

Big Bend Community Based Care Policy & Procedure

Series: 500: Special Populations

Policy Name: Services to Illegal Youth

Policy Number: 505

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Regulation: 65C-9.002, F.A.C.
65C-9.003, F.A.C.
CFOP 175-44

Policy

It is the policy of Big Bend Community Based Care, Inc. (BBCBC), to assure that unaccompanied refugee minors are provided the same range of child welfare benefits and services available to other minor children upon referral and approval from the Department of Children and Families.

An unaccompanied minor is defined as a person who has not yet attained 18 years of age or has attained 18 years and is not over 21 years of age but is still enrolled in post-secondary education, a community college or a university; who entered the U.S. unaccompanied by and not destined to join a parent or a close non-parental adult relative who is willing and able to care for the child or adult with a clear and court verified claim to custody of the minor and who has no parent in the U.S.

Procedure

- A.** Benefits and services for unaccompanied refugee minors are not limited to room and board, medical assistance, support services, and case planning.
- B.** Whenever a minor foreign national is taken into custody, the “detaining official” must determine whether consular notification is at the option of the minor (or parent, if available) or whether it is mandatory.
 1. The DCM will notify the CLS attorney that a child being detained is a foreign national so the attorney can proceed with consular notification, if required.
 2. Notification to the attorney must be documented in the FSFN record.
 3. No child may be considered to be unaccompanied unless identified by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) as unaccompanied in accordance with Action Transmittal SSA-AT-79-04 and official interpretations by the Director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement.
 4. Within thirty (30) days after the minor arrives the state must initiate procedures to have the minor adjudicated dependent and placed in the state’s custody.
- C.** Each child determined to be unaccompanied should be considered for eligibility for the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors (URM) Program administered by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Refugee Resettlement.
 1. The URM assists unaccompanied minor refugees and entrants in developing appropriate skills to enter adulthood and to achieve economic and social self-sufficiency.

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2. If the child is adjudicated dependent and placed in foster care, an application will be made to the Office of Refugee Resettlement for case plan approval.
- D. A placement report with court adjudication must be submitted and approved by the United States Department of Health and Human Services Office of Refugee Resettlement before any foster care costs can be charged to the Refugee Program.
- E. Benefits are provided to the eligible minor until:
1. The minor is reunited with his or her parent.
 2. The minor is reunited with a non-parental adult relative willing and able to care for the child or to whom legal custody or guardianship is granted under state law.
 3. The minor reaches the age of 18 years old. If over the age of 18 years, the unaccompanied minor may continue to receive benefits in accordance with the State Plan.
- F. A case plan must be developed to provide for appropriate care and supervision and appropriate services. The case plan must address, at a minimum:
1. Reunification.
 2. An appropriate placement, e.g., foster home, group home, residential facility, other appropriate setting.
 3. Health screening and treatment, including medical and dental examinations orientation, testing, and counseling to facilitate the child's adjustment to American culture.
 4. Preparation for participation in American society with special emphasis on English language instruction and occupational as well as cultural training in order to prepare the child for independent living.
 5. Preservation of the child's ethnic and religious heritage.
- G. The appropriateness of each unaccompanied minor's living arrangement and services must be reviewed no less often than every six (6) months.
- H. Moving the case of an unaccompanied refugee child to another state is the same as for other children in foster care.
- I. Reports must be submitted to the Office of Refugee Resettlement as follows:
1. Within thirty (30) days of the minor's placement in the State.
 2. Every twelve (12) months beginning with the date of the original report.
 3. A change of status report must be submitted within sixty (60) days of the child being reunited with a parent or an appropriate adult other than his or her parent.
 4. A change of status report must be submitted within sixty (60) days of the child being reunited with a parent or an appropriate adult other than his or her parent.
- J. Unaccompanied minors are not generally eligible for adoption since family reunification is preferred.
1. In rare cases, adoption may be permitted if a court finds that adoption is in the best interest of the child and there is termination of parental rights as determined by the appropriate State court, as when parents are dead or are missing and presumed dead.
 2. Each case must be decided on its own merits by local courts empowered to make such decisions.
 3. Forms can be obtained from the Office of Refugee Resettlement Programs Administration Office.