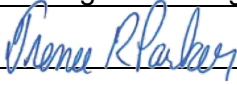


Effective Date: 03/17/21 Revision Date: 7/1/2025	Responsible Administrator: Belvie Herbert, Adoption Program Manager
Authorized Signature: Trenee Parker, DFS Director 	

Policy 1109 – Multiethnic Placements

A. POLICY

Permanent placement decisions for foster children are made free of discrimination based on race, color or national origin. The Multiethnic Placement Act (MEPA) was enacted in 1994 and amended to MEPA-IEP (Interethnic Adoption Provisions) in 1996. MEPA does not impact placement preferences defined by the Indian Child Welfare Act.

MEPA-IEP is one of several federal initiatives and laws aimed at removing the barriers to permanency for the hundreds of thousands of children who are in the child protective system. The specific intentions of MEPA-IEP are to:

- Decrease the length of time that children wait to be adopted,
- Facilitate the recruitment and retention of foster and adoptive parents who can meet the distinctive needs of children awaiting placement, and
- Eliminate discrimination based on the race, color, or national origin of the child or the prospective parent.

Legal Reference: The Multiethnic Placement Act (MEPA) of 1994 (Public Law No.103-382), as amended by the Interethnic Placement Act (IEPA) of 1996 (Public Law 104-188), prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin in foster care and adoption placements.

To achieve these goals, MEPA-IEP has three basic mandates:

1. It prohibits states and other entities that are involved in foster care or adoption placements, and that receive federal financial assistance under title IV-E, title IV-B, or any other federal program, from delaying or denying a child's foster care or adoptive placement on the basis of the child's or the prospective parent's race, color, or national origin;
2. It prohibits these states and entities from denying to any individual the opportunity to become a foster or adoptive parent on the basis of the prospective parent's or the child's race, color, or national origin; and
3. It requires that, to remain eligible for federal assistance for their child welfare programs, states must diligently recruit foster and adoptive parents who reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of the children in the state who need foster and adoptive homes.

B. PROCEDURES

1. The Foster Care and Adoption Program Managers shall develop an annual recruitment plan with input from staff and community partners that diligently target potential foster and adoptive parents that reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of the children who need homes. Individuals will not be denied the opportunity to adopt or foster based on race, color or ethnic origin.

2. The recruitment plan will focus on developing a pool of potential foster and adoptive parents willing and able to foster and adopt the children needing placement.
3. The plan will include both general and targeted recruitment activities including but not limited to the following:
 - Use of the general media (radio, television and print)
 - Dissemination of information to targeted community organizations such as religious groups and neighborhood centers
 - Development of partnerships with community groups to make waiting children more visible and to identify and support prospective foster and adoptive families
 - Listing children who legally-free on local, state and national exchanges and websites such as Heart Gallery, National Adoption Center and AdoptUSKids.
4. Recruitment activities shall provide potential foster and adoptive parents with information about the characteristics and needs of available children, the nature of the foster care and adoption process, and the financial, medical, counseling and other assistance and support available to foster and adoptive families.

C. FOCUS

Recruitment activities are documented in progress notes.

D. FORMS

N/A