no CACI match.
 - The use of Child Welfare information in the context of the background check is limited to substantiated reports of child abuse and severe neglect



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which are contained in the Child Abuse Central Index (CACI) and received from the Department of Justice (DOJ) as part of live scan fingerprint submissions. Refer to 100 INTRODUCTION, subsection b. Background Check Assessment Guide Revised 6/12/20

- The background check for one adult is incomplete as the county did not obtain the results from the Department of Justice due to poor quality of the prints, yet simplified exemption was granted.
 - The background check must include a review of the individual's state criminal record. Refer to WD Section 6-03A(b)(1) – Background Check
- Standard exemption granted
 - Unable to determine if the due date on the Exemption Needed Notification is 45 days
 - Unable to determine if CORI was attached to Exemption Needed Notification
 - With condition, but letter sent as a best practice to individual does not specify the condition
 - Refer to BAG Section 119 CRIMINAL RECORD EXEMPTIONS and 121 NOTIFICATION OF THE EXEMPTION DECISION, and WD Section 6-03B(g) - Criminal Record Exemption

RFA File Review #7

- RFA 01B not completed for the two adult sons that reside and are regularly present in the home.
 - A County shall obtain from an applicant and all adults residing or regularly present in the home a completed RFA 01B. Refer to WD Section 6-03(b)(1)(A) – Background Check
- RFA 02 date of when CLETS/CACI was done was not listed.
 - The RFA 02 is a mandatory form and must be complete. Refer to WD Section 3-02(a)(3) – Forms
- RFA 05A – states weapons/firearms, bodies of water, client group, complaints.
 - Provided all applicants meet the standards to be approved, the county may place a condition on the approval such as restricting who may transport the children due to driving record. Refer to WD Section 6-08(a)(2) - Resource Family Approval Certificate and 6-07(d) - Written Report



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RFA File Review #8

- RFA 05A has Relative placement as a condition of approval including other information as weapons/firearms, bodies of water, client group, complaints.
 - Provided all applicants meet the standards to be approved, the county may place a condition on the approval such as restricting who may transport the children due to driving record. Refer to WD Section 6-08(a)(2) – Resource Family Approval Certificate and 6-07(d) - Written Report
- Approval past 90 calendar days of the placement and reason for delay not documented.
 - If the county is unable to complete the Comprehensive Assessment within 90 calendar days, the County shall document the reasons for the delay, if the delay was due to a good cause reason and generate a timeframe for completion. Refer to WD Section 4-08(d)(1) - Placement Prior to Approval – Emergency Placement
- RFA 03 completed for the purpose of Emergency Placement (ER).
 - The RFA staff must initiate a Home Environment Assessment and shall document the date on which the health and safety assessment of the home and grounds, outdoor activity space, and storage areas of the home is conducted. Refer to WD Section 4-08(c)(2) - Placement Prior to Approval – Emergency Placement
- Control of property not verified.
 - Documents verifying that an applicant owns or rents the home in which the applicant resides or has written permission to reside at the residence by the owner of the home is required. Refer to WD Section 5-03A(a)(9)(E) - Application Requirements-Applicant
- RFA02 only has entries for the Megan, LAARS, LIS and DMV checks.
 - The RFA 02 is a mandatory form and must be complete. Refer to WD Section 3-02(a)(3) – Forms

RFA File Review #9 –File is incomplete Minimal documents in the file. Applicant withdrew her application. County sent letter to applicant verifying verbal withdrawal. Children reunified with their parents.

RFA File Review #10

- RFA 05A only listed one resource parent but there are two; has Relative placement as a condition of approval including other information as weapons/firearms, bodies of water, client group, complaints.



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- Provided all applicants meet the standards to be approved, the county may place a condition on the approval such as restricting who may transport the children due to driving record. Refer to WD Section 6-08(a)(2) – Resource Family Approval Certificate and 6-07(d) - Written Report
- Approval past 90 calendar days of the placement and reason for delay not documented.
 - If the county is unable to complete the Comprehensive Assessment within 90 calendar days, the County shall document the reasons for the delay, if the delay was due to a good cause reason and generate a timeframe for completion. Refer to WD Section 4-08(d)(1) Placement Prior to Approval – Emergency Placement
- Employment and income verified for only one of the applicants.
 - Verification of current employment and income is required. Refer to WD Section 5-03A(a)(9)(C) and (D) – Application Requirements-Applicant
- Training completed only by one of the applicants.
 - A County shall ensure that each applicant completes a minimum of 12 hours of preapproval training prior to Resource Family Approval and upon the applicant's completion of pre-approval training, as well as any required additional training, a County shall provide documentation of the completed training to the applicant(s). Refer to WD Section 6-06 - Pre-Approval Training
- Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) completed only by one of the applicants.
 - A County shall ensure that each Resource Parent submits copies of the certificates verifying completion of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and first aid training no later than 90 days following Resource Family approval. Refer to WD Section 8-01(a) - Annual and Other Training

RFA File Review #11 – File incomplete, minimal documents in the file.

- County denied application
 - There are no legal consult documents.
 - There are no supporting evidence documents i.e CORI.
 - Notice of Action in file is not signed by county management or designee.
 - It is recommended that when a case is brought to legal consult, all documents submitted be saved in the Resource Family file. To avoid duplicate legal consult forms, the original can be replaced with the one that has the attorney's



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advice. Further, the NOA should be signed prior to serving and a copy retained in the Resource Family File.

- RFA02 only has entries for the Megan, LAARS, LIS and DMV checks.
 - The RFA 02 is a mandatory form and must be complete. Refer to WD Section 3-02(a)(3) – Forms

RFA File Review #12

- RFA02 is blank.
 - The RFA 02 is a mandatory form and must be completed. Refer to wd Section 3-02(a)(3) – Forms
- Written Report not provided to applicant
 - County shall obtain an applicant's signature acknowledging receipt of the Written report. If applicant is unwilling to sign the Written Report, RFA Program staff may document the refusal in the signature space. Refer to WD Section 6-07(g) and (h) - Written Report

RFA File Review #13 – File is incomplete, unable to determine if applicant withdrew her application. Minimal documents in the file.

RFA File Review #14 – Per review of the RF file it was evident that ER and the RFA process were co-mingled. During Exit, discussed Emergency Placement versus RFA process and that they must remain separate.

RFA File Review #15 – File is incomplete. Minimal documents, unable to determine if applicant was approved. There is no RFA 05 Written Report and no RFA 05A- Approval Certificate.



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Confidential:

- File#1:** [REDACTED]
- File#2:** [REDACTED]
- File#3:** [REDACTED]
- File#4:** [REDACTED]
- File#5:** [REDACTED]
- File#6:** [REDACTED]
- File#7:** [REDACTED]
- File#8:** [REDACTED]
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