



RESOURCE FAMILY APPROVAL (RFA) PROGRAM OVERVIEW

RFA is a new family friendly and child-centered caregiver approval process that combines elements of the current foster parent licensing, relative approval and approvals for adoption and guardianship and replaces those processes. RFA:

- Is streamlined: It eliminates the duplication of existing processes.
- Unifies approval standards for all caregivers regardless of the child's case plan.
- Includes a comprehensive psychosocial assessment, home environment check and training for all families, including relatives.
- Prepares families to better to meet the needs of vulnerable children in the foster care system.
- Allows seamless transition to permanency.

THE RFA & THE QUALITY PARENTING INITIATIVE (QPI) SUPPORT THE CONTINUUM OF CARE REFORM

THE RFA PROCESS IMPROVES THE WAY CAREGIVERS (RELATED AND NON-RELATED) FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE ARE APPROVED AND PREPARED TO PARENT VULNERABLE CHILDREN, WHETHER TEMPORARILY OR PERMANENTLY.

The **QPI** partners with caregivers in helping to design child welfare organizations at the local level to better recruit, support and retain quality foster caregivers who can effectively parent vulnerable children and youth.

The **CCR**: Together, these efforts work to build the capacity of the continuum of foster care placement options to better meet the needs of vulnerable children in home based family care. This increased capacity is essential to successfully moving children out of congregate care.

LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

RFA was enacted by legislation sponsored by CWDA in 2007 and expanded through Senate Bill 1013 (Chapter 35, Statutes of 2012). The statute requires the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), in consultation with county child welfare agencies, including Juvenile Probation, foster parent associations and other interested community parties to implement a unified, family friendly and child-centered resource family approval process. The new process is to be tested in five early-implementing counties before rolling out to all counties.

RFA IMPLEMENTATION

RFA has been implemented in five counties, San Luis Obispo, Kings, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara and San Francisco. RFA will be implemented in all counties by January 2017.

CDSS in collaboration with CWDA is accepting "letters of intent" from counties to become the second cohort of early implementing counties. The letter of intent needs to be received by CDSS by May 1, 2015.