



<b>Child Protection Act R.S.P.E.I 1988, Cap. C-5.1</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>Foster Care</b>	
	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Significant Change in Foster Care Resource</b>	<i>Policy #</i> <b>3.2</b>
<b>Effective Date: February 14, 2011</b>  <b>Revised Date: May 7, 2014</b>		<b>Authorized by:</b>  <b>Deputy Minister</b>	

## 1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 The Director of Child Protection, as the legal guardian for children in care, has the sole responsibility to ensure that foster care standards are maintained in all approved foster care resources when significant changes occur.

## 2.0 POLICY STATEMENT

2.1 The best interests of the child is paramount in assessing that the foster care resource always meets the safety needs and well being of the child.

2.2 Foster Parents, approved and contracted for by the Director of Child Protection, must immediately report all significant changes, or anticipated changes which affect the family composition, to their Child Protection Resource Social Worker or Supervisor. Changes include but are not limited to:

- anyone moving in or out of the home on a full or part time basis, temporarily or permanently;
- one parent leaving the home for extended periods e.g. employment, education, etc.;
- criminal charges or convictions regarding any member of the household;
- any changes in relationships of the Foster Parent(s) to include marital discord, separation, etc.;
- the death of a member of the household or significant support person;

- changes in employment, including a return to work for the primary caregiver;
- serious illness, injury, addiction issue or changes in the health condition of anyone in the household;
- any other change in circumstance which could impact on the child(ren) in care in the home or effect the provisions of the current Foster Care Contract.

2.3 Upon receipt of information of a significant change in the foster care resource, the Child Protection Resource Social Worker will schedule a meeting with the Foster Parent(s) to collect all relevant information.

2.4 The Child Protection Resource Social Worker will meet with the Foster Parent(s) to collect all relevant information regarding the significant change and potential impacts for the child(ren) in care currently placed in the home. The information collected will include, but is not limited to:

- Foster Parent's skill level and coping abilities
- age of the child(ren) in care
- how long the child(ren) has been placed in the home
- openness and willingness of the Foster Parent(s) to work with the Director
- risks that exist for the child(ren) and the impact on the child(ren)
- best interests of the child(ren)
- views and needs of the Foster Parent(s)
- supports available to the Foster Parent(s)

2.5 The Child Protection Resource Social Worker will assess the information and review the findings with the Child Protection Resource Supervisor to make a recommendation as to whether a Special Review is required. This decision will be documented on the Foster Parent(s)'s file.

- 2.6 If the decision is to proceed with a Special Review, the Special Review will commence within three (3) business days and be completed within twenty (20) business days. The purpose of the Special Review will be to explore the significant change in more detail and determine the impact of the change on current or future children placed in the home.

The Child Protection Resource Social Worker will advise the Foster Parent(s) of the decision for a Special Review. The Level Classification payment will continue until the Special Review is completed.

- 2.7 Upon completion of the information gathering and assessment for the Special Review, the Child Protection Resource Social Worker will consult with, and make recommendation to, the Child Protection Resource Supervisor for a decision regarding the outcome of the Special Review.

- 2.8 Outcomes of a Special Review include, but may not be limited to:

- Foster Parent(s) remains a resource that meets all standards and requirements. A Level Classification Assessment will be completed and a new contract may be required;
- Department places the Foster Parent resource on hold, to a maximum of six (6) months, to allow the significant changes to stabilize. Child(ren) in placement will be moved to another resource. A new Level Classification Assessment must be completed following the Foster Parent resource being placed on hold. A new Foster Parent Assessment may be required and/or Foster Care Contract.

If the hold period on the Foster Parent resource exceeds six (6) months, the Foster Care Contract will be terminated. The Child Protection Social Worker, in consultation with the Child Protection Resource Supervisor, the Provincial Coordinator of Child Protection Services and the Director of Child Protection, has the discretion to deny future applications by the Foster Parent(s).

The Foster Parent(s) are not eligible to receive Level Classification payments for circumstances initiated by the Foster Parent(s) resulting in being placed on hold e.g. new partner, addiction, etc. Level Classification payments, up to a maximum of three (3) months, may be considered when circumstances were beyond the control of the Foster Parent(s) e.g. serious illness, death, etc. The decision regarding compensation will be based on the recommendations of the Child Protection Resource Social Worker and the Child Protection Supervisor and require approval of the Provincial Coordinator of Child Protection Services; or,

- Foster Resource is permanently closed and the Foster Care Contract is terminated.

- 2.9 The Child Protection Resource Supervisor will advise the Provincial Coordinator of Child Protection Services of the outcome of the Special Review within one (1) business day.
- 2.10 The Child Protection Resource Social Worker, within two (2) business days, will document the outcome of the Special Review in a written report clearly stating the reasons for the determination. The written report will be signed by the Child Protection Resource Social Worker and the Child Protection Resource Supervisor.

Within two (2) business days, the Child Protection Resource Social Worker will provide a letter to the Foster Parent(s) with a copy to the Provincial Coordinator of Child Protection Services and the Director of Child Protection, indicating the outcome of the Special Review with an attached copy of the written report. A copy of the letter and report will be included on the Foster Parent(s) file.

- 2.11 If the Foster Parent(s) disagrees with the outcome of the Special Review, the Foster Parent(s) may request a meeting with the Child Protection Resource Social Worker and their Supervisor to have the decision explained, however, there is no appeal process.
- 2.12 Failure by a Foster Parent(s) to report a significant change is a violation of policy and the Foster Care Contract which may result in termination of the Foster Care Contract.

### **3.0 REFERENCES**

Foster Care Contract 3.1  
Level Classification Assessment Process 3.3

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### **HISTORY:**

July 25, 2013 - Editorial and format changes  
May 7, 2014 - Editorial and format changes; clarification of significant changes requiring Special Review; added timelines for Special Review