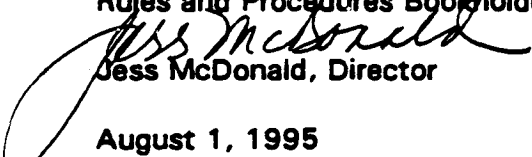


DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

Distribution: X, Z, C-3

POLICY TRANSMITTAL 95.21

Revisions to the Norman Procedures

DATE: August 1, 1995
TO: Rules and Procedures Bookholders, Direct Service Staff
FROM: 
Jess McDonald, Director
EFFECTIVE: August 1, 1995

I. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy Transmittal is to issue revisions to the Norman Procedures, which are found in Section 302.385, Services to Meet Basic Needs, and Section 302.386, Housing Advocacy Services, of Procedures 302, Services Delivered by the Department.

II. Primary Users

The primary users of these procedures are child welfare follow-up staff.

III. Changes

Procedures 302.385 (a) and (b) have been restructured with the result that former subsections (a) and (b) have been combined into one subsection (a) **Identification and Certification of Class Members**. The major substantive changes are:

- 1) Child Welfare Supervisors can now certify families as members of the Norman class in return home situations. Previously only the Regional Norman Liaison could certify these families.
- 2) Child Welfare Supervisors can now certify families as members of the Norman Class in intact family situations. Previously in intact family cases, if a worker determined that the family met the criteria for Norman services, the worker had to make a neglect report to SCR, alleging either allegation #76, Inadequate Food, #77, Inadequate Shelter, #77, Inadequate Clothing or #78, Environmental Neglect. Norman services can now be offered without a report to SCR.
- 3) Child Welfare Supervisors can now approve requests for cash assistance, make referrals for housing advocacy services, and work directly with the Department of Public Aid's Regional Liaison on behalf of Norman certified clients who



require DPA benefits and services. Previously these were tasks reserved for the Regional Norman Liaison.

- 4) The procedures regarding referrals to the Department of Public Aid have been reformatted and a section has been added regarding how to continue the adult only portion of an AFDC grant when all AFDC eligible children have been removed from the family by DCFS and DCFS anticipates that the children will be returned home within 90 days from the date of the removal.
- 5) Housing Advocacy providers are no longer required to file 10-day Status Reports or 30-day Progress Reports. They are required to file a closing report describing what services were provided and whether the client was successfully placed in permanent housing.
- 6) Form CFS 370-1, **Norman Class Certification for Reunification Cases**, has been revised and retitled to **Norman Class Certification for Reunification or Intact Family Cases** (attached). It may now be used to certify intact families for Norman services, as well as for reunification cases. Supplies of the new form may be ordered from Central Stores. Any existing stock of the old form CFS 370-1 may continue to be used for reunification cases until the stock is depleted.

IV. Filing Instructions

Remove yellow procedure pages P302 - (33)/(34) through P302 - (40) and replace with the attached revised pages Procedures 302 - (33)/(34) through Procedures 302.385-(1) through (10) and Procedures 302.386-(1)/(2).

**Norman Class Certification
For Reunification or Intact Family Cases**

This form is to be completed by the Supervisor every time a reunification or intact family situation is presented for consideration of Norman Class certification.

Family Name _____ CYCIS I.D. _____
(Last) (First)

Child(ren) _____ Region/Field _____
(Last) (First)

Determination of Class

- 1. Is the permanency goal for this child(ren) REMAIN HOME or RETURN HOME ? Yes No
If yes, go to Question 2; if no, the family is not a class member.
- 2. Does the Service Plan reflect that the living circumstances are a barrier to the child(ren) remaining at home or returning the child(ren) home? Yes No

Certification of Class

I have reviewed the case situation and hereby certify that the living circumstances of the family are a barrier to the child(ren) remaining at home or returning the child(ren) home. This family is therefore certified as a Norman Class member for the following reasons: (check all that apply)

- Inadequate Food Inadequate Clothing
- Inadequate Shelter Environmental Neglect

I have reviewed this case situation and have found that the living circumstances of the family are not a barrier to the children remaining at home or to returning the child(ren) home. This family is therefore NOT a Norman Class member.

COMMENTS: _____

Child Welfare Supervisor Date



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Assignment of Homemaker

The coordinator of homemaker services (or other staff designated by the Regional Administrator) shall assign a homemaker or homemaker agency to the case and shall immediately notify the Department worker of assignment of the homemaker. Within five working days of assignment of the homemaker, the worker will contact the assigned homemaker by phone or in person to confirm assignment and to set a time for meeting with the client. The initial meeting between the client, the homemaker and the worker is to take place within five days of the phone call. Some agency contracts may specify shorter time frames for assignment of the homemaker and the initial meeting with the clients. The resource coordinator will notify staff of those contacts which specify shorter time frames so these time frames can be adhered to. In the case of clients with hearing impairments or limited/non-English speaking clients, a homemaker shall be assigned who can communicate in the client's preferred mode of communication or speaks the client's primary language. If one is not available, an interpreter shall be used to facilitate communication between the homemaker and client.

302.380 Information and Referral Services

DCFS offices receive a variety of calls for services to children and families. Calls include, but are not limited to, requests for names and addresses of day care providers from parents looking for day care, requests for shelter, financial assistance and live-in housekeepers as well as reports of alleged child abuse or neglect and referrals for child welfare services. Department staff receiving incoming calls need to be aware of services available from other state and local agencies in order to be of assistance in directing the caller to a resource which can meet their needs.

Department staff shall ensure that information and referral services are accessible to hearing impaired and limited/non-English speaking clients through the use of TDD's, interpreters or other auxiliary aids or devices. Accommodation shall be made for the communication needs of persons with other disabilities such as persons with visual impairments who may need written materials read to them or provided in braille.

Additionally, Department service staff must be aware of other resources to which clients receiving child welfare services can be referred for services other than those which the Department provides. Such resources include, but are not limited to: the Departments of Public Aid, Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities, Rehabilitation Services, Veterans' Affairs, and Aging; the University of Illinois Division of Specialized Care for Children; Legal Assistance Foundation; local mental health centers; local Centers for Independent Living (See Appendix L); Job Service; local health clinics, the Chicago Hearing Society, the Illinois Relay Center (for hearing impaired clients), the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind, and the Social Security Administration. See Procedures 351, Federal Benefits and Other Public Funds, for a description of some of these resources.

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Procedures 302 - (34)

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302.385 Services to Meet Basic Needs

// a) **Identification and Certification of Class Members**

// Department staff are to arrange for or provide services to meet the family's basic needs, including housing advocacy services, when the family's living conditions or the parent's failure or inability to provide for the child's subsistence needs are threatening the removal of a child from the home or preventing the return home of a child in substitute care or improving these living conditions has been imposed as a condition of the child's return home. There are four ways in which such children will be identified:

1) **Child Abuse/Neglect Investigations**

Child protective investigation team supervisors will certify families who are the subjects of pending or indicated child abuse and neglect reports in which a reason for taking protective custody is one of the following four allegations:

- #76, Inadequate Food;
- #77, Inadequate Shelter;
- #78, Inadequate Clothing;
- #82, Environmental Neglect.

Refer to yellow page Procedures 300.130, Taking Children into Temporary Protective Custody, of Procedures 300, Reports of Child Abuse and Neglect for a complete description of this process.

// 2) **Administrative Case Reviews**

The Administrative Case Review System (see Rules and Procedures 305, Client Service Planning) will identify cases during the review process where living conditions or the provision of basic subsistence needs have been imposed as a condition of the child's return home and the parent's failure or inability to meet these needs is preventing the return home of children. The Administrative Case Reviewer will certify these cases as belonging to the Norman Class via the case review information packet. When this is the case, the service plan will specify the changes in conditions necessary to alleviate the living circumstances of the family. The worker handling the case shall then follow the procedures listed below for the provision of services. Certification as a member of the Norman class will continue for six months following return home of the child.

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// **3) Child Welfare Supervisors - Return Home Situations**

When child welfare workers identify a child in their caseload who could return home if services to meet a subsistence need were provided to the family, staff shall initiate the certification process. The worker shall submit the form **CFS 370-1, Norman Class Certification for Reunification or Intact Family Cases**, to the Child Welfare Supervisor. The Child Welfare Supervisor will make the final decision within 24 hours of receiving the form as to whether the family is a member of the class. A request for services may be submitted with the request for certification. All certifications and requests for services shall be approved by the Child Welfare Supervisor with an informational copy sent to the Regional Norman Liaison.

In addition to the above procedures for Norman certification, workers shall initiate the process of returning the child home by following the Regional protocol for approval to return a child home, obtain the necessary court approval, and complete the required documentation needed. Certification as a member of the Norman class will continue for six months following the return home of the child.

// **4) Child Welfare Supervisors - Intact Family Situations**

When child welfare workers identify a child(ren) in their caseload who needs to be removed from an intact family due to living conditions, i.e. inadequate food, clothing, shelter, or environmental conditions, workers shall initiate the certification process. The worker shall submit the form **CFS 370-1, Norman Class Certification for Reunification or Intact Family Cases**, to the Child Welfare Supervisor. The Child Welfare Supervisor will make the final decision within 24 hours of receiving the form as to whether the family is a member of the class. A request for services may be submitted with the request for certification. Informational copies of the approved certification and request for services shall be sent to the Regional Norman Liaison. Certification as a member of the Norman class will continue until the case is closed.

In situations involving intact family cases, workers do not need to report families to the State Central Register in order to initiate Norman certification and services. Certification is appropriate where the families' subsistence needs could constitute one of the following allegations: #76, Inadequate Food; #77, Inadequate Shelter; #78, Inadequate Clothing; or #82, Environmental Neglect, and there are no other conditions which merit a report to the State Central Register.

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b) Notice of Class Membership

Within 24 hours following a decision regarding certification, the Child Welfare Supervisor will send form CFS 370-4, **Notice to Class Members**, to the family that is the subject of the request for certification, informing the family of the Department's policies to provide services to meet the family's basic needs. The Notice also informs the family of the services available and how to appeal the Department's decision.

c) Provision of Services

Child welfare staff are to make use of all available services necessary to expedite the return home of children when lack of subsistence needs is a factor. Such services include, but are not limited to:

- o Provision of hard services such as cash assistance, shelter, utility services, food, clothing, furniture or other goods or services to meet subsistence needs.
- o Referral to the Department of Public Aid, including the Department of Public Aid's Emergency Assistance Program.
- o Family Reunification Fund
- o Referrals to community agencies, food pantries, emergency shelters, public housing and church sponsored programs
- o Homemaker Services
- o Day Care
- o Referral for money management counseling
- o Employment and Training referrals

d) Cash Assistance

// **For Norman Class Members** - When cash assistance is appropriate for families certified as belonging to the Norman class, the worker shall submit the form CFS 370-5, **Request for Cash, AFDC and/or Housing Assistance**, to the Child Welfare Supervisor. Certification as a member of the Norman class will continue for six months following return home of the child. The worker shall indicate on the form the purpose for which cash assistance is being requested, the amount, and the type of cash assistance requested. If other types of assistance are inappropriate or unavailable, the worker shall apply for Norman funds. However, the final decision regarding the types and amounts of cash assistance rests with the Child Welfare Supervisor. The final decision

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must be made within 24 hours of the request. An informational copy of the form CFS 370-5 shall be sent to the Regional Norman Liaison. Refer to yellow page Procedures 359.5(j), Norman Services for payment instructions.

// **For Families Who Are Not Members of the Norman Class** - When cash assistance is necessary for families who are not members of the Norman Class, workers shall complete the CFS 370-5, indicate the type of cash assistance requested such as the Family Reunification Fund, etc., and submit it to their supervisor. Norman cash assistance shall not be used for these families. Refer to yellow page Procedures 359.5(i), Family First Services for payment instructions.

// **Notice of Decision Regarding Request for Cash Assistance** - When a decision regarding cash assistance has been made, the Child Welfare Supervisor will send form letter CFS 370-6, **Letter to Family Regarding Cash Assistance**, within 24 hours to the family indicating whether cash assistance has been approved or denied, and (if the request is approved) the amounts and purposes of the assistance. The form letter will also notify the family of the right to appeal the decision regarding cash assistance. A copy of the CFS 370-6 shall be kept in the case file.

e) **Amount of Cash Assistance**

Depending on the need, up to \$800 in cash assistance in a 12 month period may be provided on behalf of a family who is certified as a member of the Norman Class. This may be provided, if necessary, in addition to funds from DPA or other local community resources. There is no limit on the number of times cash assistance can be provided in a 12 month period, provided the total cash assistance for that year does not exceed \$800.00. In situations where higher amounts are essential, exceptions to policy may be sought through the Regional Norman Liaison.

f) **Referrals to the Department of Public Aid**

// 1) **Special Assistance Program**

The Department of Public Aid (DPA) administers the Special Assistance program which is targeted toward preventing the disruption of families through the provision of special payments to the family, a vendor or service provider. This special assistance is available to:

- o AFDC recipients
- o non-AFDC recipients with children under 21 who meet the income and asset level of AFDC standards
- o pregnant female(s) deemed eligible for AFDC who meet the income and asset level of the AFDC standards.

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When DCFS has determined that a family is threatened with separation due to insufficient income to meet their subsistence needs and the children are in danger of foster care placement, DPA can authorize special assistance. The family must file a written request to DPA via DCFS Regional staff or a DCFS contracted service provider. A financial payment may be authorized, up to the maximum specified in DPA policy, for rent, food, clothing, household supplies and household furnishings.

Staff of both Departments shall work cooperatively to ensure timely authorization of the special assistance for eligible families. The specific time frame for a decision and/or authorization of assistance by DPA to a family are:

AFDC Recipients

A decision to approve/deny the request must be made within five (5) working days from the date of request and the assistance must be authorized within two (2) working days from the date of the decision.

Non-AFDC Recipients

A decision on the request must be made within five (5) working days from the date that DPA staff receive all requested verifications of income and assets and if eligible, assistance is to be authorized within five (5) working days from the date of decision.

2) Regular AFDC Assistance - Non AFDC Recipients

For those families who are not AFDC recipients, but may be eligible an expedited application process has been established.

Expedited AFDC Applications

For families who may be eligible for AFDC benefits except for the fact that the child(ren) is in placement, the Child Welfare Supervisor will contact the Department of Public Aid's regional liaison a minimum of approximately 30 days prior to a firm, anticipated return date of the children by DCFS to the parents.

The return date will generally be the anticipated court date at which DCFS' decision to return a child(ren) will be court affirmed or negated. Alternatively, it may be a date set by DCFS following a fitness hearing. In the event that the court unexpectedly orders return home, the agencies will jointly expedite the AFDC application process.

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The Child Welfare Supervisor will provide the IDPA Regional Liaison with the parent's name(s), the name and birth date of each child(ren) anticipated to be returned, and the address where it is anticipated the family will be residing. Upon receiving the above information, the IDPA Regional Liaison will contact the appropriate IDPA Local office to determine:

- A) that no active AFDC case exists, or
- B) that an active AFDC case exists.

If there is no active AFDC case for the family, the IDPA Regional Liaison will arrange, with the appropriate IDPA local office, an intake screening appointment for the DCFS referred parent(s). The screening appointment is to be scheduled by the IDPA local office within three (3) days from the date of contact by the Child Welfare Supervisor with the IDPA Regional Liaison. The IDPA Regional Liaison will notify the Child Welfare Supervisor of the appropriate local office, date and time of the screening appointment.

DCFS will notify the parent(s) of the scheduled IDPA screening appointment. It is the prerogative of DCFS whether they wish to accompany the applicant to the screening interview or not.

Upon completion of the screening interview, the IDPA local office, per current procedures, will ensure that an eligibility interview appointment date is scheduled within 14 days of the screening interview and that an appropriate DPA 267, Application for Assistance, is provided to the applicant and a copy sent to the appropriate DCFS Child Welfare Supervisor.

Upon completion of the IDPA eligibility interview the case, if eligible, will be processed with the understanding that the first-issued IDPA assistance warrant and food stamps will be sent to the appropriate IDPA local office and be available for pickup by the applicant on the date of reunification.

It will be the responsibility of the Child Welfare Supervisor to notify the IDPA Regional Liaison, no later than noon the day following the court date, of the court decision. In the event that DCFS fails to notify IDPA within the above time frame, IDPA will void the assistance warrant, return food stamps benefits, and cancel the AFDC case.

Upon notification by the Child Welfare Supervisor, the IDPA Regional Liaison will contact the IDPA local office and advise either to release the assistance benefits to the client, if the child(ren) is returned or void the assistance and cancel the case if the court fails to return the child(ren) to the parent(s).

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3) Regular AFDC Assistance - AFDC Recipients

Continuing the Adult Only Portion of the AFDC Grant

Children who are in temporary DCFS custody are ineligible for AFDC and must be removed from the AFDC grant. A Norman certified parent of a child in DCFS custody remains eligible for AFDC in an adult-only case for up to three months after the month in which the child(ren) was removed from the home, based on the fact that DCFS anticipates that the child(ren) will be returned to the home within 90 days from the date of the removal.

In order to alert Public Aid to continue the adult only portion of the grant to Norman certified families whose children are taken into protective and/or temporary custody, the DCP worker and supervisor or follow-up worker and supervisor must:

- A) Determine if the case should be Norman certified.
- B) After the supervisor certifies the case, determine if the child(ren) could go home in 90 days if the family cooperated with services.
- C) If yes, and the adult portion of the grant should continue, write "NORMAN" on the child's emergency medical card.
- D) Process the emergency medical card as usual per Procedures 302.360, Health Care Services.
- E) Inform the family that the child(ren) will be removed from the AFDC grant, but that the adult only portion will continue.
- F) If DCFS does not obtain temporary custody of the child(ren), and the emergency medical card has already been processed, the DCP or follow-up worker must notify the Eligibility Determinations Unit to inform Public Aid not to change the AFDC grant.

Returning a Child to the Home

In the event that DCFS is returning a child(ren) to an active AFDC case, the IDPA Regional Liaison will make arrangements with the IDPA local office for a scheduled appointment for the parent(s). The appointment will generally be scheduled for the anticipated reunification date (court date) or no later than three days after the court date. The IDPA Regional Liaison will notify the Child Welfare Supervisor of the scheduled appointment date. It will be the

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responsibility of the Child Welfare Supervisor to notify the client of the scheduled appointment time at the appropriate IDPA local office.

At the scheduled appointment the parent/AFDC grantee may come into the local office to sign form **DPA 243, Request For Assistance For Additional Family Members**, to have the child(ren) added back to the AFDC case and to the food stamp case. In these cases the benefits will be mailed to the address of the grantee based upon the IDPA Mercury schedule, which generally provides benefits to the client within two to seven days after signing the **DPA 243**.

g) Resource Manual

Each Department office has been provided with a region specific resource manual which contains community resources for payments, goods and services related to living circumstances and includes providers with whom the Department has contracts. Workers shall make use of their manuals when attempting to locate services that would reunite children separated from their families because of living circumstances.

h) Locating Absent Parents

When the absence of a parent is an issue affecting whether the Department will retain custody of a child in those case situations where living conditions are a factor, child welfare staff will make reasonable efforts to locate the absent parent. Such efforts include but are not limited to:

- o Checking the local telephone directory or directory assistance.
- o Asking the landlord of the parent (if applicable).
- o Asking relatives and friends of the absent parent to provide information to help locate the absent parent.
- o Contacting the local post office, DPA office, utility companies and school to request a check of their records.
- o Contacting past and present employers of the absent parent.
- o Requesting the local, county, and state law enforcement agencies to check their records for information which would locate the absent parent.
- o Conducting a records check of Department of Public Aid and Secretary of State, Division of Motor Vehicles (if a license number is known).

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The worker shall document in the case file all efforts to locate the absent parent(s) and the reasons why those efforts were unsuccessful.

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302.386 Housing Advocacy Services

DCFS staff shall utilize available sources to advocate for financial assistance and other services which meet the basic needs of families in preventing the placement of children or assist in the return of placed children back to the home. Such services shall be provided directly, obtained by referrals and/or purchased by providers.

a) Housing

When a child is at risk of placement or cannot be returned home due to inadequate housing/shelter and the family has been certified as members of the "Norman" class, a referral for housing advocacy services may be requested using the CFS 370-5, Request for Cash, AFDC and/or Housing Assistance form. Once this form has been completed, it should be submitted to the child welfare supervisor who can approve or deny the referral. If the referral has been approved, the child welfare supervisor will phone the Housing Advocacy provider and/or fax a copy of the referral form.

The Housing Advocacy providers are community based organizations statewide with whom the Department has contracted to provide housing services to Norman Class members. The services the Housing Advocacy providers can be expected to offer include:

- 1) Referral to emergency or domestic violence shelter, if needed;
- 2) Assistance in securing affordable housing;
 - consumer education for the family on how to look for housing;
 - housing location to help the family identify vacancies;
 - secure affordable housing-advocacy on behalf of family to help them secure housing or utilities and determine that it is affordable;
- 3) Assistance in applying for income assistance to meet initial or ongoing rental obligations;
- 4) Linkages to community resources to meet subsistence needs such as food or clothing or energy assistance;
- 5) Follow-up with the family to identify housing problems before they reach the crisis stage.

// Housing Advocacy providers will be expected to work closely with DCFS workers and to submit a closing report describing what services were provided and whether the client was successfully placed in permanent housing.

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b) Utilities

The State offers a program to assist families to secure or maintain utility services. This program is administered by the Department of Commerce and Community Affairs and operated through local community agencies. The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program provides both Home Energy Assistance and Weatherization Assistance.

1) Home Energy Assistance

The primary purpose of this program is to assist low income households to better afford the rising cost of energy through direct financial assistance, energy counseling, outreach and education.

Families may receive a one-time payment to meet their heating costs, and can receive energy counseling or education through the local administering agency.

Families may also be eligible for Emergency Assistance. Emergency Assistance is available to households only after heat or medically necessary cooling has been shut off and if a family has made a good-faith effort to maintain service or provides a portion of the amount needed to reconnect (no more than 10% of the family's income).

Emergency Assistance will be provided within 48 hours from application or within 18 hours if the crisis is life threatening.

Families should be referred to the Local Administering Agency.

2) Home Weatherization Assistance Program

Under the provisions of this assistance program, families may receive repair of home heating units. When appropriate and/or cost effective, weatherization and repair of the dwelling structure is completed to help reduce high utility bills. These services are provided by local community agencies contracted through the Department of Commerce and Community Affairs.