



CDSS

WILL LIGHTBOURNE  
DIRECTOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY  
**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

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EDMUND G. BROWN JR.  
GOVERNOR

June 26, 2015

ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. I-43-15

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

- State Law Change
- Federal Law or Regulation Change
- Court Order
- Clarification Requested by One or More Counties
- Initiated by CDSS

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS  
ALL COUNTY CHIEF PROBATION OFFICERS

SUBJECT: ASSESSMENTS TO DETERMINE THE APPROPRIATENESS OF THE GROUP HOME PLACEMENT FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN GROUP HOME CARE OVER ONE YEAR IN DURATION AND PLANS FOR TRANSITIONING INTO A FAMILY-BASED SETTING

REFERENCE: WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE (WIC) SECTIONS 361.2, 11467(c)(2), 16010.8, AND 16501.1(c)(1); ASSEMBLY BILL (AB) 74 (CHAPTER 21, STATUTES OF 2013); ALL COUNTY LETTER (ACL) NO. 13-73; ACL NO. 13-86

The purpose of this All County Information Notice (ACIN) is to inform counties that the dissemination of lists identifying those children and youth placed in group homes for one year or longer will be available on July 1, 2015. Listed below are the instructions for how to document the assessment and the plan for appropriately transitioning children and youth into a family-based setting (e.g. foster family home, foster family agency certified home, kinship/guardianship, relative/non-relative extended family member, etc.).

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) recently released the Continuum of Care (CCR) Legislative Report which contains various recommendations that support the efforts to reduce the reliance on group homes as a long-term permanent residence. The documentation of the assessment and the review process outlined in this notice is consistent with the intent of the CCR recommendations. The recommendations focus the child welfare and probation systems of care on placing children and youth in home-based family care settings with adequate services and supports, rather than in group care settings.

### The Notification Procedure

For the July 2015 data extraction, each county welfare director and chief probation officer should receive an email notice by July 15, 2015. The email will explain how to access the CDSS extranet site for each County's list of children and youth to be reviewed. Note that the website and logon procedures have not changed and each County's login from the October 2013 list distribution should still work. If an email notice is not received by a county by July 30, 2015, or if there are problems with the login process, that county should contact the CDSS using the information contained within this ACIN.

### Input of the Assessment Data and Timeframe to Complete

As of August 1, 2015, all counties are presumed to have notice and receipt of the July 2015 list of children and youth in group care over one year in duration. Counties will have until October 1, 2015 to input group care placement assessments and appropriate transition plans into the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) case management system as a "Client Evaluation" has explained in ACL No. 13-86.

The CDSS will conduct a follow-up sampling of cases to determine the extent to which counties have reassessed the continued suitability of the group home placement and developed transition plans for placement in a less restrictive placement setting consistent with the intent of WIC section 16010.8. The CDSS's review of information will be limited to those sections identified in ACL No. 13-86. Information entered into other sections of the CWS/CMS system or probation database will not be considered as meeting these requirements for the reporting purposes.

Pursuant to ACL No. 13-86, counties are being requested to document the reassessment by entering the following information into the "Contact Notebook" in CWS/CMS for each individual on the list:

- (1) Enter the appropriate start date and end date for the contact.
- (2) Contact method should be "In-Person". (Note: This activity can take place during the monthly caseworker visit.)
- (3) For the Contact Purpose, select "Conduct Client Evaluation" from the drop down menu.
- (4) For "On Behalf of Child", select the child/youth identified on this list.
- (5) Contact "Party Type" – select "Staff Person/Child."

(6) In the Narrative dialog box document the following:

a) Begin the narrative with the phrase - "Reassessment of a child/youth in group care".

b) For those youth whom it is determined that group care continues to be suitable and appropriate, include information supporting the continued placement needs of the child/youth. This would include information as to why continuation in a group home placement is the best alternative available to meet the special needs of the child/youth and what strategies are being considered to transition the child/youth to a less restrictive level of care.

c) For the child/youth whose reassessment has determined that group care is no longer suitable or appropriate, include information regarding the plan for transition being sure to include information about when it is expected that the child/youth will transition and where the child/youth will transition to (relative, parent or Foster Family Agency with In Home Behavioral Services, Therapeutic Foster Care services).

(7) If a transitional plan is developed or changed, then the case plan should be updated as necessary to reflect any changes in services and case plan goals. Extended Foster Care or an Independent Living Plans are not considered "transition plans" for purpose of this assessment of a child/youth in group care.

If you have any questions regarding this ACIN, please contact the Foster Care Audits and Rates Branch at (916) 651-9152. Questions can be directed to [ccr@dss.ca.gov](mailto:ccr@dss.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

***Original Document Signed By:***

CHERYL TREADWELL, Chief  
Foster Care Audits and Rates Branch  
Children and Family Services Division