



**TEXAS**

**Department of Family  
and Protective Services**

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*Child Protective Services*

**When a Child or Youth in  
CPS Conservatorship  
Travels  
Resource Guide**

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The purpose of Resource Guides is to provide information that helps you do your job better. This information includes reference material, procedures, and guidelines that help you complete the tasks you are required to do by policy.

It's important to remember that the information in Resource Guides **does not substitute for policy**. We may sometimes include policy statements, but only to show you the policy to which the information is related. We will highlight any policy that actually appears in the Resource Guide, and will almost always include a link to the actual policy. For example:

***Per [4322.2 Re-Allowing Placement](#):***

Any time the caseworker becomes aware of detailed justification for changing the status of and considering placements in a foster family that has been placed on Disallowed Placement status, the caseworker must elevate this consideration through the regional chain of command to the regional director.

The policy in the handbook always takes precedence over what is in the Resource Guide. We try to keep policy and Resource Guides synchronized, but sometimes there is a delay. **If you have questions, always follow the policy in the Policy Handbook.**

Resource Guides provide important information on a range of topics, for the purpose of assisting and guiding staff to:

- make essential decisions
- develop strategies to address various issues
- perform essential procedures
- understand important processes
- identify and apply best practices

The information in the Resource Guides is not policy (except where noted), and the actions and approaches described here are not mandates. You should adapt the way you perform critical tasks to the individual needs and circumstances of the children and families with whom you work.

State office and field staff are working together to identify Resource Guide topics, define the content, and develop the appropriate guides. CPS will regularly post Resource Guides as they are developed, and update them as needed. Check the Resource Guides page, in the CPS Handbook, to see new or revised Guides.

We hope these Guides provide useful information to guide and assist CPS staff in effectively performing their job tasks. These Guides, combined with clear and concise policy in the Handbook, should help staff provide a high level of service to children in Texas.



For general policy see [6470](#) When a Child Travels.

## **SPECIAL ISSUES WHILE TRANSPORTING**

Depending on individual need, some children may require additional attention while being transported.

When special circumstances affect routine transportation, the caseworker confers with his or her supervisor to develop a plan that addresses the safety of all relevant passengers during transport.

Special circumstances include transporting:

- an infant with an apnea monitor;
- a youth with mental health or behavioral issues;
- multiple children; and
- children in border areas who lack proof of citizenship or legal immigration.

An appropriate response to a special circumstance may include, but is not limited to, the supervisor approving additional staff to assist with the transportation.

For information about providing a child's medication between removal and placement in substitute care, see [11320](#) Administration of Medications by DFPS Staff.

## **TRAVEL WITHIN TEXAS**

### ***TRAVEL WITHIN TEXAS WITH A CAREGIVER***

A caregiver may provide routine transportation for a child in DFPS conservatorship, including transportation for:

- Medical, therapeutic or dental care appointments
- Educational activities and appointments
- Social activities and appointments
- Sibling or family visits

#### **Fewer Than 72 Consecutive Hours of Travel**

A caregiver may travel with a child in DFPS conservatorship for up to 72 hours (three consecutive calendar days) without written permission from the caseworker.

#### **More Than 72 Consecutive Hours of Travel**

The caregiver must obtain the caseworker's or supervisor's written approval for trips that exceed 72 hours.

When possible, the caregiver notifies the child's caseworker or the caseworker's supervisor at least 10 calendar days before a trip that requires DFPS approval.

### ***TRAVEL WITHIN TEXAS WITH A PERSON WHO IS NOT A CAREGIVER OR RELATIVE***

#### **Up to 48 Consecutive Hours of Travel**

A caregiver does not need to obtain written approval from a caseworker for a child to travel from the caregiver's home for up to 48 consecutive hours (two calendar days) with someone who is not the child's caregiver or relative.

**More Than 48 Consecutive Hours of Travel**

The caregiver must obtain the caseworker's or supervisor's written approval for trips, with a person who is not a caregiver or relative, that exceed 48 hours.

When possible, the caregiver notifies the child's caseworker or the caseworker's supervisor at least 10 calendar days before a trip that requires DFPS approval.

The caregiver does not need to obtain approval for more than 48 hours of travel when the caseworker arranges for the child to visit members of the child's immediate family or other relatives.

**BLANKET AUTHORIZATIONS**

When a child is placed, the worker may give blanket authorization for the child to travel under specified circumstances (usually routine trips or visits). Blanket authorization enables the child's caregiver to travel with the child without securing additional written approval when specified circumstances arise.

**TRAVEL OUTSIDE TEXAS****TRAVEL OUTSIDE OF TEXAS WITH A CAREGIVER**

The caregiver must obtain the caseworker's or supervisor's written approval for trips outside of Texas.

When possible, the caregiver notifies the child's caseworker or the caseworker's supervisor at least 10 calendar days before a trip that requires DFPS approval.

When the caregiver plans to travel outside of Texas with a child who is in DFPS conservatorship, the caregiver must provide DFPS with an itinerary that includes the:

- date of departure;
- date of return; and
- contact information, including the addresses and telephone numbers where the caregiver and child can be reached, if necessary.

The child's caseworker and supervisor will notify the court about the travel plans and request advanced court approval if the local court requires it.

**TRAVEL OUTSIDE OF TEXAS WITH A PERSON WHO IS NOT A CAREGIVER OR RELATIVE****Any Length of Travel**

The caregiver must obtain the caseworker's or supervisor's written approval for a child to travel out of Texas for any length of time with someone who is not the child's caregiver or relative.

The caregiver does not need to obtain approval for more than 48 hours of travel out of Texas when the caseworker arranges for the child to visit members of the child's immediate family or other relatives.

When possible, the caregiver must notify the child's caseworker or the caseworker's supervisor at least 10 calendar days before a trip that requires DFPS approval, notice to the court, or court approval, or any combination of the three.

When there are plans for a child who is in DFPS conservatorship to travel outside of Texas, the caregiver provides DFPS with an itinerary that includes the:

- date of departure;

- date of return; and
- contact information, including the addresses and telephone numbers where the caregiver and child can be reached, if necessary.

The child's worker and supervisor will notify the court about the travel plans and request advanced court approval if the local court requires it.

## **MEDICAL ISSUES**

### **Health Issues Traveling in Texas**

If a child in CPS conservatorship needs medical care when out of town or traveling, the individual traveling with the child should call toll-free 1-866-912-6283. Superior Member Services will help them find a doctor.

If the child needs emergency services while traveling, the individual should take the child to a nearby hospital and call Superior Member Services toll-free at 1-866-912-6283.

### **Health Issues When Traveling Out of State**

If the child has an emergency out of state, he or she should go to the nearest emergency room for care. If the child gets sick and needs medical care while out-of-state, the individual traveling with the child should call his or her Superior doctor or clinic. The doctor can tell her or him what to do if the child is not feeling well. If the child visits a doctor, clinic, or Emergency Room out of state, the medical provider must be enrolled in Texas Medicaid to get paid. The child's Texas Medicaid ID card and Superior ID card should be presented before the child is seen. The doctor should call Superior for an authorization number. The phone number to call is on the back of the Superior ID card.

#### **Important:**

Before the child goes out-of-state, the caregiver should call Superior at 1-866-912-6283 and ask what clinics or hospitals accept the Texas Medicaid Program.

See the [Superior Health Plan Star Health Member Handbook](#).

## **TRAVEL OUTSIDE THE U.S.**

When a caregiver wants to travel internationally (outside the U.S.) with a child in DFPS conservatorship, both the caregiver and DFPS staff must obtain court approval and follow specific steps.

See [6474.2](#) Out-of-State Travel Approval.

Domestic-bound cruises use international waterways and require the same steps for those traveling to international destinations.

In some areas of Texas, traveling out of the country with a child who is in DFPS conservatorship may be a frequent occurrence. In such cases, DFPS staff follows local court protocols for obtaining court approval.

## **STEPS AFTER OBTAINING COURT APPROVAL**

### **Caregiver Duties After International Travel Is Court Approved**

Before traveling outside of the U.S. with a child who is in DFPS conservatorship, the caregiver must:

- arrange for the child to receive immunizations that are recommended for travel to the foreign country;
- obtain all required travel documents, such as a passport or visa; and
- provide an updated itinerary to DFPS that includes:

- the date of departure,
- the date of return, and
- contact information, including the addresses and telephone numbers to reach the caregiver and child, if necessary.

## ***OBTAINING TRAVEL DOCUMENTS***

The federal government and foreign countries set the regulations governing what travel documents are required for travel outside the U.S. See the [U.S. Department of State's](#) guidelines on the identification required when traveling outside the U.S.

The requirements regarding identification documents may vary depending on the child's age and citizenship status.

DFPS funds may be used to obtain travel documents only when both of the following conditions apply:

- The funds will be used to obtain documents required for travel, such as certified copies of birth certificates, government-issued photo IDs, passports, or passport cards for CPS children
- The travel relates to issues identified in the child's transition plan for aging out of care or to achieving permanency for the child

If the child is traveling outside of the U.S. for the convenience of the child's caregiver (the foster parent, kinship provider, and so on), such as for visits with the caregiver's relatives, the child's caregiver must pay the cost of obtaining the travel documents.

## ***MEDICAL ISSUES***

Medicaid does not cover any medical services performed out of the country.