

441—202.4(234) Selection of facility.

202.4(1) Placement consistent with the best interests and special needs of the child shall be made in the least restrictive, most family-like facility available and in close proximity to the child's home. Race, color, or national origin may not be routinely considered in placement selections.

202.4(2) Efforts shall be made to place siblings together unless to do so would be detrimental to any of the children's physical, emotional or mental well-being. Efforts to prevent separating siblings, reasons for separating siblings, and plans to maintain sibling contact shall be documented in the child's case permanency plan.

202.4(3) The department shall first consider placing the child in a relative's home unless no relatives are available or willing to accept placement or such placement would be detrimental to the child's physical, emotional or mental well-being.

a. If a relative or a suitable person who has a kinship bond with the child will accept placement of the child:

(1) The person shall sign Form 595-1489, Non-Law Enforcement Record Check Request.

(2) The department shall complete record checks as listed in 441—subrule 113.13(1) to evaluate if the person's home is appropriate for the child before making the placement.

(3) The department worker shall make a referral to the recruitment and retention provider to initiate an informational contact with the kinship caregiver. The recruitment and retention provider will inform the kinship caregiver about the monthly kinship caregiver payment as outlined in rule 441—156.6(234) and explain the process of becoming a licensed foster parent.

b. Efforts to place the child in a relative's home and reasons for using a nonrelative placement shall be documented in the child's case permanency plan.

202.4(4) Foster family care shall be used for a child unless the child has problems that require specialized services that cannot be provided in a family setting. Reasons for using a more restrictive placement shall be documented in the child's case permanency plan.

202.4(5) A foster family shall be selected on the basis of compatibility with the child, taking into consideration:

a. The extent to which interests, strengths, abilities and needs of the foster family enable the foster family members to understand, accept and provide for the individual needs of the child.

b. The child's individual problems, medical needs, and plans for future care. The department shall not place a child with asthma or other respiratory health issues in a foster home where any member of the household smokes.

c. The capacity of the foster family to understand and accept the child's case permanency plan, the needs and attitudes of the child's parents, and the relationship of the child to the parents.

d. The characteristics of the foster family that offer a positive experience for the child who has specific problems as a consequence of past relationships.

e. An environment that will cause minimum disruption of the child including few changes in placement for the child.

202.4(6) A foster group care facility shall be selected on the basis of its ability to meet the needs of the child, promote the child's growth and development, and ensure physical, intellectual and emotional progress during the stay in the facility. The department shall place a child only in a licensed or approved facility which has a current contract with the department pursuant to 441—Chapter 152.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code section 234.6(6) "b."

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