

## Family Data Collection and Notification

### 521.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to establish written guidelines regarding the process for officers to identify and engage relatives when a youth is removed from the home. This policy applies to all designated personnel.

### 521.2 DEFINITIONS

**Family Finding and Engagement (FFE):** a broad concept, which begins upon intake, and encompasses not only the statutory requirements pertaining to identifying, locating, and notifying the relatives of a youth at risk of removal from the home or in foster care. These concepts are also related to nurturing life-long familial connections for all youth. These additional efforts are meant to enhance the long-term well-being of foster-care youth and are important to reducing the use of congregate care while improving outcomes. Intensive FFE can be used to identify possible relative or non-relative extended family member (NREFM) placements.

**Non-Relative Extended Family Member (NREFM):** As defined in Welfare and Institutions Code 362.7, an adult caregiver who has an established familial relationship with a relative of the child, as defined in paragraph (2) of subdivision (c) of Section 361.3, or a familial or mentoring relationship with the child. The officer will establish the existence of a relationship through interviews with the parent and youth or with one or more third parties. The parties may include relatives of the child, teachers, medical professionals, clergy, neighbors, and family friends.

**Reasonable Candidate (RC):** A youth who is at imminent risk of being removed from the home and placed into foster care, a resource family, residential treatment, or a Short Term Residential Therapeutic Program (STRTP).

**Relative:** As defined by Welfare and Institutions Code 319(h)(2), an adult who is related to the youth by blood, adoption, or affinity within the fifth degree of kinship, including stepparents, stepsiblings, and all relatives whose status is preceded by the words "great," "great-great," or "grand," or the spouse of any of these persons, even if the marriage was terminated by death or dissolution.

**Sibling:** As defined by Welfare and Institutions Code 309(e)(1), a person related to the identified youth by blood, adoption, or affinity through a common legal or biological parent.

### 521.3 POLICY

Enactment of AB 938 amends Welfare and Institutions Code 309 and Welfare and Institutions Code 628. These changes implement federal law (PL 110-351), which requires probation officers (PO) to exercise due diligence to identify and engage relatives and provide notice to relatives when a youth is removed from their home. It is the policy of the San Diego County Probation Department to comply with the law and diligent efforts be exercised to locate relatives for any youth in need of an out-of-home placement.

# San Diego County Probation Department

Administrative Services Policy Manual

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### **521.4 REFERENCES**

42 USC 671(a)(29)

Welfare and Institutions Code 309 & 628

CRC 5.637

ACL 09-86, 14-75, 16-16, 16-52, 17-65, & 18-42

For further guidance see the Family Data Collection and Notification Procedure