

ADMISSION AND DISCHARGE

NOTIFICATION OF VACANCIES/AVAILABILITIES

Refuge House Intake Director or designated employee updates the DFPS Extranet Data System daily to ensure the Department is fully advised of all Refuge House home vacancies.

References

Contract Term 25.B, Contract Term 32.A(i), Contract Term Attachment F

ADMISSION POLICY SCOPE OF SERVICE

Refuge House accepts referrals for foster care (including foster and adoptive placements) from DFPS and may provide adoption services to private entities, children, and young adults not referred through DFPS. Refuge House accepts child referrals from ages birth to 17 and young adult referrals ages 18-22, male and female, regardless of race, creed, or ethnicity. We provide foster care and adoptive services for children/young adults in both Child Care Services and Treatment Services at Basic and Therapeutic (Moderate and Specialized) levels and Voluntary Return to Foster Care and Voluntary Extended Foster Care for young adults. Refuge House does accept placement of sibling groups of one or more children and maintains capacity for placement of sibling groups. Refuge House does accept placement of pregnant children and young adults parenting their children, provided a home suitable for the child or young adult and his/her child is available. Refuge House admits children and young adults on a routine and emergency basis, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Refuge House does not accept children with primary medical needs. Refuge House is committed to compliance with all applicable federal and state laws regarding placement of children and young adults.²

Refuge House foster homes and adoptive homes are trained to care for children classified as child care services and/or treatment services and young adults. Children and young adults admitted into the care of Refuge House and a Refuge House agency home may require care for emotional disorders that include, but are not limited to mood disorders, anxiety disorders, obsessive compulsive disorders, personality disorders, conduct disorders, disorders of concentration and hyperactivity. Refuge House admits children and young adults diagnosed with mental retardation, provided the child is ambulatory and does not require care for primary medical needs. Refuge House does admit children/young adults diagnosed with some forms of Pervasive Developmental

² Multiethnic Placement Act, as amended by the Interethnic Adoption Act of 1996 (42 USC Chapter. 21 §1996b), the Indian Child Welfare Act (25 USC Chapter 21 §1915), the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (42 USC Sec. 629 et seq. and Sec. 670 et seq.); the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006 (42 USC §671) and comparable state laws.

Disorder. All children and young adults will have the ability to benefit from individualized treatment services.

The goal of the Refuge House program and services is to serve the children and young adults referred to us by providing stable growth environments and guiding them down the path to a successful tomorrow. Our social vision is to ultimately see those we have served increase the value of the investment in their lives by passing it on to someone else within their sphere of influence. When a child or young adult is admitted into care, the immediate goal is to provide a safe and nurturing environment, to meet the physical and emotional needs of the child/young adult, including medical, dental and assessment needs.

Refuge House utilizes professional staff and community resources to provide both stimulation and treatment. The needs of the whole child/young adult are assessed, then intensive planning incorporates the specific programs related to the individual needs of each child and young adult. The program is designed to meet the needs of all children and young adults (young adults who meet eligibility criteria and voluntarily agree to participate in the Voluntary Extended Foster Care* or Return to Foster Care) within the care of Refuge House and includes the following by age group:

For all children and young adults in Refuge House care **ages 0-22:**

- Providing services in an integrated fashion for body, mind and spirit;
- Ensuring that the basic needs of food, clothing and shelter are provided in the least restrictive environment;
- Ensuring that opportunities for spiritual growth and development are provided to each child/young adult;
- For those individuals whose permanency plan is emancipation from foster care, independent living skills will be initiated on an age-appropriate level;
- For those individuals whose permanency plan is adoption, perform preparation and planning to ensure successful consummation;
- Agency may provide post-adoption services and/or referrals; and
- Provide opportunities for each child/young adult to gain basic living and social skills and use experiential learning activities to appropriately care for themselves and function in the community.

All children in Refuge House care **ages 0-17:**

- Developing an integrated, individualized plan of service for each child in accordance with the permanency plan by a professional treatment team that meets regularly to assess the child's ongoing needs and progress;
- Providing for social and recreational needs through home, school, and community activities with goals emanating from the individualized service plan; and
- Ensuring that the medical, emotional, psychological and psychiatric needs of the child are met through a variety of services.

All young adults in Refuge House care **ages 18-22:**

- Developing a simplified individualized plan of service for each young adult in accordance with their CPS Transition Plan and/or active IEP by a professional treatment team that meets regularly to assess the young adult's ongoing needs and progress;
 - Basic Level of Care (LOC) young adults will receive a service plan that remains in effect until they emancipate from Refuge House care. This plan will be updated is the CPS transition plan or the IEP are updated or changed in any way.
 - Moderate LOC young adults with receive a yearly service plan with an update every six months and or the month prior to a LOC read.
 - Specialized LOC young adults will receive a new service plan every 90 days.
- Attempting to provide resources for social and recreational opportunities;
- Attempting to support a young adult to meet his/her medical, emotional, psychological and psychiatric needs through a variety services;
- Transitioning to independence including attending college or vocational or technical training; and
- Attending high school, a program leading towards a high school diploma, or GED classes.

*As defined in applicable sections of TAC §700.316. Those participating in the Voluntary Extended Foster Care or Return to Foster Care programs are also eligible for forms of Medicaid which may include traditional Medicaid, STAR, and/or STAR/Superior Health Network)

References

§749.333, §749.1101, §749.1103, §749.1105, Contract Term 6.A, Contract Term 7, Contract Term 8, Contract Term 25.C

ADMISSION POLICY

Refuge House maintains an on-call Intake Department employee (Child Placement Management Staff) and accepts placement requests and makes placements (children and young adults) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Refuge House coordinates with the Centralized Placement Unit (CPU) to ensure placements provide the least restrictive environment for a child or young adult. For routine placements, if possible, Refuge House coordinates with DFPS to arrange a placement time that is the least disruptive for the child/young adult. In the case of emergency placements, Refuge House makes every attempt to place the child/young adult as soon as possible, in order to minimize the length of time the child/young adult is without a safe family environment.

Refuge House does not make any placement decisions on behalf of foster/adoptive parent(s). Refuge House will make every effort to ensure that each placement referral is evaluated to determine the most appropriate placement within an agency home based upon the known factors at the time of referral. Refuge House provides all known information to the foster/adoptive parent(s) in order for all parties to make the most appropriate placement decision, and each conversation with prospective foster/adoptive parents is documented on the Initial Intake Information Form. Every placement decision involves information about a child, young adult, or sibling group, in addition to family dynamics and foster/adoptive parent experience. Foster/adoptive parents are expected to be available to participate in the matching process and must be present at all placements. Refuge House attempts to conduct the matching discussions

and secure placement approval from foster/adoptive parents within 20-30 minutes of receiving a placement request.

Refuge House gathers and documents known information to be included in the Initial Intake Information Form in order to make better matching decisions and provide the most accurate and pertinent information to the foster/adoptive parents. Refuge House will initiate an admission assessment that includes an initial evaluation of an appropriate placement for a child/young adult and will ensure that the information necessary to facilitate service planning is obtained, including information that may not have been available at the time of placement.

Refuge House only accepts placements of children through the contracts issued by DFPS and children of ages and genders requiring the service types specified on the license issued by RCCL. If information indicating that the services or other attributes of the child becomes known at a later date, are not within the agency's license, and was not available to Refuge House prior to placement, Refuge House will contact DFPS immediately and determine on a case by case basis if removal from the agency home is necessary.

Young adults will also be considered for placement under the RH contract issued by DFPS. This population is not regulated by RCCL

ROUTINE PLACEMENTS

Routine placements are arranged in advance between DFPS, Refuge House, and foster/adoptive parents. Every attempt is made to schedule routine placements in a manner that is the least disruptive to the child's or young adult's schedule. Routine placements are reviewed and approved by CPMS in advance. Refuge House prepares the child's or young adult's file in advance of the placement and coordinates the time and location of placement with the DFPS worker. A routine Full Admission Assessment must be completed by the time of placement, with an Updated Admission Assessment being completed within 15 days of placement.

For routine placements, Refuge House provides opportunity for a child/young adult and foster/adoptive parent(s) to meet prior to placement and to have meaningful interaction with an opportunity to ask questions and exchange information about rules and expectations in the home. Children/young adults and foster/adoptive parents are given the opportunity to meet individually and privately with the case manager to determine if this is a good fit. The discourse is appropriate to the intellectual age of the child/young adult. Refuge House case manager will discuss with the child/young adult, in a fashion appropriate to the child/young adult's intellectual and emotional age, the circumstance that made the placement necessary. The pre-placement visit and discussion is documented and recorded in the client's record, including the child/young adult's understanding why in foster care and response to the placement and the discussions about the placement. Documentation of the information shared with foster/adoptive parents, information that was not shared and the justification for not sharing, and how the placement is capable of meeting the child's or young adult's needs will be kept in the child/young adult's file.

EMERGENCY PLACEMENTS

Refuge House accepts placement calls 24 hours per day, 7 days a week. When a placement call or e-mail is received, Refuge House assesses the availability of beds and appropriateness of placement for a given child, young adult, or sibling group as soon as possible, regardless of time, day or night. If a potential family is identified, the Refuge House Intake Department attempts to contact the family immediately and discuss the potential placement(s) and available information with the family to determine a potential match for placement. When a placement is secured, Intake On-Call Department arranges placement between foster/adoptive family, DFPS caseworker, and Refuge House on-call worker. The child/young adult's file is prepared the first business day after emergency placement. The Emergency Admission Assessment must be completed the day of the child/young adult's admission, Full Admission Assessment within 10 days of admission, and an Updated Admission Assessment being completed within 15 days of admission. Refuge House will share any additional information obtained regarding the child/young adult with the foster/adoptive parents within 10 days of completing the Full Admissions Assessment. Documentation of the information shared with foster/adoptive parents, information that was not shared, a justification for information not shared, and how the placement is capable of meeting the child's or young adult's needs will be kept in the child/young adult's file.

Children receiving treatment services who came into the care of Refuge House as an emergency placement may not continue in Refuge House care for more than 30 days after the date of their admission, unless the child has received the required psychological, psychiatric, psychometric, or physician's evaluation. The completed evaluation must indicate manifestations of the child's disorder requiring treatment services. All evaluations must be signed, dated, and documented in the child's record.

UNACCOMPANIED EMERGENCY PLACEMENT

In the event that an unaccompanied child/young adult in the care of DFPS presents for emergency placement, Refuge House may accept the child/young adult for placement and shall immediately notify DFPS to determine instructions and to initiate documentation. DFPS will complete the required forms within the next working day but may immediately move the child/young adult.

VOLUNTARY EXTENDED FOSTER CARE PLACEMENT

A Voluntary Extended Foster Care placement applies to a child/young adult that is currently receiving foster care services prior to their eighteenth birthday who wishes to extend foster care services as a young adult. To accommodate children/young adults who wish to voluntarily extend their foster care services on their eighteenth birthday, Refuge House maintains policies to guide and educate children/young adults about the Voluntary Extended Foster Care Program. Refuge House case manager will communicate with the child/young adult and DFPS to determine if Voluntary Extended Foster Care is applicable. If the child/young adult wishes to extend foster care services, Refuge House case manager will obtain the required Voluntary Extended Care Agreement from CPS, which must be signed by the young adult applicant.

VOLUNTARY RETURN TO FOSTER CARE PLACEMENT

On a case by case basis, Refuge House may care for young adults ages 18-21 who meet eligible criteria for Voluntary Return to Foster Care services. Refuge House Intake Department will

communicate with the young adult, his/her caseworker, and Refuge House treatment and management employees to determine if the Voluntary Return to Foster Care program is applicable for the young adult. If it is applicable, Intake Department or designated employee will obtain a Voluntary Return to Foster Care Agreement signed by the young adult and proceed with placement as appropriate.

References

§749.335(1)(2), §749.1101, §749.1107, §749.1133, §749.1181, §749.1185, §749.1187, §749.1189, §749.1251, §749.1253, §749.1255, Contract Term 5.A, Contract Term 7, Contract Term 12.C(iii), Contract Term 21, Contract Term 25.A, Contract Term 27.C

ORIENTATION AND CHILD/YOUNG ADULT RIGHTS

At placement, or within seven days of admission, every child/young adult age three or above will be provided an age and developmentally appropriate orientation. The orientation will include: the child or young adult rights (as applicable), an explanation of behavioral interventions and discipline; religious programs and practices; educational program and expectations; program expectations and rules; ability to participate in trips away from placement home; and the grievance procedure.

For a child/young adult functioning above toddler age and below school age, orientation will include as many of the above items listed as is age appropriate. Documentation of the child/young adult's participation in the orientation process will be included on Orientation and Child/Young Adult Rights form and included in the child/young adult's records. Justification for any omissions will also be documented on the form and kept in the record.

Refuge House supports the rights listed in the CPS Rights of Children and Youth in care and will cooperate with CPS to ensure all children/young adults have been given a written copy of these at the time of placement and at subsequent placements. Refuge House will review the CPS Child Rights and Youth in Foster Care with both the child/young adult and foster/adoptive Parent, as well as maintain a signed copy of these forms in the child/young adult's file. Refuge House will not deny or restrict through action or policy, any of the rights listed in the CPS Rights of Children and Youth in Foster Care.

Refuge House will provide services to children/young adults who are deaf or hard of hearing that ensure effective communication for children/young adults in care. In the case that a deaf or hard-of-hearing child/young adult is placed in Refuge House care, the agency will contact a Deafness Resource Specialist from the Department for Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) for assistance in determining how best to ensure effective communication is being achieved between a child/young adult and foster/adoptive parent and/or Refuge House employee.

(<http://www.dars.state.tx.us/dhhs/providers/specialists.asp>)

References

§749.1111, Contract Term 9, Contract Term 27.D(iii)

PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS

Refuge House expects that children and young adults placed in the care of Refuge House foster/adoptive homes will have their physical, emotional, developmental, educational, and spiritual needs met. They are expected to participate in their progress and individualized service plan to the best of their abilities. Each child and young adult is entitled to be treated with respect and dignity and provided a loving and nurturing growth environment.

References

§749.339(11), Contract Term 10, Contract Term Attachment C Section 501

PLACEMENT PROCEDURE FOR DFPS REFERRALS

GENERAL PROCEDURE

- 1) RH Intake Department receives a referral either by phone or via e-mail from DFPS.
- 2) Intake Department assesses availability within Refuge House homes and compatibility with known child/young adult needs based upon the information provided by the Centralized Placement Units (CPU) in each region.
- 3) The information assessed includes but is not limited to:
 - a) Child or young adult's appropriateness for placement in foster/adoptive home;
 - b) Appropriate and compatible agency home;
 - c) If siblings can be placed together; and
 - d) If siblings need to be separated, the Intake Department will, through documentation and discussions with each foster family, ensure contact and properly justify the separation of considered sibling group. The plan for contact will be documented in both the Admission Assessment and the 72 Hour Plan.
- 4) Intake Department completes the Initial Intake Information Form (IIIF), including a primary and secondary (when available) recommendation for placement.
- 5) CPMS reviews and approves placement.
- 6) If approved, the Intake Department will schedule the placement with the DFPS caseworker and notify him/her of all paperwork that is needed prior to placement.
- 7) By the time of placement, Refuge House will share any information pertaining to the child/young adult's immediate needs to the foster/adoptive parent(s), including any special medical conditions or dietary needs.

ON-CALL PROCESS (AFTER HOURS PLACEMENT)

- 1) Intake On-Call Department receives placement referral from DFPS.
- 2) Intake On-Call Department assesses availability and confers with foster/adoptive parent(s) to determine willingness to accept placement.
- 3) Intake On-Call Department shares known information of the potential placement(s) with foster/adoptive parent(s) for potential placement and completes IIIF by the next business day.
- 4) If the foster/adoptive parent(s) accepts potential placement(s), Intake On-Call Department confers with DFPS to confirm match.

- 5) CPMS reviews and approves placement.
- 6) If DFPS approves placement, Intake On-Call Department contacts foster/adoptive parent(s) to arrange placement as soon as possible.
- 7) By the time of placement, Refuge House will share any information pertaining to the child/young adult's immediate needs to the foster/adoptive parent(s), including any special medical conditions or dietary needs.
- 8) Intake On-Call Department completes required paperwork for an Emergency Admission.

References

§749.335(3-4), §749.1011, §749.1115, §749.1461, Contract Term 12.C(iii), Contract Term 19, Contract Term 21

PLACEMENT PAPERWORK PROCEDURE

PROVIDED TO MANAGING CONSERVATOR:

- 1) The Intake Department sends the following Refuge House documentation to the child/young adult's Managing Conservator via e-mail prior placement and prints confirmation of the sent e-mail in the child's or young adult's record. The Refuge House documentation includes:
 - a) Emergency Behavior Intervention Policies;
 - b) Discipline Policies;
 - c) Treatment Service Policies;
 - d) Adoption Policies;
 - e) Orientation and Child/Young Adult Rights;
 - f) Volunteer Policy;
 - g) Notification Schedule; and
 - h) Upon request, any other Refuge House policies that are required by RCCL.
- 2) At placement, a copy of the above e-mail showing it sent to the CPS caseworker is also provided in a hard copy to obtain the CPS caseworker's signature on the Placement Information Acknowledgment Form.
- 3) If the DFPS placement worker provides only a Alternative Application for Placement of Children in Residential Child Care (Form 2087ex), the Intake Department requests in writing a full Common Application for Placement of Children in Residential Child Care (Form 2087), or within the first 24 hours of the child/young adult being placed with Refuge House. This is required if the child/young adult is going to be considered for Level of Care (LOC) or is Moderate or Specialized at time of placement.

COLLECTED FROM MANAGING CONSERVATOR:

1. DFPS Placement Authorization (2085-FC).
2. DFPS Medical Consent (2085-B,C,or D):
 - a. On the DFPS Medical Consent form, the Primary Medical Consenter is the foster/adoptive parent(s);
 - b. The Back-up Medical Consenter is the child/young adult's Refuge House Case Manager Supervisor;

- c. If the Refuge House placement worker is not the child/young adult's Refuge House Case Manager Supervisor on record, the Refuge House placement worker will provide the name of the child/young adult's Refuge House Case Manager Supervisor as the Back-up Medical Consenter, and sign the form as "<RH Placement Worker> for <RH Case Manager Supervisor>"; and
 - d. Appropriate Medical Consent form for young adults participating in the Voluntary Extended Foster Care or Voluntary Return to Foster Care program.
- 3. Common Application- Form 2087 for Routine Placements or Form 2087ex for Emergency Placements:
 - a. Non-Emergency Placements- For children/young adults at the Moderate Service Level or higher, the Department shall complete and provide to Refuge House at, or prior to placement, the Common Application for Placement of Children in Residential Care (Form 2087) as the uniform assessment form and application for admission. Refuge House shall only accept children/young adults for placement by the Department only after receiving completed Form 2085-FC, Form 2085-B, and/or 2085-C and/or 2085-D as appropriate, and if at the Moderate Service Level or Higher, Form 2087 and Form 2089. If the Managing Conservator attempts to place a child/young adult at the Moderate Service Level or higher without a copy of a current Form 2089, Refuge House may, although not required to, accept the child/young adult for 72 hours after having the Treatment Director sign the Form 2089-C.
 - b. Emergency Placements- The Department shall attempt to complete and provide to Refuge House at, or prior to placement, the Common Application for Placement of Children in Residential Child Care (Form 2087) as the uniform assessment form and application for admission. The form may be incomplete, but shall contain all available information. Alternatively, the Department may provide to Refuge House the Alternative Application for Placement of Children in Residential Child Care (Form 2087ex). In either case, Form 2087 shall be completed and provided to Refuge House at the time the child/young adult's placement is changed from an emergency to a non-emergency placement. Refuge House shall accept Form 2087 or Form 2087ex as the uniform assessment form and application for admission for placement of Department children/young adults. Refuge House shall accept children/young adults for placement by the Department only after receiving completed Form 2085-FC, completed Form 2085-, and/or 2085-C and/or 2085-D, and (complete or incomplete) Form 2087 or 2087ex.
- 4. Current YFT Service Level Authorization (Form 2089)- All children placed with Refuge House should enter care with a current YFT Service Level Authorization form with the exception of children/young adults that are new into foster care or basic level of care. Children/young adults new into foster care or basic level, will have the IMPACT printout from DFPS showing current basic level of care.
- 5. CPS Placement History- This can be found in the full Common Application, however, it can also be printed from the DFPS IMPACT program. The CPS caseworker must provide a reason for each placement listed on the placement history.
- 6. Communication Restrictions on the child/young adult in writing from the CPS caseworker prior to or at placement.
- 7. Court Affidavit of Fact regarding the child/young adult
- 8. All current Court Orders- Must at a minimum obtain the Court Order establishing the managing conservator of the child/young adult.
- 9. Court Order Notification Regarding Consent for Medical Care of the child/young adult
- 10. Attorney Ad-Litem- Name, address, and phone number of child/young adult's attorney and/or guardian ad-litem

11. Current Educational Portfolio– Must be provided at placement in a DFPS formatted green, three ring binder, with required dividers
12. STAR/Superior Health Care Cards
13. Medical Exam (if conducted within 12 months of placement)
14. Dental Exam (if conducted within 12 months of placement)
15. CPS Rights of Children and Youth in Foster Care
16. CPS Service Plan (applicable to children 0 to 15 years of age, and within 45 days of placement)
17. CPS Transition Plan (if child/young adult is over 16 years of age, and within 45 days of placement)
18. For a child who qualifies for Treatment Services a psychiatric, psychological, or psychological with psychometric evaluation as required in Minimum Standard §749.1135
19. Signed Voluntary Return to Care Agreement or Voluntary Extended Foster Care Agreement (if applicable)

Refuge House will make reasonable efforts to obtain all required information for the admission of a child/young adult. Refuge House will document all initial attempts to obtain the above mentioned information prior to the placement of the child/young adult on the IIIF. Post-placement contact attempts to DFPS to obtain the information still needed will be conducted in writing and filed in the child's or young adult's record.

References

§749.337(a-b), §749.1009(a)(2), §749.1109, §749.1113, §749.1135, §749.1151(a), §749.1153(b), §749.1461, Contract Term 6.B, Contract Term 9, Contract Term 27

DISCHARGE POLICY

Refuge House supports the health, safety and well-being of a child/young adult at discharge to ensure that critical information is available to other agencies or individuals who may be responsible for the child/young adult's later care and treatment. Refuge House makes every attempt to meet the needs of children and young adults placed in care, however, in cases when this is not possible, Refuge House will follow discharge procedures according to the type and nature of the reason for discharge. Refuge House employee completes a Notification of Discharge form and submits it to the appropriate DFPS parties (DFPS Program Director, DFPS Caseworker). Refuge House CPMS and Treatment Director approve the discharge and sign the Notification of Discharge form.

The Department shall:

- Provide the Contractor with thirty (30) calendar days written notice when planning a discharge from placement except as provided below or in the case of a Contractor providing emergency care services where a five (5) calendar day notice is required;
- Provide the Contractor, upon request, with a discharge document signed by the DFPS Program Director responsible for the child/young adult, or at the Department's discretion, a higher management level if the Department wishes to discharge a child/young adult without giving (30) calendar days.
- Notify the Contractor within ten (10) calendar days when a request for a Service Level evaluation will not be forwarded to the Service Level Monitor.