



RESOURCE FAMILY APPROVAL (RFA) PROGRAM OVERVIEW

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

- Eliminates subjecting families to duplicate approval processes
- Upgrades and unifies approval standards for all caregivers
- Incorporates a combined home environment and comprehensive psychosocial assessment of all families and relatives
- Prepares families to better understand how to meet children's needs

RFA COMPONENTS

The streamlined process includes:

- One application
- One background check
- Combined home environment and permanency assessments
- Pre-approval and post-approval training for all families

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

LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

RFA was authorized 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, foster parent associations and other interested community parties to implement a unified, family friendly and child-centered resource family approval process.

RFA IMPLEMENTATION

RFA has been implemented in five counties who volunteered and were selected by CDSS as early implementation counties. These counties continue to be instrumental in working with CDSS to shape RFA.

COUNTY	COUNTY CONTACT	LAUNCH DATE
San Luis Obispo	lbelch@co.slo.ca.us	November 1, 2013
Kings County	tina.garcia@co.kings.ca.us	January 15, 2014
Santa Barbara	a.kruger@sbcsocialserv.org	March 1, 2014
Santa Clara	tracy.bowers@ssa.sccgov.org	July 31, 2014
San Francisco	Sophia.isom@sfgov.org	August 1, 2014

LAUNCHING RFA IN YOUR COUNTY

If you are interested in launching RFA in your county or would like more information, you can do one or more of the following:

- Work through the Implementation Assessment to determine whether your county may be ready to launch RFA as part of the second cohort of counties and develop a plan for implementation.
- Review Welfare and Institutions Code Section 16519.5 <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov>
- Review more information about RFA <http://www.childsworld.ca.gov/PG3416.htm>
- Email your questions or comments to CDSS at RFA@dss.ca.gov
- Contact early implementation counties for more information. See the table above for contact information

