



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**

ROY COOPER • Governor

KODY H. KINSLEY • Secretary

SUSAN G. OSBORNE • Assistant Secretary for Human Services

October 7, 2022

DEAR COUNTY DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

**ATTENTION: DIRECTORS, CHILD WELFARE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS, MANAGERS,
SUPERVISORS, AND SOCIAL WORKERS**

SUBJECT: PERMANENCY INNOVATION INITIATIVE

REQUIRED ACTION: Information Only Time Sensitive Immediate

In 2013, the North Carolina General Assembly included a special provision in the State's biennium budget, "A Family for Every Child," which establishes the Permanency Innovation Initiative (PII) Fund in N.C.G.S. § 131D-10.9B. This legislation requires the Children's Home Society (CHS) of North Carolina to provide the services identified in the PII, by partnership with the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Social Services. The overarching purpose of PII is to improve permanency outcomes for children experiencing foster care.

PII utilizes the following strategies:

- **Child-Focused Recruitment**, using the Wendy's Wonderful Kids Model as developed by The Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, works with children in public foster care to develop and execute adoption recruitment plans tailored to the needs of the individual child.
- **Permanency Training Services**, which are services delivered by CHS to support county departments of social services to implement the permanency strategies under N.C.G.S. § 131D-10.9B, advance permanency-focused services for children in the legal custody of county departments of social services and provide training and support services to caregivers and family members who are supporting the permanency goal of children in the legal custody of County departments of social services.

There are two components of the PII contract to bring to the attention of County child welfare agencies.

1. **File Reviews:** CHS Child-Focused Recruiters are required to perform a diligent county DSS case file review within 30 days of child enrollment into the CFR program. File reviews allow the recruiter to learn about the history and family of the child to determine recruitment needs and participate in search and engagement efforts for people known to the youth and/or family to the youth. Child-Focused Recruiters should be allowed to review the entire file of the child or youth, with the exception of court orders. Court orders may not be shared unless otherwise specified in N.C.G.S. § 7B-2901.
2. **Quarterly Meetings with Counties:** As the Contractor, CHS is required to hold quarterly

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meetings with each County with 5 or more active Child-Focused Recruitment cases to discuss case status, progress, and any barriers to permanency. If CHS has more than two unsuccessful attempts in scheduling a quarterly meeting with a County agency, CHS will notify the NCDSS Contract Administrator within the first month the quarterly meeting is due.

A Permanency Matters Webinar titled “Every Conversation Matters” was held during National Adoption Month in November of 2021. This webinar provides an overview of PII and can be found here under “Permanency Matters Webinar Series,” <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/social-services/publications>.

Thank you for your commitment to supporting the permanency of children in North Carolina’s child welfare system. Should you have questions about the Permanency Innovations Initiative, please contact Jessica Frisina at Jessica.Frisina@dhhs.nc.gov.

Sincerely,

Carla McNeill

Carla McNeill
Section Chief for Permanency Planning
Division of Social Services, Child Welfare
North Carolina Department of Health and Human
Services

Cc: Susan Osborne, Assistant Secretary for Human Services
Lisa Tucker Cauley, Senior Director of Child, Family and Adult Services
Adrian Daye, Deputy Director for Child Welfare Practice
Tammy Shook, Interim Deputy Director for County Operations
Kathy Stone, Section Chief for Safety and Prevention Services
Kimaree Sanders, Interim Section Chief for Regulatory and Licensing
Peter West, Section Chief for County Operations

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