

417 Selection of Families for Placement

CHAPTER 4, Adoption and Birth Parent Services

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NOTE: Neither the race, color or national origin (RCNO) of the child or prospective adoptive family shall be among the selection factors, except in rare cases, outlined in [Section 413](#) or [Section 413.01](#) of the Human Services Policy and Procedure manual, that a licensed professional's individualized assessment finds that RCNO should be among the many factors considered with regard to determining a placement. In any such case, [DSS Form 2534: Licensed Professional's Statement](#), must be completed and filed in the child's record. Culture shall not be used as a proxy for RCNO.

Adoption Specialist

1. If the birth parent is involved, reviews any preferences the birth parent has concerning the openness of the adoption or whether the birth parent wants to review non-identifying abstracts on the families being considered for placement. However, preferences for an adoptive family of a particular RCNO shall not be considered during the matching, selection, or placement committee processes;
2. Prints a report from CAPSS of available families who will accept the child's characteristics;

3. Reviews the printout, then requests the State Office adoptive home files and selects up to six appropriate families, using the following criteria:

- a. Birth parent's preferences, if applicable. Birth parent preferences for an adoptive family of a particular RCNO shall not be considered in the selection process.
- b. Child's special needs;
- c. Adoptive parent's preferences and acceptance of birth family and child factors;
- d. Physical and emotional health of adoptive parent(s) in terms of ability to care for the child until the child reaches adulthood, including evaluation of adoptive parent(s)' ability to meet the changing needs of a child as the child ages;
- e. Application date if all other factors are equal;

4. Convenes a placement committee composed of the Adoption Specialist(s) who have worked with the child and birth parent, the Adoption Supervisor or Administrator, and one to two additional adoption staff. If the child had a county Foster Care worker, that worker and Foster Care supervisor must also be invited to participate. The placement committee will not meet until the adoptive home files have been received from State Office.;

5. Presents to the placement committee information on the child, including birth family background, child's health and developmental status, reason for child coming into care, etc. Presents information on the potential adoptive families and birth parent preferences, if applicable. Information regarding RCNO shall not be presented.;

Placement Committee

6. Selects up to six appropriate families, ranking them in order of preference. Neither the families' nor the child's RCNO shall be considered in selecting or ranking families. The only exception is when the child's individual comprehensive assessment, based upon the findings of an independent, licensed professional (see Section 413, 12.) has determined that race, color or national origin is a placement factor for that child. It is expected that such determinations will be rare and must be thoroughly documented and justified in the child's record. Placement may not be delayed or denied based solely on the location of the adoptive family; out of state families should receive the same

consideration as South Carolina families. The committee should honor the birth parent's preferences, if applicable and in the child's best interests. However, preferences regarding RCNO shall not be considered.;

Adoption Specialist (Child's Worker)

7. Completes the first page of [DSS Form 2532: Placement Committee Staffing](#). Be specific as to the particular reasons the adoptive family was selected. Include the particular, individualized needs of the child and include the specific factors that indicate why the selected family is the most appropriate choice to serve the child's best interests. Neither the RCNO of the child or prospective adoptive family shall be among the selection factors, except in rare cases, outlined in [Section 413](#) or [Section 413.01](#) of the Human Services Policy and Procedure manual that a licensed professional's individualized assessment finds that RCNO should be among the many factors considered with regard to determining a placement. In any such case, standardized forms, [DSS 2533: MEPA Educational Materials](#) and [DSS 2534: Licensed Professional's Statement](#), must be completed and in the child's file.;

Adoption Supervisor

8. Completes the second page of [DSS Form 2532: Placement Committee Staffing](#) after the placement committee's decision, signs it, and gives the original of the entire form to the Adoption Specialist (Child's Worker) and a copy to the Adoption Administrator.;

Adoption Specialist (Child's Worker)

9. If the birth parent is involved, shares the potential adoptive families' non-Identifying abstracts (not including RCNO) with the birth parent, not disclosing the placement committee's ranking. If the birth parent has a choice, this choice will be honored if the family is available. Explains to the birth parent that his/her choice will be honored if possible, but the agency will have to consider any unforeseen circumstances that may arise and the final placement decision is the agency's. Explains to the birth parent that requests for an Adoptive family of a particular RCNO will not be honored. If the birth parent declines to make a choice or if his/her selection is not available, placement can proceed with the placement committee's choice(s) without convening another placement committee.;

10. If the Placement Committee chooses a family of the same RCNO as the child over a family of a different RCNO than the child, notifies the Plan Monitor and provides relevant documentation to support the Placement Committee's decision.;

11. If the birth parent's preference was not honored, documents the reasons in the child's and birth parent's records and in CAPSS. Documents in the State Office adoptive home record for each family that was not selected that the placement committee considered this family and the specific reasons for selecting another family; "more appropriate family selected" is not an adequate explanation. Documents in the selected family's and the child's case records the specific reasons why this family was selected.

Using [DSS Form 2532: Placement Committee Staffing](#), include the needs of the child and why the selected family is the most appropriate choice. RCNO of the adoptive family and child are not acceptable reasons for selection of a family and shall not be considered;

12. If the birth parent is involved, notifies the birth parent which adoptive family received placement of her/his child by sharing non-identifying information and explains why the family was selected.;

13. Files the original of [DSS Form 2532: Placement Committee Staffing](#), in the child's record in the adoptive placement section.;

Adoption Administrator

14. Files the copy of [DSS Form 2532: Placement Committee Staffing](#), in a separate file maintained solely for the purpose of documenting placement committee decisions.

Referenced Documents

[DSS Form 2532: Placement Committee Staffing](#)

[DSS 2533: MEPA Educational Materials](#)

[DSS Form 2534: Licensed Professional's Statement](#)

Revision Comments

- Section 417 now applies to all adoptive placements, regardless of the child's age.
- Section 417, 1., 2., 3., 3.a., 5., 6., 7., 8., 9., 11. were revised and NOTE added to clarify that race, color or national origin shall not be used in the selection or adoptive placement processes, and that culture shall not be used as a proxy for race, color or national origin.
- New Item 10. was added to provide that the Plan Monitor is notified when a family of the same race as the child is selected over a family of a different race than the child.
- New Items 13. and 14. were added to require documentation of the placement committee decision.