



**Series:** Operating Procedures **COA:** NA  
**CFOP:** 175-62  
**Policy Name:** Expediting Permanency for Abandoned Infants  
**Policy Number:** OP-1062  
**Revision #/Date:** (2)09/05/08  
**Effective Date:** 09/30/04  
**Applicable to:** All CBCB Staff and Contract Providers

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**SUBJECT:** Expediting Permanency for Abandoned Infants

**PURPOSE:** To establish the procedures to follow when an infant is abandoned and placed in foster care.

**PROCEDURE:**

**Definitions**

“Abandoned Infant”: A situation in which the parent or legal custodian of a child from birth up to age one or, in the absence of a parent or legal custodian, the caregiver responsible for the child's welfare, while being able, makes no provision for the child's support and makes no effort to communicate with the child, which situation is sufficient to evince a willful rejection of parental obligations.

“Foster/Adoptive Home”: A family foster home licensed for foster care placement and approved for adoptive placement. Further the parents have demonstrated a willingness to facilitate reunification, if possible, and at the same time consider themselves as the child's potential adoptive parents.

**References**

Section 202 (a) (3) (c) (ii) of Public Law 103-432 which amends s. 475(5)(A) of the Social Security Act requires states to enact and implement policies and procedures necessary to enable permanency decisions to be made expeditiously regarding the placement of abandoned infants.

**Placement**

- a. In cases where it has been determined that the child does not meet the definition of a special needs child, CBC of Brevard will contact the local private agencies for consideration of placement and services to the child.
- b. If the local private agencies will not or cannot take responsibility for placing the child, CBC of Brevard will assume this responsibility.

**Diligent Search**

- a. A diligent search for parents and relatives must begin IMMEDIATELY. The search for parents is for the purpose of identifying/locating a parent who may not have been

responsible for the abandonment and/or relatives who may be resources for adoption or other permanent placement of the infant.

- b. If a parent determined not to be responsible for abandonment, or a relative comes forward within 60 days of taking the child into custody, and is willing to provide a permanent home to the infant, CBC of Brevard must conduct a home study to assess the appropriateness of the placement.
- c. When children are placed in foster/adoptive homes, it is crucial to keep the foster/adoptive parents regularly informed about the status of diligent search responses as they become available.

### **HIV Testing**

- a. If maternal history is known and it suggests that the infant's mother may be high risk for HIV, the infant must be tested for HIV.
- b. If no maternal history is known, the risk is also considered high and therefore the infant must be tested.
- c. In either case above, a court order is necessary if the parent is unavailable or is unwilling to consent.

### **Birth Records**

As soon as sufficient information is available, records including a certified birth certificate and medical records must be requested.

### **Case Plan**

- a. A case plan for expedited permanency must be developed for the infant and filed with the court within 30 days, 60 days if the court approves an extension.
- b. A Family Team Conference, to include Child Welfare Legal Services and the child's caregiver, must be convened to assist in developing the wraparound plan. The following statements apply to the wraparound/case plan:
  - (1) The act of abandoning an infant meets the definition of egregious abuse; therefore, parents responsible for abandonment do not have to be offered a reunification case plan.
  - (2) The goal of the case plan will be adoption.
  - (3) The time frame for accomplishing a finalized adoption for the infant must be the shortest time possible to allow for completion of the diligent search, home study, if applicable, and the necessary legal procedures.

BY DIRECTION OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



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