

BEST PRACTICE



ICJ TRANSFER OF SUPERVISION

HOME EVALUATION CONSIDERATIONS FOR UNCONVENTIONAL FAMILIES

Please note: This document is not a policy or procedure, but simply a reference to assist states when dealing with transfer of supervision cases.

When conducting home evaluations, many factors contribute to the acceptance or denial of transfers of supervision. For youth residing with caregivers who are not their parents or legal guardians, interstate collaboration and consideration of unique circumstances are particularly important. Unconventional living arrangements promote stability and success for many youths. Though "mandatory acceptance" may not apply, states are encouraged to accept such arrangements whenever possible.

This Best Practice demonstrates a commitment to addressing racial diversity, equity and inclusion and acknowledges that bold, strategic action must be taken in areas where disparity exists. States are encouraged to focus on home evaluations because ICJ data suggests race-based disparities may exist in denials of transfer of supervision.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR ICJ COMPACT OFFICES AND FIELD STAFF WHEN CONDUCTING HOME EVALUATIONS OF YOUTH WHO RESIDE IN UNCONVENTIONAL LIVING ARRANGEMENTS:

- Enter the home with an open mind and avoid preconceived judgment
- Seek to understand family dynamics and diverse family make-up, including, but not limited to [kinship care](#)
- Reflect the voices of the youth and family, including consideration for past trauma and cultural differences
- Provide the opportunity to allow guardians to identify alternate caregivers for their children while maintaining responsibility
- Take into account the length of time the youth have been in custody of the identified caregivers
- Assess environmental factors impacting the youth's behavior such as:
 - Enabling family members, victim/abuser living in residence, delinquent peer groups, and unstable neighborhoods, which can be associated with juvenile delinquency
 - Circumstances affecting the parent/legal guardian's ability to support successful supervision (Alcohol/drug use, incarceration, etc.)

IF IT IS DETERMINED THAT A YOUTH IS NOT IN SUBSTANTIAL COMPLIANCE WITH THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SUPERVISION REQUIRED BY THE SENDING OR RECEIVING STATE:

- Hold a joint staff meeting with the ICJ Commissioners/Designees from each state to coordinate and to address compliance issues, develop a solid treatment plan, and link the youth and family to appropriate community based in-home services prior to the submission of the home evaluation recommendation.
- If supervision is not recommended, have a discussion with field staff to obtain the details that led to the recommendation.