



DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES ADMINISTRATION  
Olympia, Washington

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TITLE: VOLUNTARY PLACEMENT SERVICES POLICY 4.10

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Authority: [Chapter 71A RCW](#) *Developmental Disabilities*  
[74.13.350 RCW](#) *Out of Home Placement*  
[Chapter 388-826 WAC](#) *Voluntary Placement Services*  
[WAC 388-850-035](#) *Services – Developmental Disabilities*

### **BACKGROUND**

RCW 74.13.350 states that it is the intent of the Legislature that parents are responsible for the care and support of their children. Due to the intense support required to care for a child with developmental disabilities, the help of an out-of-home placement may be needed. When the sole reason for the out-of-home placement is the child's developmental disability, services such as Voluntary Placement are offered by the Department to these children and their families through a voluntary placement agreement. In these cases, parents shall retain legal custody of their child and work jointly with the licensed provider to provide a shared parenting model which best supports the child.

### **PURPOSE**

This policy establishes procedures for responding to requests for Voluntary Placement Services (VPS) by families of children and youth enrolled with the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA).

### **SCOPE**

This policy applies to Field Services Staff working with families requesting Voluntary Placement Services in a Child Foster Home (CFH), Group Care Facility or Licensed Staffed Residential Program (LSR).

### **DEFINITIONS**

**Administration** means the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) of the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS).

**CRM** means the DDA Case Resource Manager.

**Department** means the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS).

**Family** means relatives who live in the same home with the eligible client. Relatives include spouse or registered domestic partner; natural, adoptive or stepparent; grandparent; child; stepchild; sibling; stepsibling; uncle; aunt; first cousin; niece; or nephew.

**HCBS waivers** means home and community based services waivers.

**ICF/ID** means an Intermediate Care Facility for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities.

**Out-of-home placement** means a child's placement in a DSHS Division of Licensed Resources (DLR) licensed home or facility other than the child's parent, guardian, or legal representative.

**Parent** means the individual who is the biological or adoptive person who has legal responsibility for and physical custody of the child.

**Shared parenting plan** means a written plan outlining shared responsibilities between the parent or legal representative, a licensed provider, and DDA, for care of a child. The plan must include a description of how information will be exchanged on a routine basis about medical care, education, daily routines and special situations in the life of the child, and should be revised and/or updated during the annual assessment.

**SW** means the DDA Social Worker and/or Social Service Specialist.

**VPS** means Voluntary Placement Services.

## **POLICY**

- A. Voluntary Placement Services (VPS) are designed to support the growth and development of children in out-of-home placement. Services are offered through a Voluntary Placement Agreement with the parent, which supports the child through the development of a shared parenting plan in conjunction with a licensed provider.
- B. VPS is intended to complement other public and private resources in providing supports to the child and family while maintaining the relationship between the child and their family when the child is not living in the family home.
- C. It is the Administration's expectation that VPS will be considered only after the Case Resource Manager (CRM) has met with the family and assessed and documented the client's unmet health and safety needs. This DDA Assessment must address all paid and unpaid available services, including but not limited to private insurance, school, and Medicaid funded resources.

**PROCEDURES****A. Families requesting VPS whose child is enrolled in a HCBS Waiver**

1. CRMs will provide families with information regarding services. When a parent indicates they are no longer able to support their child in the family home, the CRM will:
  - a. Staff the case with their supervisor; and
  - b. Document the request for out-of-home placement in a Service Episode Record (SER) using the Comprehensive Assessment and Reporting Evaluation (CARE) tool.
  - c. Meet with the family to review the current DDA Assessment and ensure the assessment is accurately reflecting what is occurring in the family home. For those health and safety needs identified as unmet, the CRM will identify services and resources available to address those needs (e.g., counseling, behavior support and consultation, communication, etc.).
  - d. Develop a plan based upon the above assessment and work with the family to follow through with identified objectives.
2. The regional VPS Coordinator or designee will meet together with the CRM, family, and child to provide information and an overview of VPS. During this meeting, the VPS Coordinator will review VPS rules and responsibilities and provide a general assessment of current paid and unpaid services available to the family.
3. The parent or legal representative will sign [DSHS 10-277, Request for Children's Residential Services](#), for out of home placement.
  - a. Both custodial parents must sign and date the request form; and
  - b. The regional VPS Coordinator then reviews, signs, and dates the form.
4. The CRM will:
  - a. Maintain the original, completed [DSHS 10-277, Request for Children's Residential Services](#), in the client file;
  - b. Mail a copy to the parent(s); and
  - c. Send one copy to the Central Office Children's Residential Services Program Manager for addition to the VPS request list in CARE.

5. The VPS Coordinator will review available funding within regional allotments for community placement and prioritization of request.
6. If, after the planning meeting referenced in 'c' above, the family continues to request VPS, the CRM will submit a Core Waiver Enrollment Request (WER) in CARE. The request will accurately reflect how the above comprehensive assessment is not meeting the current needs of the child and family. The WER will incorporate why the core waiver is being requested, utilization of all previous supports, what unmet need remains, and why the current or past supports are/have been unsuccessful.

**B. Families requesting VPS whose child is NOT enrolled in a HCBS Waiver**

1. The CRM will complete the following actions:
  - a. Meet with the family to either complete or review the Supports Intensity Scale (SIS), which documents the client unmet health and safety need and determines the request for paid services. A comprehensive assessment must:
    - i. Contain information gathered during observation of the child, family, and home environment; and
    - ii. Document all paid and unpaid services available, including private insurance and Medicaid funded resources.
  - b. If the child is assessed as meeting ICF/ID level of care, review alternative options to maintain the family unit, such as the Basic Plus waiver, Children's In-home Intensive Behavior Supports waiver (CIIBS), Medicaid Personal Care (MPC) Services, Individual and Family Services (IFS), and/or referral to the Washington State Health Care Authority (HCA) for appropriate services.
  - c. Meet with their supervisor and the regional VPS Coordinator to discuss the family's request for out of home placement.
2. The regional VPS Coordinator or designee will meet together with the CRM, family, and child to provide information and an overview of VPS. During this meeting, the VPS Coordinator will review VPS rules and responsibilities and provide a general assessment of current paid and unpaid services available to the family.
3. The parent or legal representative will sign [DSHS 10-277, Request for Children's Residential Services](#), for out-of home placement.

- a. Both custodial parents must sign and date the request form; and
  - b. The regional VPS Coordinator then reviews, signs, and dates the form.
4. The CRM will:
- a. Maintain the original, completed [DSHS 10-277, Request for Children's Residential Services](#), in the client file;
  - b. Mail a copy to the parent(s); and
  - c. Send one copy to the Central Office Children's Residential Services Program Manager for addition to the VPS request list in CARE.
5. The VPS Coordinator will review available funding within regional allotments for community placement and prioritization of request.
6. If, after the planning meeting, the family continues to request VPS, the CRM will submit a Core Waiver Enrollment Request (WER) in CARE.

C. **Process for when a Core Waiver for VPS is approved**

1. The CRM/SW will notify the family of the waiver approval and obtain signed consent to release information using [DSHS 14-012, Consent](#), which authorizes information to be shared with potential providers.
2. The CRM/SW will use [DSHS 27-057, VPS Provider Referral Letter](#), in gathering the information to complete the referral packet and submit to the regional VPS Coordinator.
3. The regional VPS Coordinator or designee will review the referral packet to ensure all information is included. The VPS Coordinator will determine which agencies with available occupancy are appropriate based upon the following factors:
  - a. Closest to the family home;
  - b. Individual need;
  - c. Cultural preferences;
  - d. Age;
  - e. Gender;

- f. Challenging behaviors;
  - g. Common interests; and
  - h. Environment/home composition.
4. The VPS Coordinator will:
- a. Submit the referral packet to identified agencies. Community residential options will be reviewed between the family/client's legal representative and the VPS Coordinator or designee. The Department reserves the final decision based upon the above considerations.
  - b. Once the residential placement option has been selected, the regional VPS Coordinator or designee will complete the Prior Approval (PA) within the CARE tool which will terminate the client from the request list. The PA must include the description of the request, community residential provider, funding source, and an estimated rate for cost of residential services.
5. The Central Office Children's Residential Services Program Manager will approve the request which will activate the VPS panel in CARE.
6. Every opportunity to include the VPS Social Worker/Social Service Specialist will be made during the transition process. After the PA is approved, the case will be transferred to the VPS SW/SSS to finalize the assessment and work with the family.

E. **When a Core waiver for VPS is denied**

- 1. Central Office will send the Core Waiver program denial Planned Action Notice (PAN) to the family/legal representative.
- 2. The CRM will notify the family/legal representative of the service denial and submit a PAN based upon the request for Voluntary Placement Services.
- 3. The CRM will work with the family to utilize current available services and supports, develop a plan based upon assessment, and follow through with identified objectives.
- 4. Documentation of families request for VPS will remain on the VPS request list, which is reviewed by the CRM during the annual assessment.

**EXCEPTIONS**

No exceptions to this policy may be granted without the prior written approval of the Deputy Assistant Secretary.

**SUPERSESSSION**

None

Approved:     /s/ Donald Clintsman      
Deputy Assistant Secretary  
Developmental Disabilities Administration

Date: January 15, 2014