

# S-201 ADMISSION AND RELOCATION OF A CHILD **MODIFIED**



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(previously SE-01)

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## Policy

Removing children from their parents is an important decision that must have been well evaluated: it is important that all other possibilities in the family or in the community have been examined in order to avoid placement and to make the best decision under the given circumstances. The decision to place a child in the care of Valoris Children and Adults of Prescott-Russell is a last resort and must be approved by a Supervisor.

First, the family's worker must confirm whether a member of the extended family (kinship) or another adult known to the child (*kithship*) may assume care for the child and properly meet the child's need as a provisional foster family that is approved following the corresponding policy and procedure.

If the child's placement with Valoris is inevitable, sufficient time should be allotted for placement planning; a placement that is unprepared must only occur in emergency situations where the child faces imminent danger.

Valoris prefers to place all children in our care in residences within their own community. Different types of foster homes and support services are offered in order to ensure the best possible care and quality of life for the child.

The following criteria must be considered by staff members when selecting an appropriate placement to ensure a successful match:

- the child's community;
- the region in which the home is located;
- the child's socio-economical, cultural, social, linguistic and religious environments;
- the child's emotional, social, physical and developmental needs;
- the child's preferences, talents, skills, strengths and weaknesses;
- the reasons for the placement;
- the Residential Services intake worker will receive relevant information in order to coordinate the selection of a resource in order to ensure a successful match;
- the expected length of the placement;
- the child's legal status;
- the child's age and developmental level.

Valoris strives to maintain the placement of a child (or siblings) already living in a foster home; this placement takes precedence and must be protected; the placement of another child within a foster home must be well evaluated so that it will not jeopardize the placement.

Once the child has been well prepared, the worker assigned to the child's file or another staff member who knows the child will accompany him/her personally during the placement or while moving from the existing foster family or residential resource. The child welfare worker must encourage the child's parents to accompany the child to the foster family where possible (ref.: SE-205). In emergency situations, another welfare worker may accompany the child.

As with the child's initial placement with the Agency, a request for removing a child from a foster home or other resource must be thoroughly evaluated with consideration for all implications of this decision. It is important to note that any disruption to a prolonged placement must be reviewed by the permanency planning committee to assess the impact of the placement disruption and determine the subsequent permanency plan. Valoris must do everything possible to ensure stability for the child. As such, all measures must be taken to avoid a placement disruption while a child is in foster care. Any requests for a placement disruption from the child or the foster parents must be assessed immediately within five business days following the request. As established in the Service Agreement between Valoris and the foster parents, a written request from the foster parents must be provided within 30 days prior to a removal. There must be at least one meeting between the child's welfare worker or a designated staff member, the child and the foster parents in order to discuss the request, try to find alternative solutions, and prepare for the disruption, as required. Any disruption of a child's placement is considered to be a failed placement.

**The local director may approve an arrangement other than those required by regulation 156/18, paragraph 1 (3) to (5). Approval of this placement will be recorded in the child's case note in CPIN. This note will be available for review by an inspector in our offices.**

During the subsequent placement or within a reasonable period following the removal, the child's welfare worker must discuss the previous placement with any child over seven years of age having been placed in foster care for more than 30 days. The child welfare worker must meet with the foster parents to discuss their experience with the child, complete the placement documentation, provide a copy of the documents to the foster parents and place a copy in the child's file.

At all times throughout the process of the child's placement or removal, the child welfare worker must consider all possible alternatives within the child's extended family or community.

## **Procedure**

### **1. Emergency placement**

In emergency situations where it is impossible to thoroughly prepare a child for placement, he/she may be placed in an admitting foster family or with another designated resource until a foster family, an extended family member or a member of the community (kinship or kithship) can be located to care for the child. The Residential Services intake worker will assume the responsibility of identifying the best possible resource for the child. If an emergency placement occurs outside of work hours, the 24/7 worker will have access to a master list of available foster homes. When a child is placed by the 24/7 Service, the worker responsible for the placement will leave a voice message for the

Residential Services intake worker, who is responsible for updating the master list of foster families on a weekly basis.

If the child **was removed from his or her environment**, the child welfare worker must immediately advise the Agency's lawyer or the Legal Services Administrative Assistant in order to plan the court hearing within five days.

## **2. Selection of a foster family**

Once the decision to place a child has been made and approved by a supervisor, and where there is no opportunity to place the child within the extended family (kinship) or with another adult familiar to the child (kithship), the worker assigned to the file must contact the residential Services intake worker to provide all available information about the child. The Residential Services worker will complete the electronic request for placement form "Demande de placement". Once the placement has been determined, this form is placed in the child's file, and will include the following information:

- Identification: last name, first name, gender, date of birth, address;
- Family environment: number of children, birth order, socioeconomic environment, religion, language, nationality, culture, family relationships;
- Education information: name and address of school attended, teacher's name, grade level, current grade level, special needs;
- Medical information: name and address of family physician and/or hospital, medical problems, disabilities or physical limitations, allergies, prescription medication, communicable diseases, immunization record;
- Strengths and interests: favorite pastimes, extracurricular activities, talents;
- Challenges: known psychological or psychiatric information, behaviour issues, young offender criminal record;
- Child's needs and the extent of services required;
- Probable length of placement within the foster family and planned contact from and visits with parents;
- Profile of the selected foster family: experience, availability, skills, training, strengths, preferences.

The worker assigned to the file may be invited to make a presentation to the placement committee led by the Residential Services intake worker and the four resource positions. The child should ideally be placed within his/her own community.

The Residential Services worker and the worker assigned to the file must provide the foster parents with all relevant information that is available to them about the child in order to help them make an informed decision.

The child's welfare worker must contact the foster parents as soon as possible with any information that was not available when the placement request was made.

## **3. Placement Selection**

Before recommending a foster family, the worker assigned to the file must ensure that:

- the foster home in question has been approved; and
- the foster family's worker or supervisor has been contacted; and
- the worker or supervisor responsible for the placement of other children within this foster home has been contacted.

When more than one foster family accepts care for a child, the child's welfare worker will be responsible for choosing the family that is best suited for the child.

The child's welfare worker must meet with the foster parents to discuss information about the child and the organization of the pre-placement and actual placement.

During the pre-placement process, the child welfare worker must provide the child with as much information as possible about his/her new foster family: name, address, family members, animals, and the community. The child must be able to discuss life in the new foster family and the role of foster parents, and must review the manual on the rights and responsibilities with the child welfare worker.

#### **4. Selecting an alternate residential resource or external resource**

If no foster family within our network can be found to care for the child, the worker must follow Policy and Procedure "S-219 Limited use of External Residential Resources".

#### **5. Mandatory Pre-placement**

Prior to the placement, the child welfare worker must accompany the child to visit the selected foster family on one or more occasions; the length of such visits depends on the child's age, developmental level and willingness to attend. The child may meet and speak with the members of the foster family, visit the home and his/her room. The child welfare worker may encourage the child's parents or previous foster parents to attend this visit, where possible.

Following the pre-placement visit, the child welfare worker will speak with the child alone about his/her impressions and worries about the foster family before confirming the placement. The child welfare worker may then prepare the child's placement.

In instances where it is not possible to hold a pre-placement visit, in emergency placements, the child's worker must provide as much information as possible about the new foster family. The child welfare worker will follow the same procedures as identified above. The child welfare worker may encourage the child's parents or previous foster parents to attend this visit, where possible. The child welfare worker will speak with the child alone following the visit to discover the child's impressions and concerns about the family.

#### **6. Steps to follow after admission**

At the time of **admission**, the child's worker must:

- Accompany the child to the placement and invite the parent to attend in cases where the foster parents are comfortable with this and there are no risks to the child or the foster family;
- Bring the child's personal belongings and important items: stuffed animal, pictures, bicycle, clothing, or other personal effects;
- Make the foster parents aware of the child's routines, fears, habits, means of comforting the child, allergies, etc.;
- Provide the foster parents with the child's health insurance card ;
- Provide the rights and responsibilities manual to the foster parents and the child over seven years of age and review it with them ;
- Plan a medical examination within 72 hours;
- Hold a private visit within 7 days, VP-7, with the child and foster parents;

- Together with the foster parents, plan any other medical, dental, or other examination, as required;
- Ask the foster parents to complete an inventory of the child's clothing and personal items and prepare a list of clothing and other items required;
- Authorize, where required, a maximum allowance of \$250 to purchase clothing; any requests above this amount must be approved by a supervisor beforehand, failing which the expense will not be reimbursed;
- Arrange a visit between the child and his/her parents, as quickly as possible;
- Document the placement date in the developmental notes;
- Complete the electronic *Child Data Form* and forward to the supervisor for approval.

Within seven days of the placement, the child welfare worker must:

- Hold a private visit with the child;
- Hold a private visit with the foster parents;
- Provide and review the rights and responsibilities manual with the child and the foster parents, if this was not done at the time of admission;
- Notify the school of the child's admission into the care of Valoris, particularly if the child cannot return to the same school; plan the child's return to school or registration to a new school;
- Discuss the frequency of the child welfare worker's visits with the foster parents;
- Discuss the other services offered by the Agency relevant to the child with the foster parents, and plan any referrals to these services; plan the introduction of the foster parents to staff members of these services;
- Discuss any other of the child's needs: school supplies, sports equipment, leisure and recreation, community and extracurricular activities, religious activities;
- Advise the worker for the Ontario Works program of the child's placement, if the family receives financial assistance;
- Discuss the child's rights with him/her, as well as the procedure for making a complaint, and provide the manual "**Rights and responsibilities of Children and Youth in Extended Care of a Valoris**".

Within 30 days following the placement, the child welfare worker will:

- Arrange a private visit with the child and the foster parents;
- Review the rights and responsibilities manual with the child and foster parents;
- Complete the admissions plan of care; review this plan with the foster parents and children over 10 years old and provide them with a copy;
- Ask the foster parents to start a **life book** for the child;
- Begin documenting a social history of for any placement longer than three months;
- Request a health card;
- Obtain the child's immunization record from the child's parents or the Ministry of Health;
- Ensure necessary follow-up and arrange for the child's vaccination, as required;
- Obtain confirmation of birth, if the child has not been registered with the Registrar General and follow-up as required
- Obtain the statement of live birth;
- Record the child's social insurance number;
- Obtain a social insurance number for children over 10 years of age;
- Notify the child's parents that the Agency will submit a request for the Child Tax

Benefit, as the parents are no longer eligible to receive this credit.

**7. Support for the child following a breakup**

The child welfare worker and foster family share the responsibility for providing all required support to the child who is dealing with a breakup between his/her parents and/or who is moved from one foster home to another. Supplementary support services, such as support groups or an integration officer, may be offered.

**8. Removal**

**8.1. Request for a removal by a child or a foster family**

The child's worker and/or another designated staff member (community integration agent, 24/7 Emergency Services worker) must meet the child and his/her foster parents within five business days of receiving a request for removal from either a child or a foster family. The child welfare worker must notify a supervisor of any requests for removal. All efforts must be made to avoid placement disruptions when a child is placed in foster care. Various options and solutions such as in-home support, compromise, and mediation, must be brought forward in an effort to avoid a failed placement. Depending on the child's age and developmental level, the child must be consulted and take part in the decision-making process and the preparations for a removal. The child welfare worker must document all of these steps in the case notes.

Except under serious personal circumstances, foster parents must provide 30 day notice when requesting a removal. This notice is required in order to thoroughly prepare the child for the removal and locate another foster family.

Except in emergency situations, the child's worker or another designated staff member known to the child will personally accompany the child during the move to a new foster home.

**8.2. Removing a child who is in extended care of Valoris**

**Article 61:** According to paragraph 61 (7) of the CFSA, if a child is **in extended care** and has lived continuously with a foster parent for two years and a society proposes to remove the child from the foster parent, the society shall give the foster parent at least 10 (calendar) days' notice in writing of the proposed removal and of the foster parent's right to apply for a review. The written notice must be sent by registered mail.

**Application for Review**

According to articles **61** and **144**, along with the written notice of its decision for removal, the Agency must provide an application for review by the Review Board of Child and Family Services. A person who receives notice of a decision may, within 10 days after receiving the notice, apply to the Board for a review of the Agency or permit holder. They may also make a complaint directly to Valoris by following the procedures outlined in Policy **S-105**.

**Management and Documentation of a Request for Review**

The written notice declaring the intent to remove the child must include the date that the **child was placed in extended care** and the date that the child was placed with the foster family.

### **8.3. Removal of a child placed for adoption**

**Article 144:** Under article 144 (1) of the CFSA, if a request for the adoption of a particular child presented by a foster parent or another person is refused or if a society or licensee decides to move a child who has been placed with a person for adoption, the Agency or licensee making the decision must give at least 10 (calendar) days' notice in writing of the decision to the person who applied to adopt the child or with whom the child had been placed for adoption. The written notice must be sent by registered mail.

#### **Requesting a Review**

According to articles **61** and **144**, along with the written notice of its decision for removal, the Agency must provide an application for review by the Review Board of Child and Family Services. A person who receives notice of a decision may, within 10 days after receiving the notice, apply to the Board for a review of the Agency or permit holder. They may also make a complaint directly to Valoris by following the procedures outlined in Policy **S-105** and S-281.

#### **Management and Documentation of a Request for Review**

The written notice declaring the intent to remove the child must include the date that the **child was placed in extended care** and the date that the child was placed with the foster family.

### **8.4. Selecting a subsequent foster family**

The child's worker must first determine whether another foster family within the Agency's network is available to care for the child who has been removed, thereby avoiding a change of workers and to allow the child to remain in his/her community.

If no family within the network is available, the child's worker must submit a request to the placement committee. If no family within the child's community is available, a request must be made to the placement committee.

In instances where the child must change workers following a removal, the procedure for officially transferring the child's file must begin between 30 to 90 days following the removal to ensure that the child has adapted to the new foster family and to allow for a satisfactory exchange of information between workers.

### **8.5. Steps to follow after a removal**

The child's worker must:

- Ensure that all of the child's personal possessions, life book and special belongings (stuffed animal, pictures, clothing and other) have been moved to the new foster home;
- Notify the school of the removal and register the child for school, if the child must change schools;
- Ask foster parents to confirm the inventory of the child's clothing and personal belongings. Usually, the child being moved should have sufficient clothing and effects. Any purchases of required clothing must be authorized;



- Arrange a private visit after 7 days, VP-7 and a private visit after 30 days, VP-30, with the child and foster parents;
- Review and discuss the “Rights and Responsibilities of Children while in the Care of a Children’s Aid Society” booklet with the child and the foster parents; this includes explaining the procedure for making complaints to the child;
- Review the plan of care, following the removal;
- Review and revise the plan of care with the child and the foster parents; notify the foster parents of follow-up visits and medical appointments, the frequency of visits, and the child’s sports activities;
- Introduce foster parents to staff of the other services provided by the Agency;
- Complete the electronic request for a removal using Matrix and obtain approval from a supervisor.

#### **8.6. Post placement contact between the child and foster parents**

The child’s worker will meet with the child to discuss his/her feelings about the removal, positive and negative experiences with the previous foster family, and the reasons for the removal. This information may assist with a better matching when other children are placed with the foster family.

The child’s worker will also speak with the foster parents to discuss their positive and negative experiences; this information may help the Agency to better understand the child and his/her needs.

These discussions must be well documented and placed in the child’s file and the foster family’s file (annual review). If the child and/or the foster parents refuse this discussion, their refusal must be documented in the intervention notes.

This information may also be collected using a removal survey.

It is important to assess the relevance of maintaining contact between the child and his/her previous foster family. Even though a placement failed, the relationships created may be beneficial and important to the child.

### **Definitions**

**Parents:** The term “parents” includes biological and adoptive parents, stepfathers, stepmothers and any other person who is responsible for a child before Valoris intervenes

### **Annex(es)**

- Form Request for placement
- Admission Medical Report
- Dental Report

### **References**



- Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017
- Regulation 156/18 on General Matters Under the Authority of the Minister
- S-256 : Assessment and supervision of kinship and kithship foster families;
- S-205 : Involvement of parents in the placement of their children;
- S-211 : Health and medical care;
- S-219 : Limited use of external residential resources ;
- S-105 : Complaints from clients;
- S-114 : Complaints from foster parents about services;