

All of us are responsible for the well-being of children in the custody of the Department of Family Services and undertake this responsibility in partnership, with full awareness that none of us can succeed by ourselves. Children need normal childhoods as well as loving and skillful quality parenting which recognizes their attachment to their biological family. In order to achieve these goals, respected partners must share information.

Information sharing is not only permitted under state and federal law, it is required. A well-informed care provider or potential care provider is better able to meet the needs of a child in care and is better prepared to handle challenges particular to the child.

Because of the confidential nature of Family Services cases the QPI Child Welfare Workgroup worked closely with the District Attorney's Office to clarify what information may be shared with care providers or potential care providers.

The purpose of this document is to provide simple and concise guidance for the effective sharing of information between Family Services Specialists, care providers and child welfare teams.



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Reference: Federal law, 42 USC 675 (5)(D), 42 USC 675 (5)(G), Nevada Revised Statute, NRS 424.038, Nevada Administrative Code, NAC 424.810, and Clark County DFS Policy .



INFORMATION SHARING:
*What Family Services
Specialists
CAN Tell Care Providers*



LEGAL AND POLICY REQUIREMENTS

- ◆ Sharing of information about the child with the care provider is required by federal law, Nevada Revised Statutes, Nevada Administrative Code, and Clark County DFS Policy.
- ◆ The general rule is that care providers **must** receive records and information that relate to or assist in appropriately parenting their foster child except when prohibited by law.
- ◆ Care providers must be invited to participate in Child and Family Team (CFT) Meetings. During the portions of the CFT's related to the Parent's Progress, the parents will be encouraged to include the care providers' continued participation.

BENEFITS OF SHARING INFORMATION

- ◆ Helps care providers provide quality care for children and reduces disruptions
- ◆ Builds meaningful partnerships between Family Services Specialists, birth families and care providers
- ◆ Helps all team members maintain a realistic expectation of the potential outcomes of the case
- ◆ Supports healthy transitions for children
- ◆ Provides critical content for the child's Lifebook, a place to record memories and life events that occur before and after placement in foster care

*Information that relates specifically to the children and the care of the children in their home **MUST BE** shared with care providers*

This includes, but is not limited to:

- ◆ Notification and invitations to all Judicial Review Hearings regarding the child
- ◆ Medical, dental, psychological, psychiatric and behavioral history, on-going treatments and evaluations regarding the child
- ◆ Lists of tasks related to the child (For example from CFT's, Court, home visits)
- ◆ A copy of the child's case plan objectives
- ◆ Recommended Permanency Plan
- ◆ All school reports
- ◆ Copies of birth certificate
- ◆ A copy of the visitation plan (if the care provider is a participant in the plan)

*Information that **CANNOT** be shared with care providers*

- ◆ Reporter information to the Hotline
- ◆ Financial records of biological parents or others
- ◆ HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) protected documents of the biological parents such as:
 - ◆ Medical reports
 - ◆ Drug tests results
 - ◆ Psychological and psychiatric reports
- ◆ Records of domestic violence centers
- ◆ Court reports and parental case plans

Have a question about what can be shared?

FAMILY SERVICES SPECIALISTS: Contact your Supervisor, Manager or assigned Deputy DA

CARE PROVIDERS: Contact your Family Services Specialist or his/her Supervisor

SHARING INFORMATION WITH THE CARE PROVIDER

Family Services Specialists are encouraged to partner with the birth family and care provider and encourage the sharing of sensitive and confidential information that will support the partnership and improve the quality of care given to the children.

SHARING INFORMATION WITH FORMER CARE PROVIDERS

Children and their substitute care providers often form meaningful and significant relationships that may last after a child transitions from their home. Encouraging and maintaining these relationships is often of great benefit to the child, the child's family and the former care providers.

Parents are able and encouraged to share information with former care providers. DFS staff and current care providers are able to share information with former care providers when consistent with the desires of the parent or specified in a court order. DFS makes efforts to partner parents and care providers in order to better meet the needs of the child even after the child is reunified with their parents. DFS staff encourage parents to maintain the relationship between the child and the child's former care providers because of how incredibly important this relationship can be, both for the child's well-being and for the success of the reunification.

WHAT CAN CARE PROVIDERS SHARE WITH OTHERS?

Care providers will encounter a variety of situations where they will need to share confidential information about a child in order to meet the needs of the child. This may include with schools, medical offices, therapists and other professionals on the Child and Family Team.