

Lutheran Social Services (Upbring)

Family Services Policies and Procedures

October 2016

No. 1038

Foster Care: Notifications to Parents/Conservators

- 1) Purpose: To establish policy what notifications are required to be made to the parent/conservator for a child at the time of placement with Upbring Family Services.
- 2) Scope: The scope of this policy outlines the requirements for notifications made to the parent or conservator of a child placed for care with Upbring Family Services.
- 3) Policy: Upbring Family Services has established policy outlining the requirements for notifications made at the time of placement to a child's parent or conservator. The parent must be able to determine whether the Upbring Family Services program and/or practices are appropriate for the child and can meet the child's needs.
 - a. Admission Notifications: At Admission, Upbring Family Services provides written material to the parent placing the child that explain the following:
 - i. Information about the policies that Upbring Family Services will present a child during orientation;
 - ii. Upbring Family Services Policies regarding:
 1. Use of volunteers or sponsoring families;
 2. Type and frequency of notifications made to parents; and
 3. Involvement of the child in any publicity and/or fund raising activity for the agency; and
 - iii. Parent's right to refuse to or withdraw consent for a child to participate in:
 1. Research programs; and/or
 2. Publicity and/or fund raising activities for the agency
 - b. Notifications and/or documents provided: Specifically, Upbring Family Services staff provides certain notifications and other documents to the parent/conservator of a child place into the care of Upbring Family Services. Such notifications and documents, related to a child in care may include, but are not limited to:
 - i. At least two weeks written notification prior to development of a child's Initial Service Plan and Service Plan reviews;
 - ii. Requests to travel away from the foster home for more than 48 hours or 72 hours, depending on situation, as soon as request is made by foster parents;

- iii. Requests for approval for respite child-care episodes as soon as the request is made by foster parents;
 - iv. Serious Incidents within 24 hours;
 - v. Other Occurrences within 24 hours;
 - vi. Notifications for Upbring Family Services initiated subsequent moves or transfers, prior to or within 24 hours of an emergency move;
 - vii. Notifications for Upbring Family Services initiated discharge requests for discharges within 24 hours, 14 days or 30 days, depending on situation;
 - viii. Notification of incarceration or placement in juvenile detention within 24 hours;
 - ix. Requests for research participation;
 - x. Requests for participation in publicity or fund raising activities;
 - xi. Other required notifications required by Minimum Standards for Child Placing Agencies, Residential Child Care Contract and accreditation standards.
 - xii. In the event that neither community nor Medicaid resources are available to fund recommended Medical, Dental, or Vision services, as practicable, but no later than the 3rd business day, Upbring Family Services will notify the child's Child Protective Services (CPS) caseworker or chain of supervision for assistance; and
 - xiii. Other notification requests generated by the parent/conservator or the court of jurisdiction.
- c. Additional notifications: In addition to the Minimum Standards notifications, Upbring Family Services will provide the following notifications:
- i. Give the caseworker and caseworker's chain of command the amount of written notice required by Section 29 of the residential child care contract before discharging a child placed by the Department;
 - ii. Notify the caseworker and caseworker's chain of command within 24 hours after Upbring Family Services determines that a child placed by Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) with Upbring Family Service is a danger to self or others and requires a placement in another setting, or has been incarcerated or placed in juvenile detention;
 - iii. Notify the caseworker and the caseworker's chain of command within 24 hours when Upbring Family Services is aware of a hospitalization of a child in our care;
 - iv. Notify the caseworker and caseworker's chain of command of any serious incident, including, but not limited to: run away, death, and abuse, neglect or exploitation, within the timeframe mandated by Minimum Standards.

Upbring Family Services may report serious incidents to DFPS Statewide Intake to meet these requirements;

- v. Notify the Residential Contract Manager within 10 calendar days, of any significant changes affecting the contractor's residential child care program, including but not limited to:
 1. The addition, replacement, or termination of the Administrator or Board President;
 2. Any change in ownership of the facility;
 3. A change in Upbring's status as a for-profit or non-profit entity; or
 4. Any change to Upbring Family Services admissions policy and significant changes to the scope and coverage of the services provided by Upbring Family Services or subcontractor.
- vi. Notify the Residential Contract Manager within 10 calendar days, if there are Service Level issues which cannot be resolved by the department's third-party contractor or payment issues which cannot be resolved by the applicable regional foster care billing coordinator;
- vii. Notify the Residential Contract Manager within 48 hours of an identified breach of confidentiality of children's information;
- viii. Notify the school the same day of any change that will affect the child's attendance at school, and where possible, the length of time a child may be absent;
- ix. Notify, in writing, the caseworker or caseworker's chain of command, within 3 business days, of the date that the contractor or the caregiver initially receives notice of the following meeting(s) related to the child:
 1. Upcoming ARD team meetings; and
 2. Any meetings regarding student disciplinary actions that may lead to in-school or out-of-school suspension, expulsion, or placement at an alternative education setting;
- x. Notify the residential.passportaccess@dfps.stat.tx.us email box within 48 hours of any additions or deletions of Health Passport Authorized users;
- xi. Notify the Residential Contract Manager in writing within 10 calendar days if the contractor receives a formal complaint or lawsuit filed against it regarding noncompliance with any statutes or regulations;
- xii. Notify the child's caseworker and caseworker's chain of command within 48 hours when a Voluntary Extended Foster Care Agreement signed by the child has not been completed within 10 calendar days prior to the child's 18th birthday or a Voluntary Extended Foster Care Agreement has not been received for a child 18 to 22 years of age participating in Extended Foster Care. Efforts made to obtain a copy of the signed agreement should be documented in the child's record;

- xiii. Notify the child's caseworker and caseworker's chain of command when a child is 16 years of age or older, if at the time of updating the child's Service Plan, the contractor is not aware of a plan for the child to enroll in or receive PAL Life Skills training classes;
 - xiv. Notify DFPS of a foster home application to a child placing agency made by a relative or fictive kin family by entering required data into the DFPS Child Care Licensing Public and Provider website within two business days of when the application was accepted;
 - xv. Notify DFPS of reasons why a relative or fictive kin family that applied to be a foster home is not verified by entering required data into the DFPS Child Care Licensing Public and Provider website within two business days of determining the home will not be verified;
 - xvi. Notify DFPS of the relationship between a relative, fictive kin, or unrelated foster parent verified by the Child Placing Agency and all children in DFPS conservatorship placed in the foster home by entering or updating required data into the DFPS Child Care Licensing Public and Provider website within two business days of any such change; and
 - xvii. Notify each child's caseworker and caseworker's chain of command in writing within two business days of verification of a relative or fictive kin family member and submit a copy of the foster home screening to each child's caseworker and caseworker's chain of command.
- d. Documents to Parents/Conservators: Upbring Family Services Staff provides documents to the parent/conservator of a child placed into their care on a monthly basis, to include:
- i. A copy of a child's initial service plan at the time of development and approval;
 - ii. A copy of a child's revised service plan, each time it is revised;
 - iii. Upbring Family Services staff contact notes;
 - iv. Child status reports completed by the child's foster parents; and
 - v. No later than the 3rd business day after the child's caregiver receives a STAR Health Denial Letter, Upbring Family Services must email a scanned copy of the denial letter and the date of such receipt to the caseworker and caseworker's chain of command and the Regional Well Being Specialist.

Upbring Family Services staff will provide other documents, as requested by the parent/conservator, for a child placed in our care within two weeks of such written request.

- e. Information Provided to Foster Parents/Other Caregivers: By the day Upbring Family Services admits the child for care, Upbring Family Services provides foster parents and caregivers responsible for the child's care with information about the child's immediate needs, such as enrolling the child in school or obtaining needed medical care or clothing. Additionally, Upbring Family Services must inform appropriate caregivers of any special needs, such as medical or dietary needs or conditions.
- 4) Responsibility: Revisions to this policy are made at the direction/discretion of the Senior Vice President of Program Operations. Policy is executable through October 2018, unless applicable standards or contractual changes require revision prior to that date. Upbring's Board of Directors reviews this policy annually.
 - 5) Guidelines: As set forth in this policy.
 - 6) References:
 - a. Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Minimum Standards for Child Placing Agencies, §749.1113.(B)
 - b. Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities, Child and Youth Services Standards, 3.Q.1.b
 - c. Residential Child-Care Contract, No. 200322-901.
 - 7) Revisions: Replaces Policy No 106.07, dated September 1, 2010.