

Permanency Planning Matrix

Reunification	
Permanent Plan	Federal Timeline requires this permanency plan be achieved within 12 months of Original Placement Date (OPD)
Objective	Preferred option when safety threats are managed, or eliminated, or aggravated circumstances do not exist. Maintains family connections and provides permanency beyond age 18.
Legal Status	Parental rights remain with birth or legal parent.
Legal Custody & Caregiver Responsibility After Permanent Plan Achieved	The dependency is dismissed and all care and custody is returned to the parents. NOTE: DCYF does not provide ongoing services or supervision.
Birth / Adoptive Parent Rights / Responsibility	Full parental rights and responsibility.
Financial Services Available / Monthly Subsidy	May be eligible for benefits and services such as monthly grant and Medicaid through the DSHS Community Services Office (CSO).
Medical	Responsibility of the family.
Educational Services	Youth may be eligible for some DCYF services dependent upon age youth returned home and individual program requirements. Additional information can be found at: http://independence.wa.gov Or For college financial aid options visit a financial aid office at a local college or go to: https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid
Services Post 18 Years	Youth may be eligible for extended foster care (EFC) services. Additional information can be found at: http://independence.wa.gov



Guardianship

Permanent Plan	<p>Chapter 13.36 RCW - https://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=13.36</p> <p>NOTE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DCYF does not provide ongoing services or supervision. • If the guardian is eligible for R-GAP then a subsidy and services may be available. • Children and youth in guardianships are not considered foster children or youth. • Federal Timeline requires this permanency plan be achieved within 18 months of OPD
Objective	<p>Provides permanency for children or youth with an approved adult.</p> <p>Guardianship is to be discussed with parents and caregivers as an alternative to termination of parental rights (TPR) and adoption, when children or youth have been placed with the caregiver for more than six months.</p> <p>Legal relationship ends on the youth's 18th birthday.</p>
Legal Status	<p>Parental rights are not required to be terminated.</p> <p>Although the parent continues to be the legal parent, the guardian has full care, custody, and control of the child or youth.</p> <p>The dependency is dismissed.</p> <p>NOTE: If the family later decides to adopt the child, they will be responsible for legal fees and will not be eligible for adoption support.</p>
Legal Custody & Caregiver Responsibility After Permanent Plan Achieved	<p>The legal guardian maintains physical and legal custody with full responsibility for care, custody, and the right to make decisions for the child or youth.</p> <p>In rare circumstances modifications of the guardianship order may occur.</p> <p>Guardians can choose whether or not to provide an inheritance to a child or youth; it is not a right for the child or youth.</p> <p>For eligible relatives, Relative Guardianship Assistance Program (R-GAP) (https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/4340-guardianships/43401-relative-guardianship-assistance-program-r-gap) subsidy can transfer to a successor guardian if named in the R-GAP agreement and the legal guardian becomes incapacitated or dies.</p>
Birth / Adoptive Parent Rights / Responsibility	<p>Guardianship orders must include visits. Visits are the responsibility of the guardian.</p> <p>The court may continue to order that the birth parent is still responsible for child support.</p> <p>In rare circumstances modifications of the guardianship order may occur.</p>
Financial Services Available / Monthly Subsidy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A guardianship subsidized through RGAP (https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/4340-guardianships/43401-relative-guardianship-assistance-program-r-gap) may be available to licensed relatives that meet the requirements, per the R-GAP policy, that includes, but is not limited to the: • Guardian being foster care licensed for at least 6 months and having placement of the child or youth for 6 months post licensing prior to establishing the guardianship. • R-GAP agreement must be signed prior to establishing the guardianship. • The program also reimburses up to \$2000 to guardians for up-front legal fees. • Guardians who do not qualify for R-GAP may apply for financial support from the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program through the CSO. Household income is no longer reviewed to determine eligibility. Guardian may request a good cause waiver of child support against the biological parent when applying for TANF.
Medical	<p>Medical and dental coverage is provided as specified in the R-GAP agreement. Evidence Based or Evidence Informed Counseling is available to guardianship families when requested.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Guardians may apply for medical for the child or youth through the CSO or put them on their own insurance if their personal insurance plan allows.</p>

Guardianship

Educational Services	<p>Youth eligibility for post high school grants and scholarships is program specific. Additional information can be found at: http://independence.wa.gov</p> <p>Or</p> <p>For college financial aid options visit a financial aid office at a local college or go to: https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid</p>
Services Post 18 Years	<p>Check with the R-GAP Gatekeeper to determine eligibility.</p> <p>R-GAP subsidy will automatically stop on the youth's 18th birthday, unless they meet eligibility requirements and the guardians or parents have provided documentation of the youth's continuation in high school prior to their 18th birthday.</p> <p>If the subsidized guardianship was established after the age of 16, youth may be eligible to receive support up to age 21 if the youth meets one of the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enrolled in high school or high school equivalency program. 2. Enrolled, has applied for, or can show intent to timely enroll in a post-secondary academic or vocational program. 3. Participating in a program to promote or remove barriers employment, including part-time employment. 4. Employed 80 hours or more a month. 5. Unable to engage in any of the above activities due to a documented medical condition. <p>Youth may also be eligible to apply for TANF or state family assistance (SFA) through the CSO, per WAC 388-404-0005.</p>

Guardianship of a Minor

Permanent Plan	<p>Chapter 11.130 RCW - https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=11.130</p> <p>NOTE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific to open DCYF dependency cases only. • DCYF does not provide ongoing services or supervision. • If the guardian is eligible for R-GAP then a subsidy and services may be available. • Children and youth in guardianships are not considered foster children or youth. • Federal Timeline requires this permanency plan be achieved within 18 months of OPD.
Objective	<p>Provides permanency for a child or youth with a court appointed guardianship of a minor. Legal relationship ends on the youth's 18th birthday.</p>
Legal Status	<p>Parental rights remain intact.</p> <p>Although the parent continues to be the legal parent, the guardian has full care, custody or control of the child or youth.</p> <p>The dependency is dismissed, if applicable.</p> <p>NOTE: If the family later decides to adopt the child, they will be responsible for legal fees and will not be eligible for adoption support.</p>

Guardianship of a Minor

<p>Legal Custody & Caregiver Responsibility After Permanent Plan Achieved</p>	<p>The petitioner becomes the legal guardian with full responsibility for care, custody and the right to make decisions regarding the child or youth.</p> <p>Chapter 11.130 guardianship are not filed with the dependency court. The proposed guardian is responsible for filing and serving other parties.</p> <p>The court may order that the parent remain involved in some decision making.</p> <p>Guardians can choose whether or not to provide an inheritance to a child or youth; it is not a right for the child or youth.</p> <p>For eligible relatives, R-GAP subsidy can transfer to a successor guardian if named in the R-GAP agreement and the legal guardian becomes incapacitated or dies.</p> <p>Termination or modification of the guardianship may occur if the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basis for the guardianship of a minor no longer exists. • It would not be harmful to the child or youth. <p>The child's or youth's interest in maintaining the guardianship may outweigh the parent's interest in regaining their rights.</p>
<p>Birth / Adoptive Parent Rights / Responsibility</p>	<p>Birth parent remains the legal parent and is responsible for child support.</p> <p>Custody orders may include visits.</p> <p>Modification of custody orders may occur if the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basis for the guardianship of a minor no longer exists. • Modification would not be harmful to the youth. <p>Youth's interest in maintaining the guardianship outweighs the parent's interest in regaining their rights.</p>
<p>Financial Services Available / Monthly Subsidy</p>	<p>A guardianship subsidized through RGAP (https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/4340-guardianships/43401-relative-guardianship-assistance-program-r-gap) may be available to licensed relatives that meet the requirements, per the R-GAP policy, that includes, but is not limited to the guardian being foster care licensed for at least 6 months with the child or youth in placement prior to establishing the guardianship. The R-GAP agreement must be signed prior to establishing the guardianship. The program also reimburses legal fees paid up-front by the guardian up to \$2,000.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Guardians who do not qualify for R-GAP may apply for financial support (TANF) through the CSO. Household income is no longer reviewed to determine eligibility.</p>
<p>Medical</p>	<p>May apply for medical through the CSO.</p>
<p>Educational Services</p>	<p>Youth eligibility for post high school grants and scholarships is program specific. Additional information can be found at: http://independence.wa.gov</p> <p>Or</p> <p>For college financial aid options visit a financial aid office at a local college or go to: https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid</p>
<p>Services Post 18 Years</p>	<p>Youth may be eligible to apply for TANF or state family assistance (SFA) if they are under age 19 and participating in a secondary education program full-time, progressing toward completion and meets the eligibility requirements for cash but no medical benefits per, WAC 388-404-0005 - https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=388-404-0005.</p>

Adoption

Permanent Plan	<p>NOTE: DCYF does not provide ongoing supervision.</p> <p>Post Adoption Services are based upon the child's or youth's needs and family circumstances.</p> <p>Federal Timeline requires this permanency plan be achieved within 24 months of OPD</p>
Objective	<p>Provides permanency for a child or youth when adoption rather than reunification or guardianship is determined to be in their best interest.</p> <p>Child or youth becomes a permanent and legal member of a family with all the legal rights of a birth child.</p> <p>Adoption is a lifelong legal relationship that cannot be modified in court.</p>
Legal Status	Parental rights are relinquished or terminated unless it is a customary adoption established through Tribal court.
Legal Custody & Caregiver Responsibility After Permanent Plan Achieved	<p>Upon entry of adoption decree, the child or youth becomes the legal child or youth of the adoptive parents. The adoptive parents have all care, custody and legal rights to make decisions on the child's or youth's behalf. The child or youth has inheritance rights.</p> <p>Title IVE adoption assistance can follow the youth to a subsequent adoption.</p>
Birth / Adoptive Parent Rights / Responsibility	<p>Adoptive parents assume full parental rights. Birth parents have no parental rights after termination of parental rights (TPR), unless a customary adoption established through Tribal court.</p> <p>Birth and adoptive parent may have ongoing contact under an Open Adoption Agreement.</p>
Financial Services Available / Monthly Subsidy	By applying for assistance through the adoption support program, adoptive parents may be eligible for finalization costs including legal fees. Families also may be eligible for a monthly cash reimbursement.
Medical	<p>Medical and dental coverage for the child or youth is provided as specified in the adoption support agreement.</p> <p>Pre-Authorized Counseling can be available and includes individual, family or adoptive parent counseling. Evidence Based or Evidence Informed Counseling is also available to adoptive families.</p>
Educational Services	<p>Youth eligibility for post-high school grants and scholarships is program specific.</p> <p>Additional information can be found at: http://independence.wa.gov</p> <p>Or</p> <p>For college financial aid options visit a financial aid office at a local college or go to: https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid</p> <p>Youth adopted after age 13 are eligible to complete FAFSA forms as an independent individual.</p>
Services Post 18 Years	<p>Adoption support benefits will automatically stop on the youth's 18th birthday, unless they meet eligibility requirements and the parents have provided documentation of the youth's continuation in high school prior to the 18th birthday.</p> <p>If adopted after the age of 16, youth may be eligible to receive support up to age 21 through the Extended Adoption Support Program if the parents are providing financial support and the youth meets one of the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enrolled in high school or high school equivalency program. 2. Enrolled, has applied for, or can show intent to timely enroll in a post-secondary academic or vocational program. 3. Participating in a program to promote or remove barriers employment, including part-time employment.

If you would like copies of this document in an alternative format or language, please contact DCYF Constituent Relations (1-800-723-4831 | 360-902-8060, ConstRelations@dcyf.wa.gov).