



RESOURCE FAMILY APPROVAL (RFA) PROGRAM OVERVIEW

RFA is a new family friendly and child-centered caregiver approval process that combines elements of the current foster parent licensing, relative approval and approvals for adoption and guardianship and replaces those processes. RFA:

- Is streamlined: It eliminates the duplication of existing processes.
- Unifies approval standards for all caregivers regardless of the child's case plan.
- Includes a comprehensive psychosocial assessment, home environment check and training for all families, including relatives.
- Prepares families to better meet the needs of vulnerable children in the foster care system.
- Allows seamless transition to permanency.

THE RFA & THE QUALITY PARENTING INITIATIVE (QPI) SUPPORT THE CONTINUUM OF CARE REFORM

THE RFA PROCESS IMPROVES THE WAY CAREGIVERS (RELATED AND NON-RELATED) FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE ARE APPROVED AND PREPARED TO PARENT VULNERABLE CHILDREN, WHETHER TEMPORARILY OR PERMANENTLY.

The **QPI** partners with caregivers in helping to design child welfare organizations at the local level to better recruit, support and retain quality foster caregivers who can effectively parent vulnerable children and youth.

The **CCR**: Together, these efforts work to build the capacity of the continuum of foster care placement options to better meet the needs of vulnerable children in home based family care. This increased capacity is essential to successfully moving children out of congregate care.

LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

RFA was enacted by legislation sponsored by CWDA in 2007 and expanded through Senate Bill 1013 (Chapter 35, Statutes of 2012). The statute requires the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), in consultation with county child welfare agencies, including Juvenile Probation, foster parent associations and other interested community parties to implement a unified, family friendly and child-centered resource family approval process.

RFA ENHANCES CURRENT SERVICES

RFA reaffirms the commitment to serving children, youth, young adults and families because it:

Focuses on Lifelong Relationships

- RFA supports connecting children, youth and young adults to safe, caring relationships that can last a lifetime by focusing on families
- RFA's purpose is to place children, youth and young adults with families that can provide a lifelong connection by determining permanency approval upfront

Achieves Results for Children, Youth, Young Adults and Families

- Upfront training and ongoing services prepare caregivers to meet the needs of children, youth and young adults and assisting families with forming lifelong relationships
- Supportive and loving long-term relationships lead to stable permanent placements and improved outcomes for children, youth and young adults

Improves Efficiency

- RFA is a streamlined process that includes one application, one background check and a combined home environment and permanency assessment
- The new coordinated process will eliminate duplication, reduce paperwork and maximize the efficient use of staff and system resources

HELPFUL RFA RESOURCES:

- Review Welfare and Institutions Code Section [16519.5](#)
- Review more information on the CDSS [RFA](#) webpage
- Email your questions or comments to CDSS at RFA@dss.ca.gov