

17. Travel Policy for Children and Youth in Foster Care

17.0 Purpose: Traveling for children in foster care is sometimes necessary to achieve child well-being, safety, and permanency goals. Additionally, allowing children in foster care to travel with their Resource Caregivers (RCGs) may be in their best interest and promote normalcy and is consistent with Prudent Parenting.

17.1 Authority

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| A. | P.L. 115-271,
106(b)(2)(B)(xii) | Child Abuse Prevention Treatment Action (CAPTA) |
| B. | P.L. 1130183 | Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act of 2014 |
| C. | CHAP 346-17, HRS | Child Placing Organization, Child Caring Institutions, and Resource Family Homes |
| D. | CHAP 587A-3.1,
HRS | Rights of Children in Foster Care |
| E. | CHAP 587A-18,
HRS | Reports to be submitted by the department and authorized agencies |
| F. | CHAP 587A-15,
HRS | Duties, rights, and liability of authorized agencies |
| G. | CHAP 587A-24,
HRS | Motions to vacate or modify prior order brought or decided upon pursuant to rule 59, Hawaii Family Court rules. |

17.2 Travel Request to Caseworker

Travel requests may be initiated by various parties and all travel requests regarding children in foster care must be considered. Travel requests can include actions that support the concurrent permanency goals, normalcy, and wellbeing for children and families. When a travel request is received, the caseworker shall gather sufficient information to determine the type of travel request and assess if the destination is safe considering public health emergencies and travel notices.

- A. Persons who can initiate a travel request
 1. Child or youth

2. Parents or caregiver
 3. Other supportive family members
 4. Resource Caregiver
 5. CWS Caseworker
 6. GAL/CASA
- B. The caseworker shall gather the following information:
1. Names of persons travelling and their relationship to the child
 2. Destination(s), including tentative flight, land/ground and/or sea itinerary
 3. Dates of travel or tentative dates
 4. Purpose
 5. Individual paying for the trip
 6. Approximate costs or receipts of the following
 - a. Flight cost
 - b. Ground transportation
 - c. Lodging
 - d. Other expenses
 7. Current public health or travel alerts for the destination (links)

17.3 Engaging Parties to the case

After gathering the travel logistics, the caseworker's recommendation for the travel request must be based on safety, permanency, and well-being.

- A. The caseworker shall discuss and consult with the following parties to inform them of the request, understand the purpose, and identify if they are in agreement with the request:
1. Parents
 - a. Parental consent from both parents/caregivers is required for all travel, see *C. Completing a Travel Notice for Emergency Travel* for emergency circumstances
 2. Child/youth
 3. GAL/CASA
 4. RCG
- B. The caseworker shall discuss the following with the parties listed above:
1. The concurrent permanency goals and plan
 2. Reunification efforts (including 'Ohana Time)
 3. Child or youth's best interest

4. Agreement or disagreement of parties listed in IVA.
Engaging Parties to the Case
Current public health or travel alerts for the destination and plans to adhere to current public health and safety rules and regulations. Refer to Travel Advisories posted at:
<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html/>

17.4 Administrative Timelines and Completing a Travel Notice

In consideration of the travel process, it is important that CWS staff are aware of the administrative and court timelines that are in place to ensure travel can occur as scheduled.

A. Administrative Timelines

1. Caseworkers shall complete the necessary forms and notifications within the following timelines:
 - a. Interisland: 2-4 weeks prior to the departure date
 - b. Interstate: 4-6 weeks prior to the departure date
 - c. International: 6-8 weeks prior to the departure date

B. Completing a Travel Notice

1. If all parties are in agreement with the travel request, the caseworker shall complete the following:
 - a. Travel within the state
 - i. Draft a letter to court, which includes:
 1. Purpose of the travel
Indicate and describe the reason and purpose for travel
 2. Specifics of the travel
Identify the dates of the travel, destination for any flight, ground and/or sea itinerary, lodging, travel companions, and other relevant information.
 3. Agreements and collateral contacts
Indicate efforts to contact parents or caregivers and describe their support with the travel request.
 4. DHS Recommendation
Short description on DHS position and any further recommendations
 - ii. Complete a Travel Approval Form (TAF)
 - b. Travel outside state
A court order needs to be obtained prior to any

travel (see exceptions in C. Emergency Travel).

- i. Draft a letter to court, which includes all the information listed above, and submit as a motion to DAG with colored cover sheet.
 - ii. Contact the assigned Deputy Attorney General (DAG) to initiate the motion to court. (Refer to 2019 ICF: Communication with Attorney General's Office Regarding Motion for Immediate Review (MIR); Clarification Regarding Changing Legal Status from Foster Custody to Family Supervision, Family Supervision to Foster Custody)
 - iii. Complete a Travel Approval Form (TAF)
 - iv. Complete a Travel Internal Communication Form (Travel ICF) to be reviewed and approved by the Division Administrator, which includes:
 1. Name of person travelling and family member role
 2. Destination and Duration of Trip
 3. Cost of Travel
 4. Funding Source for Travel
 5. Purpose and Justification of Trip
 6. ICPC approval, as appropriate
2. If any party is not in agreement with the travel request or DHS is unable to obtain consent for travel, the caseworker shall:
- a. Consult with their supervisor
 - b. Draft a letter to court and submit as a motion to DAG with colored cover sheet. The letter should include:
 - i. all the information in B.1.a.i
reason for motion, including inability to obtain consent/agreement of the parties)
 - c. Contact the assigned Deputy Attorney General (DAG) to initiate the motion to court
- C. Completing a Travel Notice for Emergency Travel
- Emergency travel requires that flight arrangements be made immediately and requires approval by CWSB. Due to the urgency of the travel, a court order may not be possible to obtain prior to travel. A request for a motion must be submitted once travel has been completed. Situations that warrant immediate action involves:
- travel to obtain services that address health, medical and dental needs,

- placements (including ICPC) that support the permanency goal and require immediate attention and response,
 - 'Ohana time needs that must be addressed timely and require immediate attention and response
1. In the event of emergency travel, the caseworker shall:
 - a. Take appropriate action to address the emergency
 - b. Draft a letter to court with colored cover sheet and request for a motion, which includes:
 - i. Purpose of the travel
Indicate and describe the reason and purpose for travel
 - ii. Specifics of the travel
Identify the dates of the travel, destination, lodging, travel companions, and other relevant information.
 - iii. Emergency situation or essential need
Describe situation, follow up, actions taken, and next steps
 - iv. Agreements and collateral contacts
Indicate efforts to contact parents or caregivers and describe their support or disagreement with the travel request.
 - v. DHS Recommendation
Short description on DHS position and any further recommendations
 - c. Contact the assigned Deputy Attorney General (DAG) to initiate the motion to court (Refer to 2019 ICF: Communication with Attorney General's Office Regarding Motion for Immediate Review (MIR); Clarification Regarding Changing Legal Status from Foster Care to Family Supervision; and Family Supervision to Foster Care https://shaka.dhshawaii.net/icf_document/download/124740)
 - d. Complete a Travel Approval Form (TAF)
 - e. If travelling out-of-state, complete a Travel Internal Communication Form (Travel ICF)

17.5 Travel Logistics

A. Financial Support

1. CWS shall be responsible for ensuring airfare costs for the child or youth is covered
2. CWS clerical staff shall research state's mileage points first to determine if miles can be used to book flights
3. CWS shall explore other funding sources to cover additional expenses (ground transport, lodging) such as:
 - a. Contributions from parents, RCGs
 - b. Friends of the Children's Justice Center
 - c. Enhancement Funds
4. Medical travel should be authorized via the medical plan prior to travel, whenever possible. If approval is not possible prior to travel due to urgent needs, consult the respective supervisor for instructions on requesting after-the-fact reimbursement via the medical plan.
5. Additional funding of up to \$2000 per family per trip may be reimbursed to a prospective caretaker when travel is occurring to support the permanent placement with the goal of adoption or legal guardianship. This additional funding can be extended to support reunification with a birth parent who resides out of state on a case-by-case basis. This funding may be used to cover expenses in situations where a prospective caretaker may accrue lodging or transportation expenses when travelling to pick up a youth.

B. Chaperone and Seat Purchases

1. Children and youth cannot travel alone. They must be accompanied by a CWS staff member, family member, RCG, or other chaperone approved by CWS at all times. The purpose is to help ensure the child or youth's safety, as well as provide support when the travel plans change unexpectedly.
2. All children and youth traveling with a community or school group must have designated chaperones as approved by the community organization or school. See [Prudent Parent Standard](#). Caseworkers may consult with their supervisor for due diligence and further guidance.

3. When a child, under the age of two (2), is travelling out-of-state and is accompanied by one (1) chaperone, an airline ticket/seat shall be purchased for that child.
 - a. Children under the age of two (2) accompanied by two (2) chaperones do not require their own seat.