Resource Parent Cooperative Agreement

September 19, 2016

The Resource Parent Cooperative Agreement has been in place since July of 2010. The purpose of the agreement is to provide clarification regarding resource parents and social workers roles and responsibilities. The agreement is reviewed with prospective resource families by their Resource Peer Mentor (RPM) as well as their licensing worker prior to licensure. The Department is currently assessing the need to include a signature page for this document.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND WELFARE AND RESOURCE PARENT COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT

This agreement is designed to acknowledge that resource parents and social workers share responsibilities for the care of children in out of home placement. To accomplish the most effective delivery of services, both resource parents and social workers must clearly understand what is expected of each other.

Responsibilities of the Resource Parent(s):

General Responsibilities

- To assist in preparing the child for reunification or permanent placement.
- To support case planning decisions designed to achieve permanency for the child through actions, words and support of the child and their birth family.
- To give love, acceptance and care to a child without expecting a demonstration of appreciation from the child.
- To maintain confidentiality as it relates both to the child and the family. Information about the child or the child's legal parents should be released only to persons authorized by the Department.
- To provide the child with opportunities for normal growth and development.
- To participate in training.
- To participate in court hearings for the child.
- To assist with the implementation of services as defined by the child's service plan.

To the Child

- To provide a safe and nurturing environment for the day to day care of the child.
- To model good parenting skills and to demonstrate healthy behavior including positive discipline.
- To give support to: school and academic achievement, extracurricular activities, church and community involvement, and to arrange for transportation needed to be a part of these community activities.
- To provide medication as directed. Under no circumstances, discontinue or change the medication unless directed to do so by a qualified medical professional.

- To make a commitment to keep a child for a planned period of time. Except in an emergency, provide sufficient notice prior to the removal of a child to assure a healthy transition.

- To participate in the development of the child's independent living and transition plan.

- To work with the child's social worker to assure the child entering care has a physical examination to assess their health needs within thirty (30) days of placement.

To the Child's Legal Parents

- To present a positive image of the legal parents to the child.

- To work as mentors to the child's birth family to facilitate their reunification.

- To cooperate with visitation between the child and his/her legal parents.

- To regularly communicate with the child's parents on routine matters, progress and updates about the child.

- To include the child's parents as appropriate in parenting responsibilities such as school, medical, religious, recreational, and other activities.

To the Department

- To comply with the general supervision and direction of the Department concerning the care of the child.

- To help in establishing a Resource Family Plan and then working to implement the plan.

- To keep records of important issues related to medical, school, social and family matters that would be of importance to the Department.

- To immediately notify the Department of an illness or accident involving the child that requires the care of a physician.

- To obtain the approval of the Department before allowing the child to travel or vacation outside the state.

- To be willing to cooperate with community support services that may be available.

- To immediately report to the Department any changes in the circumstances of the household which may either impact the child and/or the ability to meet continued licensing requirements.

- To communicate problems and issues to the proper person in the Department.

Responsibilities of the Social Worker to the Resource Parent:

- To treat the resource parent with respect and dignity recognizing their role as a member of the professional team.

- To provide the resource parent with the necessary information related to the child in their care, including any information which could impact their home or family life.

- To assist the resource parent in identifying training to support them in caring for the child and in meeting their responsibilities to the child, the child's legal parents and the Department.

- To provide services to the resource parent, including respite care, as support in meeting their needs.

- To provide a timely response to the resource parent's request for information, guidance and support.

- To ensure the resource parent is included in the identification of therapeutic services for the child and their feedback is elicited regarding medication decisions.

- To discuss with the resource parent the expectations of them in supporting services to the child and their family.

- To establish a plan for face to face contact between the resource parent, the child, and social worker as a means of providing supervision, planning and ongoing support.

- To establish a Resource Parent Plan with consideration given to the resource parent's time limitations and availability. Periodically review the plan with the Resource Parent.

- To provide resource parents with notice of court proceedings related to the child in their care and their right to be heard in any of these hearings. If the resource parent chooses to provide their input by submitting a written statement to the court, assure timely distribution to the court.

- To assist the resource parent in preparing the child and themselves for the child's departure.