



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES
1500 Jefferson Street, SE • P.O. Box 40975 • Olympia WA 98504-0975

POLICY MEMO

June 27, 2023

TO: Child Welfare Employees

FROM: Natalie Green, Assistant Secretary *N. Green*

RE: Changes to [4526. Licensed Foster Care and Licensed Kinship Care: Placement and Support](#) policy

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2023

SUNSET REVIEW DATE: July 1, 2024

Purpose

The purpose of this memo is to provide guidance to Child Welfare (CW) employees of the updated policy and procedure requirements to align with [House Bill 1227: Keeping Families Together Act](#) and [KW](#) supreme court decision.

This policy is under full review for further revisions, but the following changes will take effect July 1, 2023:

New Policy Requirements

Caseworkers must:

- Place children or youth with foster parents if no licensed or unlicensed relatives or suitable persons are available or approved prior to the establishment of dependency only if it is necessary to prevent imminent physical harm to the child due to child abuse or neglect.
- Follow the Initial License Memo
- Provide services and supports to both licensed and unlicensed relatives and suitable persons to maintain and stabilize placements.

New Procedural Requirements

Caseworkers must:

- Follow the Initial License Memo.
- Continue to:
 - Search for relatives and suitable persons throughout the life of the case.
 - Provide support through services and [concrete goods](#) throughout the duration of the case to maintain and stabilize placement.
- Complete the initial [health and safety](#) within seven calendar days of placement and ask the caregivers privately:
 - How are the children or youth adjusting?
 - If they:
 - Need additional services to provide appropriate care and supervision to meet the children's or youth's health, safety, and well-being needs?
 - Have any immediate needs or if there are any barriers to maintaining placement?

Questions

If you have any questions, please contact Geene Delaplane, Kinship Care and Guardianship Program Manager, at geene.delaplane@dcyf.wa.gov or 360-688-0391.

Cc: Brenda Villarreal