



Department of
Job and Family Services

John R. Kasich, Governor
Michael B. Colbert, Director

March 13, 2012

TO: Directors, Public Children Services Agencies
Directors, Private Child Placing Agencies
Directors, Private Non-custodial Agencies

FROM: Jennifer R. Justice, Deputy Director
Office of Families and Children

RE: MEPA Cycle IV Introduction

MEPA Cycle IV was developed based upon a continuous quality improvement model which focuses on monitoring agency compliance with Multiethnic Placement Act (MEPA) requirements and provision of technical assistance to support agency's compliance with MEPA and Title VI. Each Cycle examines either the same or other components of MEPA.

The monitoring procedures selected were also designed to address ongoing concerns raised by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administrative for Children and Families (HHS, ACF) and the HHS, Office of Civil Rights-Region V (HHS, OCR) regarding implementation of the MEPA Corrective Action and Resolution Plan (CARP). In 2010 and 2011 HHS, ACF and HHS, OCR has indicated that Ohio should:

- Review more cases where the largest percentage of children in permanent custody (PC) reside and where racial and ethnic diversity is present within the PC population.
- Review family files when the family is deemed ineligible through the homestudy process.
- Review foster family cases when a child is moved from a different race foster placement to a same race foster placement.
- Review foster care cases.

On behalf of the Department, we would like to acknowledge that the significant increase in sample size for some PCSAs will pose an increased burden. We appreciate your commitment to ensure ongoing compliance with the MEPA CARP.

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SUMMARY OF MEPA CYCLE IV

MEPA Cycle IV is scheduled to commence in March 2012 and end in February 2014. The major changes in the MEPA Cycle IV review are as follows:

PCSA ANNOUNCED SITE VISITS

- All site visits will include observing matching conferences. It is critical that public children services agencies (PCSA) and private child placing agencies (PCPA) notify ODJFS of all matching conferences scheduled and/or rescheduled using the MatchingConference@ifs.ohio.gov.
- Seventy (70) PCSAs will be reviewed during MEPA Cycle IV. Counties selected for review were based upon: (1) higher rates of racial or ethnic minority children in the permanent custody (PC) of the agency and/or (2) high number of children in PC.
- The sample size of child cases has increased in the Major Metro counties and select Metro and Large County size groupings based upon the percentage of children in PC as of March 2011. For some PCSAs participating in MEPA Cycle IV the sample size of child cases reviewed may be smaller than those reviewed during MEPA Cycle III.

The following table contains information on the PCSAs who will have a MEPA Cycle IV review and the number of cases to be reviewed (All JFS 01688 cases will automatically be reviewed and is not reflected in the table).

Adams Child Cases= 2 Family Cases=10	Allen Child Cases=5 Family Cases= 10	Ashland Child Cases=4 Family Cases=10	Ashtabula Child Cases=8 Family Cases=10	Athens Child Cases=4 Family Cases=10
Belmont Child Cases= 2 Family Cases=10	Brown Child Cases= 4 Family Cases=10	Butler Child Cases= 42 Family Cases=10	Champaign Child Cases= 2 Family Cases=10	Clark Child Cases= 17 Family Cases=10
Clermont Child Cases= 4 Family Cases=10	Clinton Child Cases= 2 Family Cases=10	Columbiana Child Cases= 4 Family Cases=10	Crawford Child Cases= 2 Family Cases=10	Cuyahoga Child Cases=209 Family Cases=32
Darke Child Cases= 2 Family Cases=10	Defiance Child Cases= 2 Family Cases=10	Delaware Child Cases= 2 Family Cases=10	Erie Child Cases= 2 Family Cases=10	Fairfield Child Cases= 4 Family Cases=10
Fayette Child Cases= 2 Family Cases=10	Franklin Child Cases= 64 Family Cases=16	Gallia Child Cases= 2 Family Cases=10	Geauga Child Cases= 2 Family Cases=10	Greene Child Cases= 12 Family Cases=10

Guernsey Child Cases= 4 Family Cases=10	Hamilton Child Cases= 70 Family Cases=56	Hancock Child Cases= 4 Family Cases=10	Harrison Child Cases= 2 Family Cases=10	Highland Child Cases= 4 Family Cases=10
Hocking Child Cases= 2 Family Cases=10	Huron Child Cases= 2 Family Cases=10	Jackson Child Cases= 2 Family Cases=10	Jefferson Child Cases= 4 Family Cases=10	Lake Child Cases= 2 Family Cases=10
Lawrence Child Cases= 4 Family Cases=10	Licking Child Cases= 4 Family Cases=10	Logan Child Cases= 2 Family Cases=10	Lorain Child Cases= 7 Family Cases=10	Lucas Child Cases= 32 Family Cases=10
Madison Child Cases= 2 Family Cases=10	Mahoning Child Cases= 5 Family Cases=10	Marion Child Cases= 2 Family Cases=10	Medina Child Cases= 2 Family Cases=10	Meigs Child Cases= 2 Family Cases=10
Miami Child Cases= 4 Family Cases=10	Montgomery Child Cases= 50 Family Cases=10	Muskingum Child Cases= 4 Family Cases=10	Ottawa Child Cases= 4 Family Cases=10	Perry Child Cases= 2 Family Cases=10
Pickaway Child Cases= 2 Family Cases=10	Pike Child Cases= 2 Family Cases=10	Portage Child Cases= 4 Family Cases=10	Preble Child Cases= 4 Family Cases=10	Richland Child Cases= 4 Family Cases=10
Ross Child Cases= 4 Family Cases=10	Scioto Child Cases= 2 Family Cases=10	Seneca Child Cases= 4 Family Cases=10	Shelby Child Cases= 2 Family Cases=10	Stark Child Cases= 39 Family Cases=10
Summit Child Cases= 54 Family Cases=10	Trumbull Child Cases= 9 Family Cases=10	Tuscarawas Child Cases= 4 Family Cases=10	Union Child Cases= 2 Family Cases=10	Vinton Child Cases= 2 Family Cases=10
Warren Child Cases= 2 Family Cases=10	Washington Child Cases= 2 Family Cases=10	Wayne Child Cases= 4 Family Cases=10	Williams Child Cases= 2 Family Cases=10	Wood Child Cases= 2 Family Cases=10

CHILD CASES TO BE REVIEWED:

Cases to be reviewed will include the following three groups of cases:

- GROUP 1:** Permanent custody child cases for children who are presented at a matching conference observed by ODJFS staff.
- GROUP 2:** Permanent custody child cases for children who have been in permanent custody for at least 45 days during the 12-month period ending two months prior to the first day of the month in which the MEPA entrance conference takes place.
- GROUP 3:** Child cases with a JFS 01688.

FAMILY CASES TO BE REVIEWED:

Cases to be reviewed will include the following three groups of cases:

- GROUP 1:** Families who were presented at the matching conference observed unless the family had been approved by another agency.
- GROUP 2:** Families with an approved adoptive home study open for at least one day during the period under review. Approved home studies that are open include: 1) families who have been approved for at least one day in the review period and do not have a child placed with them as well as 2) those adoptive families who have been approved and do have a child placed with them. If a family has finalized an adoption but their home was open during the period under review for at least one day during the period under review, then the adoptive family case record will be included.
- GROUP 3:** Families who have been disapproved as a foster home or disapproved as an adoptive home.

Those PCSAs not being reviewed during Cycle IV will be reviewed during MEPA Cycle V; however if the agency was required to have a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) during MEPA Cycle III, their CAP and CAP Self-Assessment will be reviewed during either CPOE Cycle 8 or CPOE Stage 9.

PCSA UNANNOUNCED SITE VISITS

- Unannounced site visits will be conducted in the Major Metro, Metro and Large county size groupings. Matching conferences will be observed and one child and one family case will be reviewed. The child case will be the child for whom the matching conference was held and the family case will be the case in which a family was presented during the matching conference (if there are no families presented or the family presented is from another agency then the reviewer will select another family case to review).

PCPA/ PNA ANNOUNCED SITE VISITS

- Private child placing agencies (PCPA) and private non-custodial agencies - adoption only (PNA) that have contracts with PCSAs for foster care and/or adoption services will be monitored during MEPA Cycle IV. Ten child cases and ten family cases will be reviewed; however the child and family groupings

outlined under the PCSA Announced Site Visit section of this document will be used.

- PNAs (foster care only) that have contracts with PCSAs for foster care services will be monitored during MEPA Cycle IV. ODJFS exercised the option under the CARP to integrate MEPA monitoring within the foster care recertification reviews. Specific MEPA questions were added to the Licensing Review Tool to address foster caregivers' home studies.

PCPA/PNA UNANNOUNCED SITE VISITS

- Each calendar year a PCPA/PNA will be randomly selected for an unannounced on-site review. One child and one family case will be reviewed.

If you have questions on this matter, please direct them to Joan Van Hull of my staff at Joan.Vanhull@jfs.ohio.gov.