


(Supersedes DCFS-95-01)

To: Area Administrators/ Human Services Area Coordinators  
Bureau Directors  
County Departments of Community Programs Directors  
County Departments of Developmental Disabilities  
Services Directors  
County Departments of Human Services Directors  
County Departments of Social Services Directors  
Licensing Chiefs/Section Chiefs  
Tribal Chairpersons/Human Services Facilitators

From:  Burnie Bridge   
Administrator

This memo clarifies the Wisconsin Title IV-E policy for Voluntary Placement Agreements (VPA) regarding the requirement to obtain a signature of a child age 12 or older. This policy clarification supersedes the current policy that is found in the DHFS Title IV-E Eligibility and Reimbursability Policy Manual, sections 6.4, 6.7, and Appendix B – page 49.

On February 2005, the current Title IV-E Eligibility and Reimbursability Policy Manual was released for distribution. This policy manual stated that “a Voluntary Placement Agreement is a signed written agreement between the agency, the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of the child, and the child if the child is age 12 or older.” This required that all children aged 12 years or older must sign a Voluntary Placement Agreement under s. 48.63, Stats., in order for the agreement to meet the requirements for Title IV-E reimbursability. To meet this requirement, some county agencies revised their Voluntary Placement Agreement forms to include a signature block for children aged 12 years or older. However, many agencies did not make such form revisions. In order to create a consistent process and allow for variations in county procedures, a new Title IV-E Voluntary Placement Agreement policy is hereby created.

Agencies are no longer required to obtain the signature of a child aged 12 years or older on Voluntary Placement Agreements to be IV-E eligible, as long as there is documentation that the child consents. Section 48.63(1), Stats., states the following:

*Voluntary placement agreements may be made only under this subsection and sub. (5) (b) and shall be in writing and shall specifically state that the agreement may be terminated at any time by the parent or guardian or by the child if the child's consent to the agreement is required. The child's consent to the agreement is required whenever the child is 12 years of age or older.*

For Title IV-E purposes, agencies are no longer required to ensure that a child age 12 or older consents in writing to the Voluntary Placement Agreement. Best practice would include continuing to obtain the signature of the child age 12 years or older if possible. However, the new policy interpretation provides for other types of consent to be used in lieu of the child's signature. Any type of consent to a Voluntary Placement Agreement by a child aged 12 years or older must be noted and recorded in the case record if the child's signature is not obtained.

REGIONAL OFFICE CONTACT: DCF Area Administrator

CENTRAL OFFICE CONTACT: Policy Initiatives Advisor – Executive  
Division of Safety and Permanence  
608-422-6869

MEMO WEB SITE: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/cwportal/policy>