



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**

ROY COOPER • Governor

KODY H. KINSLEY • Secretary

LISA TUCKER CAULEY • Division Director, Human Services

10-17-2024

DEAR COUNTY DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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

SUBJECT: UPDATES TO SAFE SURRENDER LEGISLATION AND PERMANENCY PLANNING POLICY

**PURPOSE/BACKGROUND: POLICY ALIGNMENT FOR CHILD WELFARE RELATED TO SAFE
SURRENDER, REASONABLE AND PRUDENT PARENTING, NATIONAL YOUTH IN TRANSITION
DATABASE, AND VOLUNTARY PLACEMENTS WITH YOUNG ADULTS**

REQUIRED ACTION: Information Only Time Sensitive **Immediate**

NCDSS is committed to ensuring that local child welfare agencies are provided with the most up-to-date policy and guidance to support compliance with the law and best practice of child welfare services. Please note the following changes:

SAFE SURRENDER:

As part of [SESSION LAW 2024-34, SENATE BILL 425](#) there were two updates to the Safe Surrender Law that impact Child Welfare practice. These updates were identified in [DCDL_CWS_63_2024](#) released on July 26, 2024.

This update came into effect **October 1, 2024**, and applies to infants surrendered on or after that date. This update allows local child welfare agencies to apply for an ex parte order once the notification by publication has been initiated, rather than waiting for notification completion. This update primarily impacts Permanency practice to allow counties to document legal and physical custody of safely surrendered infants in a more timely manner.

SECTION 6.(a) G.S. 7B-525 reads as rewritten:

"§ 7B-525. Social services response.

(a) A director of a department of social services who receives a safely surrendered infant pursuant to this Article has, by virtue of the surrender, the surrendering parent's rights to legal and physical custody of the infant without obtaining a court order. A county department of social services to whom an infant has been safely surrendered may, after the notice by publication set forth in G.S. 7B-526 has been initiated, apply for ex parte to the district court for an order finding that the infant has been safely surrendered and confirming that the county department of social services has legal custody of the minor for the purposes of obtaining a certified copy of the child's birth certificate, a social security number, or federal and State benefits for the minor..."

This update can be found in the [Permanency Planning](#) and [Cross Function](#) policy manuals.

REASONABLE AND PRUDENT PARENTING:

The "Reasonable and Prudent Parenting" section of the Permanency Planning manual and "Reasonable Prudent Parenting Activities Guide" were revised to ensure compliance with the [Social Security Act §471](#).

This update can be found in the [Permanency Planning](#) manual. The "Applying the Reasonable and Prudent

Parent Standard Tool” and revised “Reasonable Prudent Parenting Activities Guide” can be found on the [CWS Policies/Manuals](#) website under the Child Welfare Practice Resources section.

NATIONAL YOUTH IN TRANSITION DATABASE (NYTD) RESOURCE GUIDE:

The National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) tracks services and outcomes of youth and young adults connected to the child welfare systems. This is done by tracking services provided to a sample population of youth and young adults and their experiences and/or outcomes.

NCDSS has recently updated the National Youth in Transition Database Resource Guide to ensure county agencies have information regarding NYTD and are accurately reporting information on the support being provided to vulnerable populations.

This resource guide can be found on the [CWS Policies/Manuals](#) website under the Child Welfare Practice Resources section.

For questions, please contact the NCDSS Foster Care Coordinator, Jessica Frisina at Jessica.Frisina@dhhs.nc.gov.

Sincerely,



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