

**Policies related to Obtaining Identification Documents**  
**CPS Handbook**  
**<http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/handbooks/default.jsp>**

**1541 Foster Care Assistance Application and Review Policies**

CPS October 2009

To obtain foster care assistance for a child, the child's worker and the foster care eligibility specialist must take the following actions.

**Applying for Foster Care Assistance**

**Role of the Child's Worker**

The child's worker must:

- complete the Foster Care Assistance Application in the IMPACT case management system and submit it to the foster care eligibility specialist;
- send the following documentation to the foster care eligibility specialist:
  - A copy of the court order designating DFPS as the child's managing conservator;
  - A copy of the original petition that initiated the court action, with the date that the petition was filed indicated on the petition; and
  - Documentation of the child's age, citizenship, or alien status.
- complete both actions within 10 calendar days after the child's placement.

**If No SSN Exists**

If during this process the foster care eligibility specialist determines that the child has never had an SSN issued by the Social Security Administration, the child's worker must complete the Social Security Administration's [Form SS-5](#) and coordinate with appropriate regional staff to obtain a number.

**Determining Eligibility**

**Role of the Eligibility Specialist**

The foster care eligibility specialist must:

- obtain documentation of birth and citizenship or alien status, if not received from the child's worker. The eligibility specialist prints the child's birth record screen from the Vital Statistics Birth Verification System (BVS) of the Department of State Health Services.

**For out-of-state births:** The eligibility specialist requests that the child's worker obtain a birth certification from the child's birth state.

- verify the child's Social Security number (SSN) through use of SSA's Wire Third Party Query System (WTPY) system and include a print-out in the child's eligibility file.

If **No SSN exists:** If the child has never had an SSN issued by the Social Security Administration, the child's worker must complete the Social Security Administration's [Form SS-5](#) and coordinate with appropriate regional staff to obtain a number.

- determine the child's eligibility within seven calendar days after receiving the Foster Care Assistance Application and related documentation from the child's worker. The eligibility specialist must record the child's eligibility immediately in IMPACT.

## Review of Eligibility

### Role of the Eligibility Specialist

The foster care eligibility specialist must complete a review of the child's eligibility for foster care assistance at least once every 12 months while the child is in foster care or when there is a change in the child's circumstances that affects his or her eligibility.

The eligibility specialist receives an IMPACT *Task To-Do*, which notifies the specialist when a child's placement changes from paid foster care to a nonpaid placement and vice versa. This assists the eligibility specialist in deciding whether the child's eligibility is affected and a foster care review is needed.

### Role of the Child's Worker

To complete the review, the child's worker must:

- complete and submit the foster care review form in IMPACT and submit it to the foster care eligibility specialist; and
- send all child-specific court orders since the previous review or initial determination to the eligibility specialist.

### Role of the Eligibility Specialist

The foster care eligibility specialist must:

- review all documentation sent by the caseworker; and
- process the foster care review form in IMPACT by the end of the month that the review is due.

## 1541.4 Obtaining Certified Birth Certificates or Screen-Printing Birth Records

CPS October 2009

### Access the Bureau of Vital Statistics (BVS) System

The CPS foster care eligibility specialists have access to the BVS system of the Department of State Health State Services, which allows

them to verify birth information and order certified birth certificates for children born in Texas.

### **Obtain Birth Certificate From Family Members or Guardian When Possible**

A child's worker always attempts to obtain a birth certificate from the child's parents, relatives, or guardian instead of requesting a copy of the birth certificate through the BVS system. If a child's worker obtains a copy of the birth certificate, he or she submits this to the eligibility specialist to serve as documentation of a child's age, citizenship, or alien status when submitting the documentation for the Foster Care Assistance Application.

### **Use Screen Print of Birth Record if Birth Certificate Is Unavailable**

If the child's worker cannot obtain a copy of the birth certificate, the eligibility specialist uses a screen print of the birth record on the BVS system for this verification.

### **Use Screen Print of Birth Record if Birth Certificate Is Not Required**

In other circumstances requiring birth information, but not requiring certified copies, the child's worker uses a copy of the birth record on the BVS system. It is no longer necessary to obtain a certified birth certificate when registering a child for school and the child's worker can use the BVS record screen print for this purpose.

### **Request Certified Birth Certificate Only Under Certain Circumstances**

Certified birth certificates may only be requested from the regional eligibility specialist when:

- it is a necessity when applying for a Social Security number (SSN) if one has never been obtained; otherwise the Social Security Administration can confirm the SSN of a child in DFPS managing conservatorship;
- it is a necessity when applying for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or other federal benefits for the child;
- it is a necessity when applying for a Texas Driver's License or Texas Identification Card for the child in order to help prepare youth who may be aging out of care;
- parental rights are terminated and the child becomes eligible for adoption; and
- other situations in which the recipient requires a certified copy.

### **Requesting Out-of-State Birth Certificates**

The eligibility specialist can only order birth certificates through the BVS website for children born in Texas. For children born in other states, the child's worker orders the birth certificate from the child's state of birth. See [Where to write for Vital Records](#) for information on

ordering birth certificates from the individual states and certain territories.

### **Request Reimbursement if Personal Funds Must Be Used to Obtain Certificate**

While the preferred method for obtaining a birth certificate is through the regional eligibility unit, a staff person may have a need to use his or her personal funds to purchase a certified Texas birth certificate from the Department of State Health Services or an out-of-state birth certificate.

If a staff person purchases a certified birth certificate with personal funds, he or she must:

- submit a State of Texas Purchase Voucher, Form [4116](#), to the CPS budget analyst at state office to request reimbursement. The mail code is E-669;
- include the receipt of purchase along with the Form 4116;
- ensure that forms have worker and supervisor signature;

Note:

Forms may not be e-mailed to budget analysts.

If a staff person is not housed with the supervisor, he or she may fax the form to the supervisor for his or her signature.

Faxed copies with signatures of both worker and supervisor are considered for payment.

- enter his or her name, address (home or office), and Social Security number as the vendor number;

A staff person may submit more than one family per voucher as long as he or she differentiates between families and dates of purchase.