

Referrals for a PP Assessment

(Revised 7/19/19)

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Forms

The following forms are referenced in this file:

- 02-95 Concurrent Planning Agreement
- 04-90A Pre-Assessment Review
- 04-133 PPAU Pre-Assessment Referral (CWS/CMS Template)

Background

In the majority of dependency cases, the primary goal is reunification with the parents. With the exception of non-reunification cases, parents have from 6-24 months to correct the situation that brought the family to the attention of the court and to reunify with the child.

If the child is unable to return home after the statutory reunification time period, the court must set a Selection and Implementation Hearing per WIC 366.26. At the 366.26 hearing, the court will determine the most appropriate permanent plan for the child. Per the WIC, the order of preference (permanence) is:

- Adoption
- Tribal Customary Adoption (TCA) in the case of an Indian child
- Legal Guardianship
- Placement with a fit and willing relative
- Remain in foster care (only for children under 16 without another PP)
- Another Permanent Planned Living Arrangement (APPLA) (**only** for children 16 and over).

The court can determine in specific cases that a 366.26 hearing is not in the best interest of the child because the child is not a proper subject for adoption and there is no one willing to accept guardianship as of the hearing date. The court can then order a permanent plan of continued foster care or APPLA without a 366.26 Hearing.

**Role of
Permanency
Planning
Assessment Unit
(PPAU)**

The Permanency Planning Assessment Unit (PPAU) performs the following functions:

- Assesses children for placement in approved adoptive homes formerly known as concurrent planning homes.
 - Conducts pre-assessments required prior to the 366.21/22 Hearing when a 366.26 is to be recommended, or at any post-PP hearing when the recommendation is to change the permanent plan.
 - Notices all required parties of the 366.26 Hearing.
 - Updates all parent searches and prepares the Declaration of Due Diligence required on any absent parents.
 - Reviews case for ICWA findings and defective notice issues.
 - Facilitates the transfer of the case to Adoption or Guardianship.
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Policy

The Welfare and Institutions Code requires permanent plans to be selected and implemented for children who are unable to reunify

In an effort to make informed, timely decisions about permanency, the SW will make a referral for a pre-assessment of permanency to be conducted:

- when the Dispositional recommendation is that no reunification services be provided to the parents.
- prior to the 12-month Status Review Hearing under 366.21.
- prior to the 6-month Status Review Hearing for children who were under age three at the initial removal date and children who are part of a sibling group in which the youngest child was under age 3 at initial removal.
- prior to the 6-month Status Review Hearing for child who were initially removed under 300(g) and the parent(s) are still absent and have not had contact or visited.
- once every 12 months for children with any of the following permanent plans:
 - placement with fit and willing relative
 - continued foster care
 - Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA).

The Pre-Assessment process involves the following:

- A review of the case by a PPAU SW
- Communication with the assigned SW
- Discussions with the current caregiver regarding their willingness to adopt or take guardianship of the child
- An evaluation of the child's adoptability based on the child's characteristics and available resources.

NOTE: Referrals for pre-assessments should be sent 60 days prior to the next Review Hearing with the exception of those sent prior to Dispositional Hearings which should be sent as soon as it is determined that the recommendation is non-reunification.

Placement in an approved adoptive home prior to a permanent plan order

In situations, such as Safely Surrendered Babies, a child whose parents have failed to reunify with the child's siblings, or parents who will clearly be unable to reunify due to other circumstances, the child should be placed in an approved adoptive home, formerly called a concurrent planning home.

However, when a family is approved under Resource Family Approval (RFA), no additional approval will be required in the event that the child ultimately becomes a proper subject for adoption and the family decides to adopt the child.

The benefit for the child of this type of placement is that the family is already approved to adopt, and if reunification does not occur, the child will not have to be moved. A search for relatives must be completed prior to a referral to PPAU for an adoptive placement with a non-relative.

Referral for concurrent resource placement

This table describes how to refer a child for an approved adoptive (formerly a concurrent planning) home.

STEP	WHO	ACTION
1	Assigned SW	<p>Prior to referring the case, consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is the prognosis for reunification?• Have relatives been located to the 5th degree? If so, have they been ruled out as placement resources?• If the child has siblings, have their caregivers been contacted for placement?• Has the referral been discussed with the PSS or presented at Multi-Disciplinary Case Consultation?
2	Assigned SW	<p>If the above questions have been addressed and there is not a workable concurrent plan for the child, then:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete the 04-133 PPAU Pre-Assessment Referral.• Include the required attachments listed at the bottom of the form.• Send to the PPAU PSS. At W94 or via email.
3	PPAU PSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review case and get any additional information from SW.• Assign to PPAU SW.

Referral for concurrent resource placement (cont.)

STEP	WHO	ACTION
4	PPAU SW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review case. • Write a Child Profile. • Complete staffing form.
5	Placement Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review referral. • Select an adoptive family.
6	Adoptions Matching Specialists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact assigned Adoption Applicant SW. • Obtain child's medical records.
7	Adoption SW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact adoptive family. • If family is interested, go to Step 8. • If family is not interested, return to Step 5.
8	Applicant SW and assigned SW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold Telling meeting. • Inform family of reunification timeline and requirements. • If family is willing to move forward review and sign 02-95 and arrange for a Showing or placement.

PPAU pre-assessment

The following steps will be followed for a permanency assessment

STEP	WHO	ACTION
1	Assigned SW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the 04-133 Pre-Assessment Referral. • Attach all required documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Child's birth certificate ○ Court order with ICWA finding, if available ○ Previous search history if there is an absent parent(s) ○ Most recent Court Officer's Summary ○ Death, Divorce, Marriage Certificates for parents ○ Field worksheet (AKA Face Sheet). ○ Send to PPAU at W94.
2	PPAU PSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review 04-133 and documents. • Assign to PPAU SW.

PPAU pre-
assessment
(cont.)

STEP	WHO	ACTION
3	PPAU SW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review case file. • Communicate with SW. • Communicate with current caregiver regarding willingness to adopt or take guardianship of child. • Educate caregiver on responsibilities and benefits of adoption and guardianship. • Obtain the number of local approved adoptive families open to adopting child with the specific characteristics from the Adoption Placement Coordinator. • Based on the information determine the appropriate PP recommendation. • Complete the 04-90A, checking appropriate recommendation.
4	PPAU PSS	Sign 04-90A and send to assigned SW.
5	Assigned SW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on PPAU recommendation, write report recommending either a 366.26 hearing or a plan of placement with a fit and willing relative, continued foster care or APPLA without a 366.26 hearing. • Include summary of the PPAU recommendation in court report. • File 04-90A. <p>NOTE: Do not attach the 04-90A form to the Court Report.</p>

When to request a 366.26 Hearing

The SW will request a 366.26 hearing at these times, **unless** PPAU determines that the child is not adoptable and there is no one willing to accept guardianship at the time of the hearing.

Request a 366.26 Hearing...	When...
at Disposition	no reunification services are ordered for the parents pursuant to WIC 361.5(b) (1 through 17) or 361.5(e) (1). The 04-90 should be submitted to PPAU as soon as possible.
at a 6-month hearing	the child was under 3 years of age when removed from the parent; and : <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the prognosis for reunification is poor; or• the parent's whereabouts are still unknown after a diligent search; or• the parent has not had contact with the child for the last 6 months.
at the 12-month Permanency Hearing	there is no substantial probability that the child will return to the parent by the 18-month date.
at the 18-month or 24-month Permanency Review Hearing	the parent has failed to alleviate the safety threats to the child and reunification services are terminated.

Selecting a Permanent Plan with no 366.26 hearing

The law allows the court to make a finding that setting a 366.26 hearing is not in the child's best interest because the child is not a proper subject for adoption and has no one willing to accept legal guardianship as of the date of the hearing.

If PPAU has assessed that there are no adoptive homes available, or that one of the exceptions to adoption exist and there is no one willing to accept legal guardianship, the assigned SW can request that a 366.26 hearing not be scheduled and that the court select one of the following permanent plans:

- Placement with a fit and willing relative, continued foster care (if child is under 16)
- APPLA (only if youth is 16 or older).

Case management responsibilities

This table describes who has case management responsibilities, based on the permanent plan:

Permanent Plan	Responsible SW
Adoption	Adoption
Tribal Customary Adoption	Adoption
Guardianship	Continuing Services
Placement with a fit and willing relative, continued foster care (for children under 16)	Continuing Services
APPLA (for youth 16 and over)	Continuing Services

**Alignment with
SET**

This policy aligns with [Value 5: A Strong Working Relationship with the Legal System](#), which means collaboration with legal, and LE partners/mutual understanding and respect/primary focus on child's best interests/confidentiality/child's legal rights/cross agency education/teamwork/advocating for least restrictive care and visitation/case planning.
