

POLICY TITLE: ESTABLISHING THE GOAL OF ALTERNATIVE PLANNED PERMANENT LIVING ARRANGEMENT (APPLA)		PAGE 1 OF 4
CHAPTER:		
	CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES AGENCY  Approved by: _____ Signature of Agency Director	PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS See Section VIII.
EFFECTIVE DATE:	LATEST REVISION: June 25, 2009	APPROVED BY LEGAL COUNSEL: June 29, 2009

I. AUTHORITY	Pursuant to D.C. Official Code § 4-1303.03(a-1)(6), (13) (Repl. 2008), the Director of Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) adopts this policy to be consistent with the Agency's mission and applicable federal and District of Columbia laws, rules and regulations, including the federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act and its implementing regulations, the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (ASFA), provisions in Title 4 and 16 of the D.C. Official Code, and the modified final order and implementation plan in <i>LaShawn A. v. Fenty</i> .
II. APPLICABILITY	All CFSA employees, contracted personnel and contract agency personnel.
III. RATIONALE	The phrase "another planned permanent living arrangement" or APPLA was coined by Congress during the writing of ASFA as a result of concern for children languishing indefinitely in the foster care system. "Long-term foster care" was eliminated as a permanency option with the intent that children would exit from foster care with a permanent family. Federal statute considers APPLA to be viable as a permanency option only after "the State agency has documented to the State court a compelling reason for determining that it would not be in the best interests of the child to return home, be referred for termination of parental rights, or be placed for adoption, with a fit and willing relative, or with a legal guardian" (Title III, Section 302 of the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997, approved November 19, 1997; P.L. 105-85, 42 U.S.C. 675(5)(C)).
IV. POLICY	<p>This policy provides standards and procedures for CFSA and its case management partners to make individualized determinations to establish Alternative Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) as the permanency goal for a youth.</p> <p>The mission of CFSA is to promote the safety, permanence, and well-being of children and families in the District of Columbia. CFSA is committed to making all efforts to promote children's safety while they remain in the custody of their parent(s) or caregivers. When CFSA determines that a child is at imminent risk of harm, the child may be moved from their home to the protective custody of CFSA. Remaining in protective custody or in the custody of CFSA is not a primary, long-term option for children and youth.</p>

	<p>It is the goal of CFSA to ensure that each child and youth in CFSA custody finds an enduring connection with at least one committed adult who is safe, stable and able to provide the following components of a supportive relationship:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Physical, emotional, social, cognitive, and spiritual well-being; 2. Respect for racial and ethnic heritage and traditions; 3. Respect for maintaining natural bonds with the birth family; and, 4. Lifelong support, guidance and supervision to the youth as the youth transitions from foster care to self-sufficiency. <p>These enduring connections would occur when the permanency options of reunification, a legal adoption, guardianship or legal custody have been exhausted.</p>
V. CONTENTS	<p>A. Primary Permanency Options B. Considerations for Determination of APPLA as a Non-Preferred Permanency Option C. When APPLA Goal is Established by the Court</p>
VI. ATTACHMENT	<p>A. Request for APPLA Goal Approval</p>
VII. PROCEDURES	<p>Procedure A: Primary Permanency Options</p> <p>The following are primary options for “Safe Case Closure” as identified by CFSA’s Practice Model:</p> <p>Reunification The CFSA Practice Model affirms the immeasurable importance and significance of a youth’s attachment to parents and family. It is CFSA’s commitment to protect and preserve this attachment by providing every possible resource for youth and their families to maintain an optimally healthy, nurturing family bond. The goal of reunification is the first, primary and most preferred permanency option for children under the care of CFSA.</p> <p>Adoption Non-kin adoption involves recruitment of an adoptive/custodial family that is not related to the youth. Youth may also be adopted by relatives or kin. CFSA’s current pre- and post-adoption services are carefully tailored to encourage and sustain the adoption process, both for relatives and non-relatives.</p> <p>Guardianship CFSA’s Practice Model fully supports and actively seeks involvement of relatives to achieve permanency for children and youth. In the event that reunification has been eliminated as a viable permanency option, permanence can be achieved through permanent guardianship with kin. Research indicates that this option positively influences school performance, behavior, mental health, and/or later adult functioning.</p>

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	<p>Legal Custody Legal custody awards legal responsibility for the child or youth, including the right to make decisions regarding where and with whom the child shall live; the right and duty to protect, train, and discipline the child; and the responsibility to provide the child with food, shelter, education, and ordinary medical care.</p>
	<p>Procedure B: Considerations for Determination of APPLA as a Non-Preferred Permanency Option</p> <p>It is the policy of CFSA to prepare for permanence through a comprehensive case planning and teaming approach that includes the youth and family in a participatory process. After careful review, and only after the four priority permanency goals mentioned above have been eliminated during this process, shall consideration be given as to whether a youth is to be eligible for the goal of APPLA. Further, the following requirements must be fulfilled prior to accepting the goal of APPLA for any youth:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The youth is 16 years of age or older. 2. The youth's case record fully documents facts, evidence, and circumstances surrounding the decision to consider APPLA, including evidence that the four priority permanency goals have been exhausted, evidence of youth and family involvement in the decision-making process, and evidence of supervisory input and approval. 3. A concurrent permanency plan has been thoughtfully developed for all youth in care including youth with extraordinary needs who may need to remain indefinitely in institutional care. <u>The concurrent permanency plan must include at least one, preferably two, adult parental figures, who willingly commit to involvement with the youth beyond his or her time in foster care.</u> 4. The youth's skills and talents have been assessed, and he/she has been or will be enrolled in an individualized program designed to develop independent living skills, including those required to secure an appropriate income and suitable housing. 5. Youth must have been involved in at least one "Listening to Youth and Families as Experts" (LYFE) Conference, assembled for the purpose of exploring permanency options. LYFE Conferences should be requested by the CFSA or private agency social worker at least 6 to 8 weeks prior to the permanency hearing, to allow adequate time to coordinate the meeting and have all of the necessary documentation available . All requests must be submitted via email to cfsa.ftmu@dc.gov for assignment to a LYFE Conference coordinator. The social worker shall make every effort to involve the youth's family in the Conference. The youth's social worker and the social worker's supervisor shall be in attendance.

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	<p>6. If all of the above conditions have been met and satisfied, the assigned Administrator must submit a Request for APPLA Goal Approval form to CFSA's Director or designee for signature. Private agency workers shall submit the request to their respective agency's Executive Director for approval. The approved form shall be forwarded by the private agency's Executive Director (or designee) to the CFSA Director for final approval. All of the above-mentioned documentation must be copied and attached to the form. The signed form shall be copied and filed with the case plan.</p> <p>The APPLA goal shall be constantly examined and revisited at all relevant team meetings and reviews. This goal should not be considered fixed or immutable.</p>
	<p>Procedure C: When APPLA Goal is Established by the Court</p> <p>There may be instances when the Court will establish the goal of APPLA, when this goal was not recommended by CFSA or the private agency. In these instances:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The assigned social worker shall secure and provide a copy of the Court order to the respective Program Administrator (or Program Director in the case of the private agency social worker) and discuss the Court's recommendation. 2. The assigned social worker and supervisor should discuss the Court hearing, reasons for the Court's decision to change the goal, other possible recommendations or solutions, and give full consideration and review of CFSA's assessment for permanency options with the assigned Assistant Attorney General (AAG) and their supervisor. 3. The Program Administrator (or private agency Program Director) shall discuss the Court order with the respective Deputy Director and Director (or agency Executive Director). 4. The assigned social worker shall immediately schedule a Permanency Family Team Meeting. 5. The assigned social worker shall document all activity in FACES.

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**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Child and Family Services Agency**



REQUEST FOR APPLA GOAL APPROVAL

Client Name:	DOB:	
	Client ID:	Case ID:
Social Worker:	Telephone #:	
Signature:	Cell #:	
Supervisor:	Telephone #:	
Signature:	Cell #:	
Program Manager:	Telephone #:	
Signature:	Cell #:	
REASON(S) FOR REQUEST (ATTACH DOCUMENTATION)		
1. Why was reunification eliminated as a goal? How was the youth and family involved in the decisions-making process?		
2. Why was adoption eliminated as a goal? How was the youth and family involved in the decision-making process?		
3. Why was guardianship with relatives eliminated as a goal? How was the youth and family involved in the decision-making process?		

4. Why was legal custody eliminated as a goal? How was the youth and family involved in the decision-making process?

APPLA GOAL CHECKLIST (All boxes must be checked YES prior to receiving approval)

Is the youth over age 16? Yes

Does the youth's case record contain documentation supporting this request? Yes

Are documents attached to this request that provide evidence that other goals are exhausted? Yes

Is there documentation of concurrent planning attached? Yes

Is there documentation of a skills set/talent assessment attached? Yes

Has the youth been involved in at least one LYFE team meeting? Yes

Do you require any exceptions to the above-listed requirements? Yes (Please attach documentation)

Administrator/Executive Director Authorization

I have thoroughly reviewed and approve this request for the approval of the goal of APPLA.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Director's Authorization

I have thoroughly reviewed and approve this request for the approval of the goal of APPLA

Name: _____ Date: _____