

	<b>GEORGIA DIVISION OF FAMILY AND CHILDREN SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY MANUAL</b>			
	<b>Chapter:</b>	(14) Resource Development	<b>Effective Date:</b>	March 2015
	<b>Policy Title:</b>	Inter-County and Inter-Agency Partnerships		
	<b>Policy Number:</b>	14.24	<b>Previous Policy #:</b>	1015.7-1015.10

<b>CODES/REFERENCES</b>
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N/A

<b>REQUIREMENTS</b>
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The Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) and Child Placing Agencies (CPAs) must re-evaluate each caregiver who moves to another county or changes his/her agency affiliation.

The approval status of a caregiver shall not be transferred. Caregivers currently approved with another County DFCS or CPA shall go through an abbreviated approval process with the new county or new agency.

The DFCS County Director/Designee must grant approval **prior** to any child in foster care relocating with a caregiver to a different county.

DFCS shall transfer a relocating family's file to its new county of residence within 14 business days after the family is approved by the new county. If the family moved to another state prior to finalization of an adoption, refer to policy [15.6 ICPC: Court Jurisdiction Cases and Other ICPC Issues](#).

<b>PROCEDURES</b>
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**When a DFCS caregiver plans to move to another county in Georgia, the RD Case Manager in the county where the family currently resides will:**

1. Confirm the family's desire to continue providing foster or adoptive services and notify any other County DFCS with children in the home so they can make appropriate plans.
2. Notify the RD Supervisor in the new county of the family's plan and provide the new address, Georgia SHINES Resource ID number, and any other helpful information regarding the family.
3. Request post-adoptive placement services, if applicable.
4. Complete the appropriate Dissemination Log before transferring Criminal Records Information (CRI) regarding the foster family. (Must be signed out to a person in the receiving county who has completed Security Integrity training)
5. Place the home on hold in the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (Georgia SHINES) until the transfer is approved via the Home Approval Section of the Home Information Page.
6. Instruct the family to notify the new county within five calendar days of their move.

**When a DFCS caregiver plans to move to another county in Georgia, the RD Case Manager in the new county will:**

1. Acknowledge receipt of the notification of transfer and/or request for post-adoptive placement services within five business days.  
**NOTE:** If a family moves to an adjoining county, the original county may request permission from the new county to continue to provide post-adoptive placement supervision.
2. Complete a re-evaluation of the home as soon as the family relocates to the new county (see policy [14.13 Resource Development: Family Re-evaluation](#)).
3. Update the Foster Home record in Georgia SHINES to reflect the change in county, address, phone number, etc.
4. Take the home off hold in Georgia SHINES via the Home Approval Section of the Home Information Page.
5. Provide supervision of the foster home.

**When approved caregivers (DFCS or CPA) request to transfer between agencies (DFCS ↔ CPA ↔ CPA), the RD Case Manager or CPA staff will:**

1. Inform the caregiver(s) they can serve as a foster family for only one agency at a time (i.e., a County DFCS or a single CPA), discuss the re-evaluation process, and ask them to sign an Authorization for Release of Information so information may be shared between the agencies involved.
2. Request and review the caregiver's Family Evaluation from the previous agency. This includes any subsequent evaluations, pre-service training certificate, documentation of annual training hours, and history of policy violations or corrective actions.
3. Utilize an abbreviated foster home re-evaluation process to assess the family:
  - a. Determine if any components of the Family Evaluation are missing or need to be updated (e.g., medical evaluations, drug screens, etc.) and ensure all required attachments and verifications are obtained (see policy [14.11 Resource Development: Initial Family Evaluation Components](#)).
  - b. Conduct CPS screening and a fingerprint-based criminal records check (CRC) on all adult household members.
    - i. A CPS check from other state(s) is unnecessary unless an adult household member has lived out-of-state since the home's last approval.
    - ii. The results of a CRC may not be transferred between agencies. Therefore, a new CRC is necessary if the caregiver is transferring between CPAs or between a CPA and DFCS.
    - iii. A new CRC is unnecessary if the caregiver is simply moving from one county in Georgia to another but remaining with the same agency.
  - c. Conduct background screening using the following databases: Department of Corrections Offender Query; Board of Pardons and Parole; Sexual Offender Registry.
4. Request a recommendation from the previous agency regarding the caregivers' protective capacities and confirmation from the DFCS or CPA Director or Designee that the caregivers are active and in good standing.
5. Conduct at least one family consultation.
6. Submit the Family Evaluation for supervisory approval and final approval from the

DFCS or CPA Director.

7. Provide written notification of the approval decision to the applicant.
8. DFCS staff must upload all information received from the CPA, including the home study addendum, into External Documentation in Georgia SHINES.

**When children are placed in a CPA home that is transferring to another agency the RD Case Manager or CPA staff will:**

1. Delete the home from the current CPA list in Georgia SHINES.
2. Add the home to the new CPA list.
3. Update the home information page for the resource (i.e., non-DFCS certifying entity, capacity, etc.). Certain changes may require the home to be moved to pending approval status.
4. Contact the Data Integrity Specialist (DIS) in the county where the case is located and ask the DIS to update the placement. The DIS will have to go into the current placement, select the resource again, and save it. At that point, the resource will show the new CPA.

<b>PRACTICE GUIDANCE</b>
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**Approved DFCS caregiver moves to another county**

DFCS staff should maintain regular contact with approved families and be aware when families have plans of moving to another county. When families have children placed in their home, transition planning must include all local DFCS involved. Each local DFCS is responsible for planning for the children in their custody. The decision whether or not to allow a child to move out of county with a family is made only after careful consideration and requires the prior approval of the County Director/Designee. The proximity of the new county, the ongoing treatment needs of the child, and the child's permanency plan are important factors to consider. Ultimately, placement decisions should be based upon what is in the best interest of the child.

**Family transfers between a CPA and DFCS**

It is incumbent upon DFCS and CPAs to ensure transferring families meet the DFCS Safety and Quality Standards (SQS). A thorough assessment of the family's current circumstances and protective capacities must be clearly documented in the re-evaluation.

Please note that CPAs are not required to use IMPACT FCP for pre-service training. Certificates of pre-service training from Model Approach to Partnerships in Parenting/Group Preparation & Selection (MAPP/GPS), Parent Resources for Information, Development, and Education (PRIDE), Parents as Tender Healers (PATH), or Treatment Parent Readiness Training are acceptable. Any other pre-service training will require a waiver from the State Permanency Unit Manager, or the family must attend IMPACT FCP.

If a family decides to transfer between agencies prior to attaining full approval status, then standard intake and approval procedures for prospective caregivers shall apply. Standard intake and approval processes shall also apply in the following instances:

1. Information from the previous agency is unable to be obtained.
2. Information from the previous agency indicates a family has been voluntarily inactive for more than five years.
3. Information from the previous agency indicates a family was not in good standing.

**FORMS AND TOOLS**

Authorization for Release of Information