

## Foster Care Bill of Rights



In all circumstances, the best interests of the child shall be the first priority of the Children's Division

Recognizing the importance of familial stability in foster care and adoption placement, it shall be the practice of the Children's Division, when appropriate, to support a child's return to the custody and care of the parents or guardians with whom the child resided immediately prior to state custody

When restoration of care and custody is not appropriate or possible, the Children's Division shall attempt to place the child with suitable relatives in accordance with section 210.565

The Children's Division shall further support familial stability by ensuring continuity of foster placement, except in instances where cause for a change in a child's placement is reasonably found

The Children's Division shall work with each child in state custody to develop both a permanency plan and a case plan. These plans shall be developed within twelve months of a child's entrance into state custody. The permanency plan shall include the child's immediate and long-term placement goals, while the case plan shall address a child's specific medical and emotional needs

Recognizing the value of familial relationships in foster care and adoption settings, it shall be the practice of the Children's Division to place siblings in the same foster care, kinship, guardianship, or adoptive placement, unless doing so would be contrary to the safety or well-being of any of the siblings. If siblings are not placed together, it shall be the practice of the Children's Division to support regular visitation and communication between siblings in state custody, and between children in state custody and their parents and relatives, where not otherwise prohibited or against a child's best interests

The Children's Division shall support all children twelve years of age or older in state custody to attend any hearings pertaining to the child's placement, custody, or care, provided that the child is willing and able to attend such hearings, and that attending such hearings is in the best interests of the child.

REV 8/17

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