

DSS Policy and Procedure Guide

Division 03: Child Welfare

Chapter 01: Director's Policies

Item 018: Sharing Information with Caregivers

Suggested changes send to: [DSS PSOA](#) Mailbox

Issued: December 19, 2014

References: All County Information Notice (ACIN) [I-05-14](#); Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) Sections [317\(f\)](#), [362.04](#), [16010](#), [16010.4](#), [16010.5](#), and [16501.1](#); Division 31 Regulations [31-405\(r-t\)](#); 22 CCR Sections [83068.1\(b\)\(1\) and \(2\)](#), [89372\(a\)\(10\)\(A\)-\(B\)](#), [89378\(a\)\(1\)\(B\)\(4\)\(a\) and \(b\)](#), and [89468\(a\)](#), [89468\(b\)\(1\)-\(10\)](#), [89468\(d\)](#).

Replaces Issue: New

Preamble

Child Welfare Policy and Procedure Guides (PPG) are meant to be used as tools to relay best practice and staff expectations. It is understood that specific case scenarios may not always align themselves with the stated practices and that at all times what is of paramount importance is the Safety and Well-being of the children we are charged to protect.

Policy

In addition to disclosure requirements outlined in PPG [03-01-002](#), *Mandatory Disclosure Policy*, the Department of Social Services (DSS) Child Welfare (CW) staff shall also share with caregivers any information that better enables a caregiver to meet the needs of the children and youth living in their home. Information sharing is not only permitted under state and federal law, it is required, as long as the information is not otherwise protected under Federal or State regulation, law or statute.

Note: Non-Minor Dependents (NMD) should be encouraged to share their pertinent educational, medical and mental health information with their caregiver; however because they are now legal adults and have much more control over what information can be shared, the NMD must consent to DSS sharing this information.

Purpose

To provide guidance to DSS CW staff regarding the requirements and limitations of sharing information with caregivers and former caregivers regarding the children and youth currently or formerly in their care.

Procedure

Sharing Information about the Child or Youth with the Caregiver

The child's assigned Social Worker (SW) is required to ensure that the following information is shared with the caregiver at specific times, as indicated in All County Information Notice (ACIN) [I-05-14](#):

- Medical and dental information, including:
 - Names and contact information of health care providers.
 - Names and instructions of all medications.
 - Any treatments the child may be receiving.
 - Immunizations and known allergies.
 - Medi-Cal number or other health insurance number.
- All school information, including grade level and any special classes.
- The child's relevant mental health information, including therapist and medication(s).

<p>Note: It is the assigned SW's responsibility to ensure the information in the Health and Education Passport (HEP) is current and accurate.</p>
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- Child's case plan, including visitation.
- Any known or suspected dangerous behavior on the part of the child.
- Child's transitional independent living plan, when applicable.

Other basic information that should be provided to the caregiver in order to assist the caregiver with meeting the needs of the child:

- Contact information for the SW and their Supervisor.
- Contact information for the child's attorney and their Juvenile Court case number.
- Contact information for the child's Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) if needed.
- Child's birth certificate or passport.
- Child's California Department of Social Services identification number.

Sharing Information About the Child’s Parent(s) with the Caregiver

While sharing some family history with the caregiver is appropriate and allowable under the law, the information shared should be limited to what is required for the caregiver to adequately address the child’s needs. Any additional information regarding the parents or family shall require written, informed consent from the adult in question or a Court order.

Sharing Information About the Child or the Family with Former Caregivers

Former caregivers are allowed to remain involved in a child’s life and there is nothing that prohibits DSS from sharing information with a former caregivers at Team Decision Making Meetings, Permanency Teaming Meetings, Staffings, etc., as part of a teaming approach to meet the needs of the child; as long as doing so is in the child’s best interest, is what the child wishes, the family is in agreement with the former caregiver remaining part of the family team and consents to exchange information are kept current.

Documenting Shared Information

Information shared with caregivers shall be documented in the following manner:

- All information shared verbally (in-person or telephonically), electronically, or in writing shall be documented in the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) narrative section. The documentation shall occur within the timeframes outlined in [PPG 03-01-001](#), *Mandatory Face-to-Face Contacts/Documentation Timeframes*.
- On form 6252, *Foster Placement Request*, when placing a child in a new home. The form is located in the green section of CWS/CMS.
- In the HEP given to the care provider.

Limitations on Sharing Information

The table below is a non-exhaustive list of documents or information that cannot be shared absent a court order or consent from the affected individual(s). If there is any question regarding whether particular information may be shared with a caregiver, it is recommended that the SW consult with their Social Work Supervisor (SWS). When the SWS and Program Manager (PM) are unsure whether or not information can be shared the CW Program Specialist may be contacted by emailing the [DSS Child Welfare QA](#) inbox.

Type of information or record	Authorization needed to share information
WIC 300 Petition and court reports	Court order

Type of information or record	Authorization needed to share information
Medical or mental health treatment where the minor has a right to consent to the care	If the minor consents to mental health services or could have consented to such services under Family Code § 6924 or Health & Safety Code § 124260, information may be shared only with the signed authorization of the minor and the minor's attorney or Court order.
Substance abuse treatment records of the parent	Parent's consent or court order
Substance abuse treatment records of the child	Child's consent, child and parental consent or court order, depending on the circumstances
HIV antibody test results related to the child	Consent of parent or child (if over 12) or court order
Prevention or treatment of pregnancy	Child's consent

For further information regarding confidential records, please refer to [PPG 03-01-008](#), *Access to Confidential Records/§827 Requests*.