

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS  
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES



MEMORANDUM

**To:** Family Service, Juvenile Probation and Parole Units  
**From:** Kevin Aucoin, Interim Director   
**Date:** September 13, 2019

**Subject:** Policy on Child Support Enforcement for Children in DCYF Care

Rhode Island and Federal law acknowledge and reinforce the role and responsibility of the parent as the primary source of support for a child. Parental responsibility is not eliminated by the voluntary or involuntary placement of a child outside his/her home and family. RIGL. §15-9-1 provides that whenever the Department pays for the support of a child in the care of the Department, the parents of the child are responsible to contribute to the cost of the child's care.

To fulfill its statutory responsibility, the DCYF is required to facilitate a referral for the Office of Child Support Services at DHS for purposes of seeking parental contribution for all children placed in out of home care. Child support referrals are processed through the Department's Federal Benefits Unit. The child support referral application requires (as a matter of federal guidelines) the Department provide documentation relating to paternity and the parent's marital status.

**Effective immediately**, in any case in which a child is placed outside of the home of the parent (including children/youth currently residing outside the home of the parent) the primary case manager (FSU or Juvenile Probation) is required to provide to the DCYF Federal Benefits Unit the following documentation:

- The primary service worker will be required to confirm through conversations with at least one of the parents for each child in out of home care:
  - Whether the mother was married to the child's father at the time of birth and if so, the date and location of the marriage (by county and State) or whether the child was born within 300 days of termination of the marriage by death or divorce. In addition, the primary case manager must inquire as to whether the mother and father remain married. If the parents are no longer married, the primary case manager must confirm through conversation with one of the parents whether the parents are

divorced/separated or have had their marriage annulled and the date of the divorce, separation or annulment.

- If the parents were parties to a civil union (whether married or not) the primary case manager will be required to confirm through conversations with at least one of the parents for each child in out of home care:
  - Whether the parent was married and/or in a civil union to the other parent at the time of birth/adoption and if so, the date and location of the civil union/marriage (by county and State) or whether the child was born within 300 days of the termination of the marriage and/or civil union by death or divorce. In addition, the primary case manager must inquire as to whether the parents remain partnered in a civil union or marriage. If the parents are no longer married or parties in a civil union, the primary case manager must confirm through conversation with one of the parents whether the parents are divorced/separated or have had their marriage annulled and the date of the divorce, separation or annulment.
- The State of residence of the last shared address of mother and father (if applicable).

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The primary service worker must document this information in a case activity note within the family's RICHIST record for each child in out of home care. The information contained in the case activity note should be copied into an email and sent to the DCYF Federal Benefits Unit through Outlook, referral email address [DCYF.CSEreferrals@dcyf.ri.gov](mailto:DCYF.CSEreferrals@dcyf.ri.gov). This is a mandatory part of the referral packet sent to the Office of Child Support Services.

- Additionally, in any case **where the name of a father is not listed on the birth certificate and the child has been in care for 30 days**, the Federal Benefits Unit will initiate a request for a notarized paternity affidavit from the primary case manager for DCYF. The primary case manager will need to obtain the paternity information from the child's mother in accordance with the provisions below. The paternity affidavit is located in RICHIST and accessed as follows:
- In case name,
  - right click on case name and then
  - left click on Case maintenance;
  - right click on child's name;
  - drop down box appears; click on paternity affidavit;
  - drop down box appears for putative or legal father
  - the form is pre-filled and the primary service worker must print it and have it signed and notarized
  - The primary service worker will forward the completed affidavit to the DCYF Federal Benefits Unit

Thank you for your prompt attention to this process.