 Department of Children & Family Services <i>Building a Stronger Louisiana</i>	Division/Section	Child Welfare
	Chapter No./Name	6 – Foster Care (FC)
	Part No./Name	4 – Placement With Family or Friends
	Section No./Name	Placement With Family or Friends
	Document No./Name	6-410 Establishing Paternity and Permanency
	Effective Date	August 17, 2020

I. STATEMENT OF POLICY

It is the policy of the Department of Children and Family Services to seek permanent connections and resource support for the children and youth entering foster care in the State of Louisiana. Paternity testing is a tool for use when no legal parent has been determined, nor any individual is claiming paternity, but potential fathers exist. If an individual accepts paternity his claim shall be accepted, unless the mother denies his paternity or multiple individuals claim paternity. For an individual claiming paternity of a child, the Department does not have to rule out that individual. If there are multiple individuals claiming paternity or an individual denying paternity that has been named by the mother as the father, paternity testing can help to clarify the identity of the child's father and guide ongoing case work with the family. It is possible for a child to have both a legal father and biological father who are separate individuals. The Department is responsible for working with all parents as all legal and biological parents have rights to the child, and all parents can be an option for permanency


II. PROCEDURES

A. PRETESTING PROCEDURES INFORMATION GATHERING FOR PERMANENCY

Prior to the Continued Custody Hearing, the Foster Care case *** worker **** shall collect the following information from the parents, relatives, child(ren), if age appropriate, and other sources.

The requested information should include, but is not limited to:

- Copy of the child's birth certificate
- Full names of all biological, legal, alleged, step, and adoptive parents; include the maiden name, any previous married names, any aliases or nicknames
- Parents relationship with the child
- Parent's relationship with other parent of all children including history of contact and financial support
- Dates of birth of each parent
- Social Security Number of each parent
- Last known address of each parent
- Marital status of each parent
- Past and current employment history of each parent
- Criminal history of each parent
- City, parish/county, state and country of birth of each parent
- Full names of all grandparents, to include maiden names, any previous married names, aliases, or nicknames, addresses, telephone numbers and relationship to the parents, and relationship with the child
- Extended and fictive kin family members' names, addresses, telephone numbers, etc.

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1. At the Continued Custody Hearing and any subsequent hearings, it is expected the *** case worker **** will advise the District Attorney, Bureau of General Counsel or any attorney representing the Department to request a statement from all persons appearing before the court, to identify the name, address and whereabouts of each parent per Louisiana Children's Code Article [625 \(D\)](#). Information should also be requested regarding all known relatives of the child to notify these individuals within *** 15 days but no later than **** 30 days of foster care entry regarding the child's entry into foster care and opportunities for involvement as per federal [P.L. 110-351](#). *** The case worker shall add this information to the Family Connections Form and Circle of Influence Form. **** Refer to [6-400](#), Identifying and Locating Placement Resources with Relatives and Friends. This information is to be requested at every court hearing and case planning meeting to ensure a good faith attempt to locate absent parents and relatives of the child. Refer to [6-201](#), Diligent Efforts to Visit Parents.
2. Within seven days of a child entering Foster Care, the Foster Care *** case worker **** shall complete the FAST forms and follow-up with the IV-E and Federal Benefits Programs to determine if any parent has been identified by Support Enforcement. [42 U.S.C. 653\(i\)](#) authorizes IV-D agencies (Support Enforcement Services (SES)) to share information with IV-B and IV-E agencies (Child Welfare (CW)) through the State and Federal Parent Locator Service (PLS). The purpose of the information requested by Child Welfare from the PLS system can only be utilized to locate parents (custodial or noncustodial) and relatives for potential placement of a child removed from parental custody.


Information requested on parents may include:

- Name
- Address
- Social Security Number
- Employer name
- Employer address
- Federal employer identification number
- Wages
- Benefits of employment, including healthcare coverage
- Type, status, location and amount of any assets
- Debts owed by or to the individual
- Income

Information requested on a relative for potential placement is limited to:

- Name
- Social Security Number
- Most recent address
- Employer name
- Employer address
- Employer federal identification number

The Child Welfare Form [200](#), Request for Federal and State Parent Locator Service, is used to request information from PLS through the regional eligibility unit.

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Note: Child welfare agencies do not have direct access to statewide child support automated systems to permit IV-B and IV-E managers to search for data. Only certain IV-D staff have direct access to the Federal PLS.

The Foster Care case * worker ** shall:

- a.) Contact SES to determine if paternity testing has been requested in the past or if SES will be ordered to conduct paternity testing by a court on a pending case. If there is an open SES case, the case * worker should monitor the status of the case. If there is a closed case, the case worker ** should request the nature of the closure from SES. If the SES case is closed with no actions taken, then CW may request paternity testing.
- b.) Request paternity testing if the person identified as the father disputes paternity or his paternity is otherwise contradicted (more than one person identified as possibly being the father) If paternity testing is necessary, the case * worker ** shall make arrangements for testing within 30 days of becoming aware of the need.

Paternity testing should never be used to:


- rule out the paternity of a legal father as he has the rights of a father although he may not be the child's biological father;
- rule out the paternity of a man who has been determined by the court to be the father; or,
- rule out the paternity of a man whom the mother states is the father and who states he is the father, unless the alleged or adjudicated father is opposing adoption or other permanency options for the child.

When a parent is located or identified:


- notify the parent of the right to legal representation in the "Child In Need of Care" proceedings; and
- provide the parent, if identified or located after the point of removal, with a copy of the [Form 48](#), Notice to Parent Legal Custodian of Children Placed in State Custody by Instant Order, to inform them how to make contact with the Louisiana Public Defenders Board in the area so the parent's need for indigent legal representation may be determined and an attorney appointed.

B. TESTING PROCEDURES

1. Each region/parish is to appoint a liaison to receive referrals and schedule paternity testing appointments for the entire region. The liaison will forward reports on the findings to field staff and provide reports on services conducted and feedback to the State Office CW liaison as requested.

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2. Each contracted provider has established collection sites in their areas. If accessing the established community site is an issue, then the testing can be performed at an alternate site. The regional liaison will be responsible for setting up the alternate site.
3. Each referral requires a completed CW Request for Paternity Testing Form for each individual being tested. The form should be forwarded to the appropriate contractor for services.
4. The individual being tested is to provide a completed copy of the CW Request for Paternity Testing Form and picture identification to the tester. The individual to be tested will receive the necessary forms from their case * worker. **
5. Prior to scheduling the test, CW staff is to check all available databases or resources to ensure that a legal father/mother has not already been identified. If a legal father or mother has already been confirmed by the court or through legal means, such as marriage, CW staff is not to test for additional parents.
6. If no legal father has been determined, then the CW staff may request paternity testing.
7. To process payment for testing, the contractor forwards a dated invoice for services rendered to:
DCFS CW Liaison
Foster Care & Transitioning Youth Program Unit
P.O. Box 3318
Baton Rouge, LA 70821
8. Issues surrounding service provision are forwarded to the attention of the regional liaison. All payment or other issues not resolved locally are to be forwarded to the State Office CW Liaison.
9. The biological mother and alleged biological father do not have to be scheduled for testing on the same day or time.
10. On out-of-state cases, the regional liaison will notify the service provider of the referral. The CW Request for Paternity Testing Form identifies the parties involved and the location of the party whose genetic sample is needed. The provider will make an appointment for specimen collection and will return the form with the time, date, and location of the appointment to the regional liaison. The provider will then prepare the specimen collection form and forward it and the specimen collection kit to the location of testing. The specimen collection kit will include a specimen collection kit, Chain of Custody form, * photo, ** thumb print pad, integrity seal, and an overnight courier pack for shipping back to the provider.

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NOTE: If Child Support Enforcement (CSE) opens a case subsequent to CW requesting a paternity test, then CW should turn over the originals of the test to CSE. CW should only maintain a copy for their records. This will reduce the possibility of duplicate or contradictory testing of the involved parties.

III. FORMS AND INSTRUCTIONS

[Form 48 / Instructions](#) Notice to Parent-Legal Custodian of Children Placed in State Custody by Instant Order

[Form 200 / Instructions](#) Request for Federal and State Parent Locator Service

FAST I [Form / Instructions](#) Financial Assessment Transaction

FAST II [Form / Instructions](#) Notification to Client Parent Guardian

[Paternity Testing Procedure Guide Sheet](#)

IV. REFERENCES

[Policy 1-1140](#), Consolidated Lead Evaluation and Reporting (CLEAR)

[Policy 6-201](#), Diligent Efforts to Visit Parents

[Policy 6-400](#), Identifying and Locating Placement Resources with Relatives and Friends

[Louisiana Children's Code Article 625D](#)

[P.L. 110-351, Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008](#)

[42 U.S.C. 653\(j\), Federal Parent Locator Service](#)