 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	9 – Ongoing Services to Foster Children
	Section No./Name	Ongoing Services to Foster Children
	Document No./Name	6-935 Travel and the Foster Child
	Effective Date	September 1, 2020

I. STATEMENT OF POLICY

DCFS ensures travel away from the child's normal * care setting occurs in a manner supporting the safety, permanency, and well-being of the child, as well as providing for normalcy in accordance with the child's best interest.

II. PROCEDURES

A. GENERAL TRAVEL GUIDELINES

- An adult must accompany a child in foster care in all travel situations.
- The child's case worker or supervisor is responsible for accompanying the child in any travel involving changing care settings.
- Placement of the child by an accompanying case worker or supervisor must occur in the care setting, not at a train station, airport, etc.


Official picture identification must be viewed by anyone accompanying a child during travel prior to releasing the child to another party.

- DCFS staff must ensure all financial needs of the child are accounted for and appropriate authorization received prior to approving or executing the travel episode.
- Staff traveling out of state with or without a child must have DCFS appointing authority approval prior to crossing state lines in performance with job duties. When traveling out of state, the case worker should refer to policy 6-1630-Transportation Expenditures for Foster Children.
- Approval must be obtained from DCFS appointing authority prior to taking state property, e.g. state vehicles, across state lines.

B. RESPONSIBILITIES OF CASE WORKER WHEN FOSTER CHILD IS TRAVELING

The duties of the Foster Care case worker related to travel involving a foster child includes:

- Following financial approval requirements for travel to be funded by the Department. Refer to 6-1630, Transportation Expenditures for Foster Children.
- Notifying the child's parents (when rights have not been terminated) about the travel plans. The case worker ** is responsible for rescheduling visitation, if there is a conflict with the visitation schedule for parents or siblings.

 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	9 – Ongoing Services to Foster Children
	Section No./Name	Ongoing Services to Foster Children
	Document No./Name	6-935 Travel and the Foster Child
	Effective Date	September 1, 2020

- Advising the foster parents to provide notification to the case *** worker** of travel plans when
 - traveling for more than a day;
 - requesting travel and/or funding approval prior to the planned travel; and
 - providing a trip schedule including dates, telephone number and address to allow contact in case of an emergency.
- When the child will be traveling out of state or out of the country, the case **worker** should provide notice to the child's parents if they retain parental rights, the court of jurisdiction, CASA, and the child's attorney.
- Ensuring travel occurs within Department of Administration (DOA) guidelines when DCFS is responsible for funding any portion of the travel.
- Utilizing the CW Foster Child Travel Assessment Checklist listed below to ensure travel is in the best interest of the child and neither the safety nor well-being of the child will be jeopardized.

C. TRAVEL OF **CAREGIVERS** WITHOUT THE FOSTER CHILD


If the family will be traveling for an extended period of time without the child accompanying them, the foster **caregivers** are to inform the child's case **worker** of alternate child care arrangements. Refer to 6-920, Respite Care and Alternative Child Care Plans, for guidance on assisting **caregivers** in locating alternative child care arrangements.

D. FOSTER CHILD TRAVEL ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

The following assessment must be documented in case notes regarding travel arrangements for a child in foster care. All information must accompany a request to provide funding for any type of travel.

1. Reason Foster Child will be Traveling:

- Visit non-custody parent uninvolved in the abuse/neglect of child
- Release of custody of child and accompanying child to custodian
- Child aged out of foster care in Louisiana and chosen residence is with relative in another state
 - relative must be in agreement with child coming to live with them
 - will only be approved for relatives
- Vacation with foster **caregiver** (No expense to Department)
- Visit potential ICPC or adoptive **care setting ****

 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	9 – Ongoing Services to Foster Children
	Section No./Name	Ongoing Services to Foster Children
	Document No./Name	6-935 Travel and the Foster Child
	Effective Date	September 1, 2020

- Placement for ICPC or adoption
- Medical procedure (Procedure must be medically necessary. Documentation must also include information regarding Medicaid coverage of travel if seeking financial support of travel from the Department.)
- Return of child from runaway episode
 - obtain ICJ III, Consent for Voluntary Return of Out of State Juvenile
 - notify ICJ Administrator at Office of Juvenile Justice State Office.
 - refer to 6-1215, Runaway, Missing, Kidnapped Foster Child
- Return of child from Human Trafficking episode
- School trip for educational purposes (not Senior trip)
 - refer to 6-1020, Expenses Allowed for Education
- Other , please explain

2. Condition of the Child:

- Child on medication has an adult responsible for and capable of transportation and administration of medication traveling with them.
- Child is not a runaway risk or an adult responsible for and capable of managing child's behavior is traveling with the child.
- Child has not been homicidal or suicidal within the past year or an adult responsible for and capable of managing the child's behavior is traveling with the child.
- Child has received explanation of the purpose and mode of travel and is in agreement with the travel plan.

3. How Travel will Achieve Child's Best Interest:

- Maintain family connection
- Achieve permanency
- Support medical or educational well-being
- Provide normalcy
- Resolve legal issues
- Other, please explain

III. FORMS AND INSTRUCTIONS

[Form ICJ III](#) Consent for Voluntary Return of Out of State Juvenile

IV. REFERENCES

Policy [6-920](#), Respite Care and Alternative Child Care Plans
 Policy [6-1020](#), Expenses Allowed for Education
 Policy [6-1215](#), Runaway, Missing, Kidnapped Foster Child
 Policy [6-1630](#), Transportation Expenditures for Foster Children