

Q's and A's for Resource Work Policies

Q 1: Why have the policies been revised?

A: The *Caregiver Support Service Standards* have been revised and renamed to the **Resource Work Policies**. The policies have been revised to include three new policies (see Q4) and to improve the clarity and consistency of language throughout the policies.

The format of the policy has also change to match the Child Protection Response policies and other core child welfare policies that are under development. Each policy includes a policy statement, outcomes, standards, procedures and additional resources.

Q 2: Why has the name changed from the Caregiver Support Service Standards to the Resource Work Policies (RWP)?

A: The name 'Caregiver Support Service Standards' created some confusion about the intended audience. In some instances they were mistakenly thought to be for foster caregivers rather than resource workers. A decision was made to clarify this by calling the revised policies 'Resource Work Policies'.

Q 3: Who was involved in the revision process?

A: Policy updates to the RWP continued through a working group that included membership from MCFD Service Delivery Division, Policy and Provincial Services Division, Quality Assurance Branch, Residential Redesign project team, Delegated Aboriginal Agencies (DAA); BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations and the Office of the Chief Information Officer.

Q 4: What are the most substantive changes?

A: There are two main changes.

1.) SAFE Assessment is Mandatory

Resource Work Policy 8.1: Recruitment, Screening, Assessment and Approval states that SAFE must be used. The version that included topic areas that was included in the Caregiver Support Service Standards can no longer be used.

Resource Work Policy 8.2: Assessment and Approval of Restricted Caregivers states that SAFE is also required for restricted caregiver.

Current restricted caregiver homes are **not** required to have their home study re-done.

You must receive the SAFE training before you can use SAFE. Further training sessions for SAFE was offered for resource workers in November and December 2016. More training is anticipated for 2017.

2.) Moving Protocol Agreements into Provincial Policy

The introduction of the following three new policies will replace regional foster home protocols and the Protocols for Foster Homes (1999) - bringing greater consistency to practice across the province:

- Resource Work Policy 8.19: Quality of Care Review;
- Resource Work Policy 8.20 Family Care Home Investigations (replacing *Caregiver Support Service Standard 19: Caregiver Protocols*); and
- Resource Work Policy 8.21: Dispute Resolution for Caregivers (replacing protocol entitled 'Resolving Issues between Foster Parents and Ministry Staff')

To support these, the Family Care Home Agreement (FCHA) has been updated to refer to the policies regarding the director's review and investigation of concerns and dispute resolution for caregivers, rather than regional protocol agreements.

Q 5: Have any other new policies been added?

A: Yes. The previous *Caregiver Support Service Standard 1: Assessment and Approval of Restricted and Specialized Caregivers* is now two separate policies:

- *Resource Work Policy 8.2: Assessment and Approval of Restricted Caregivers*, and
- *Resource Work Policy 8.3: Assessment and Approval of Specialized Caregivers*.

Q 6: Have any policies been removed from the document?

A: Yes

- *Caregiver Support Service Standard 1: Recruitment and Retention* has been removed. It was decided that the information included in this standard referred mainly to high level program activities within an SDA rather than resource workers, for example, developing and following a recruitment blue print. Recruitment information specific to the work of resource workers is now included in *Policy 8.1 Recruitment, Screening, Assessment and Approval* as well as *Policy 8.5: Recruitment of Aboriginal Caregivers*. Support and retention activities continue to be included in *Policy 8.15: Supportive Practice*.
- *Caregiver Support Service Standard 21: Monitoring of and Liaison with Contracted Resources* has been removed. It will be included in a separate policy set regarding contracted residential resources targeted for release in 2017. This separate policy set will also include the policy on *Assessment and Approval for Contracted Agencies* which is already released, as well as a policy on *Quality of Care Reviews and Investigations in Contracted Resources*.

Q 7: What other significant changes have been made?

A: All of the changes are described in the accompanying matrix; however, the following highlights the most significant changes:

- *Resource Work Policy 8.1: Recruitment, Screening, Assessment and Approval* includes:
 - a list of the screening activities that will likely become the responsibility of the Centralized Hub once in place i.e. criminal record checks, initial and detailed record review, medical assessment and reference checks, and
 - procedures relating to criminal record checks for relevant persons who have lived outside of B.C.
- *Resource Work Policy 8.2: Assessment and Approval of Restricted Caregivers* states that:
 - The interim approval period is **90 days** rather than 60 days
- *Resource Work Policy 8.3: Assessment and Approval of Specialized Caregivers* now states that all specialized family care homes must first be assessed and approved as regular or restricted family care homes – there are no exceptions as was previously outlined in the Caregiver Support Service Standards.
- *Resource Work Policy 8.4: Recruitment, Assessment and Approval of Aboriginal Caregivers* states that a prospective caregiver gives consent prior to a resource worker seeking support and guidance within the Aboriginal community if unsure about approving the prospective caregiver.
- *Resource Work Policy 8.5: Initiating, Modifying and Ending Agreements* states that when a child leaves a home that has more children than the allowable number, 60 days’ notice is **not** required unless an exception is made by the manager responsible for the resource.

Q 8: Are there changes regarding what actions have to be approved and by whom?

A. Yes.

- The introduction section states that exceptions to policies are made by the manager responsible for the oversight of the resource. Previously, the Caregiver Support Standards stated exceptions were made by the regional director of the CFCSA.
- *Resource Work Policy 8.2: Assessment and Approval of Restricted Caregivers* now requires approval from an appropriate supervisor/team leader for the 90 day interim approval period.
- *Resource Work Policy 8.5: Initiating, Modifying and Ending Agreements* states that when a child leaves a home that has more children than the allowable number, 60 days notice is not required unless an exception is made by the manager responsible for the resource.
- *Policy 8.11: Allowable Number of Children in a Care Giving Home* requires that a manager responsible for the oversight of the resource approve exceptions rather than the regional director of the CFCSA.
- *Resource Work Policy 8.19: Quality of Care Reviews* states that the ‘supervisor of the resource’ decides, with the approval of the responsible manager, if a quality of care review is necessary. *Responsible Manager* is used in policy as there may be some variation between SDAs with respect to who that ‘Manager’ is.

Q 9: What other general changes have been made?

A: The Resource Work Policies include the following general changes:

- There is an emphasis on:
 - Placing children in a family setting with minimal stays at staffed residential resources
 - Keeping children with siblings and/or close to other family members and friends
 - Placing children in living arrangements in their local and/or cultural community
 - Supporting a child's cultural heritage
 - Consideration of caregivers' strengths.

- **Language:**
 - The active tense is used throughout the procedures section in each policy. The procedures section speaks directly to the resource worker.
 - The following terms have also been changed:
 - Child's 'care plan' instead of 'comprehensive plan of care'
 - 'Cultural planning' instead of 'cultural plan'
 - 'Child's worker' instead of 'child's social worker'
 - 'Initial record review' and 'detailed record review' instead of 'prior contact check'
 - 'Permanency' instead of 'stability and continuity of lifelong relationships'
 - 'Designated computer system' instead of 'ICM'

- **Prior Contact Checks divided into an Initial Record Review and a Detailed Record Review:**
 - An 'Initial Record Review' includes a review of the electronic databases (ICM, MIS, Best Practices) in order to:
 - identify the number of past service requests and incidents; and
 - Identify the previous issues or concerns from the past service requests or reports.
 - A 'Detailed Record Review' is a detailed review of any electronic and physical files to determine:
 - How previous issues or concerns have been addressed;
 - The responsiveness of the family care home in addressing the issues and concerns; and
 - The effectiveness of the last intervention

Q 10: Has a decision been made about the training for foster parents?

A. Yes. PRIDE has been chosen for both pre service and on-going training. It will be piloted in 2017. Because the Resource Work policies will be implemented before then, PRIDE is not mentioned in the policies however, a list of the PRIDE competencies is included in *Policy 1: Recruitment, Screening, Assessment and Approval*. Once PRIDE is implemented province-wide, the policies will be revised to include its requirement as the training model for foster caregivers.

Q. 11: *Are there new or revised forms?*

A. Yes. The Annual Family Care Home Review form has been updated to align with the Resource Work Policies and is now more user-friendly. Questions about permanency planning and culture have been added as well as questions relating to the completion of Criminal Records Checks and Detailed Record Reviews for: caregivers, relief care providers, persons 18 years and older in the family care home, and anyone with significant and unsupervised access to the child/youth., The Environmental Check List has also been formatted.