

# S-207 PLAN OF CARE-MODIFIED



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(previously SE-08)

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## Policy

Children placed in foster homes or other substitute resources must receive care that is equal to or better than that provided by other competent, well-informed and resource-supported parents. Valoris regularly compares and adjusts the life experiences and results of the children under its care to those of Canadian children using data from the "National longitudinal study on children and youth".

We must recognize that children who have been placed after experiencing abuse or neglect may have greater and more complex needs than other children. Moreover, the fact of being placed under Valoris' care carries stigmatism that puts children at risk of experiencing other discontinuities. Each child's plan of care must take this into account and attempt to provide positive compensation to increase his resilience and allow him to achieve his full potential.

In recent years, the Agency has adopted the principles and philosophies of the "Looking after Children" approach in planning the care and services provided to children under our care. We believe that the quality of a child's present affects his future possibilities. Thus, through the eight LAC dimensions: residential and permanency plan, health, education, identity, family and social relationships, social presentation, emotional and behavioural development and self-care skills, we attempt to improve children's life conditions and experiences and the quality of parental guidance they receive.

Child Welfare Workers will make efforts to determine whether there are services, programs or activities that relate to the child's or youth's race and ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, family diversity, disability, beliefs, gender, sexual orientation, sexual identity, gender identity, cultural or linguistic needs; or regional differences. If such a service, program or activity is offered, the Child Welfare Worker will ask the child or youth if they wish to receive the service or participate in the program or activity, and if so, will assist the child or youth to receive the service or to participate in the program or activity and to continue to receive the service it provides.

Most parents do not formally plan the care they give their children. However, when several individuals, such as foster parents, Child Welfare Workers and integration officers, share substitute parental responsibility for a child, a formal care and report planning process is essential to clarify their roles and responsibilities, to provide follow-up and to establish accountability.

Development of the foster family plan of care must begin as soon as a child is admitted to our care and be completed within 30 days. The parents and foster parents must take part in developing the child's plan of care. The plan must be reviewed every three months in

consultation with the foster parents, the parents and the child, and when a child is moved from a foster home.

Unless it is inadvisable because of exceptional circumstances, children and youth are entitled to take part in discussions that affect their daily lives and their plan of cares. In particular, they have a right to participate in developing and changing their plan of care and life projects in accordance with their age, abilities, interests, desires and level of understanding.

## **Procedure**

### **1. Participation of child/youth and other persons**

A plan of care must take the opinions of the child/youth, his foster parents and his parents or **his primary contact** and any other employee or professional involved with him into account. The Child Welfare Worker must document in the plan of care if the child or youth took part in developing it and if so, on what date.

When an integration officer from the Residential Services Sector or another service sector is involved with a child, he is welcome to take part in reviewing the plan of care.

If a child was not present at a planning or review meeting on his plan of care, he must be advised on any decisions or aspects that concern him.

### **2. Dimensions of a child's plan of care**

#### **2.1. Residency and permanency plan**

The goal of this dimension is to identify all measures allowing the child or youth to live a suitable and stable family life. A permanency plan must take this element into consideration when being developed.

#### **2.2. Health**

The goal of this dimension is to identify all preventive measures and appropriate treatments for the child's/youth's health problems or disabilities, as well as the information he needs to stay in good physical condition and protect himself against accidents.

#### **2.3. Education**

The goal of this dimension is to properly plan the child's/youth's studies, to ensure that he receives assistance in developing his best academic potential and that he has opportunities to develop special skills, to take part in a variety of school and extracurricular activities and, depending on his age, to learn skills that will be useful in the workplace.

#### **2.4. Identity**

The goal of this dimension is to ensure that the child/youth has information on his family of origin, his culture and origins and the reasons for his placement so he will be confident and be proud of himself.

**For an Inuit, Métis or First Nations child, the Child Welfare Worker will research to determine if there are services, programs or activities that can support the objectives of the service, for example see what is offered or recommended by:**

- one of the Inuit, Métis or First Nations bands or communities to which the child belongs;
- If the child does not belong to an Inuit, Métis or First Nations band or community, find an organization that is closely related to the child's culture, heritage and traditions.

Once the Worker has the information, he must ask if the child wants to receive the service or participate in the program or activity, and make reasonable efforts to facilitate this and document the plan of care.

#### **2.5. Family and social relationships**

The goal of this dimension is to check if the child has good relationships with members of his family of origin and fosters families, if he has good friends and if he has a significant relationship with a responsible adult.

#### **2.6. Social presentation**

The goal of this dimension is to ensure that the child/youth understands the image he projects through his appearance, personal hygiene, language, manners and way of dealing with different situations.

## **2.7. Emotional and behavioural development**

The goal of this dimension is to highlight the child's/youth's feelings and how they affect his behaviour and to determine what specialized assistance needs he has.

## **2.8. Self-care skills**

The goal of this dimension is to check whether the child/youth is learning to become autonomous and independent, considering his age and abilities.

For each of those dimensions, the plan of care must indicate specific goals, deadlines and measurable means of achieving them. It shall also identify the individuals responsible for any actions to be taken. It must also specify if there are any actions that are desirable but cannot be taken at this time, clearly indicating the reasons for not pursuing the actions.

After 12 months of placement, the child's welfare worker must redo the child's plan of care by completing the Looking After Children (LAC) Assessment and Action Record (AAR) appropriate to his age. The Assessment and Action Record shall be completed during one or more face-to-face meetings between the Child Welfare Worker, the foster parents and the child, if he is aged 10 or over. The results of those discussions shall be used in preparing the child's plan of care.

## **3. Authorization of the supervisor**

The Child Welfare Worker's supervisor must check and approve the AAR and the plan of care.

## **4. Absence of the child and/or his foster parents and/or his parents**

When a plan of care is prepared or reviewed without one of those persons being present, an explanatory note must be made to that effect.

## **5. Documentation**

The plan of care must be completed within 30 days of a child's admission to Valoris' care and every 12 months thereafter. Ministry rules require that the plan of care be completed, signed and approved by the supervisor and placed in the child's file within the prescribed time. Any Child Welfare Worker who does not meet the Ministry's deadlines may be subject to disciplinary measures.

The plan of care must be reviewed every three months by the Child Welfare Worker, the foster parents and the child, if he is old enough to do so. Following this review, the Child Welfare Worker may make any necessary changes to the plan of care or leave it as is when no change is required. This review must be documented in the required report.

The Child Welfare Worker shall complete the reports summarizing the highlights of the child's life since the preceding period summary. He shall also indicate how the child is progressing and whether or not the goals of the plan of care are being achieved. This report must be completed and signed by the Child Welfare Worker, signed and approved by the supervisor and placed in the child's file within the deadlines specified by the Ministry. Any Child Welfare Worker who does not meet the Ministry's deadlines may be subject to disciplinary measures.

It sometimes happens that a Child Welfare Worker is unable to complete the required documentation - plan of care or reports - by the due date. In such exceptional situations,

the plan of cares and reports may be submitted to the supervisor as soon as possible, but no more than 30 days late.

The administrative assistant shall forward a copy of the annual plan of care to any child or youth requesting it and to the foster parents.

## **Definitions**

**Parents:** Includes biological parents, adoptive parents, step-mother, step-father or all other persons responsible for the child previous to Valoris' involvement.

## **Annexe(s)**

- Forms: Plan of care and Statutory Report

## **References**

- [Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017](#)
- [Ontario Regulation 156 on General Matters Under the Authority of the Minister](#)
- Looking After Children (LAC) (national and provincial research);