

Children's Services

Local Guidance for Extension of Temporary Approval to Foster for Connected Persons

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this guidance is to set out the steps to be taken when an eight-week extension is sought to the temporary approval of foster carers who are Connected Persons.

2. Background

- 2.1 The governing procedure for this guidance is [Placements with Connected Persons](#) which can be found in the Contents section of the Children's Services Procedures library. Section 4 of that procedure states:

- 2.2 *If it is likely that the 16 weeks will expire before the full assessment is complete the temporary approval can, in exceptional circumstances be extended for a further period of up to 8 weeks under regulation 25 (The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010). Before deciding whether to extend the approval, the Local Authority must consider if the placement is still the most appropriate placement available. All such requests for an extension should be presented to the fostering panel setting out what work is still outstanding, the views of the QARO and timescales to completion. The fostering Panel will make a recommendation to the Agency Decision Maker who will make the agency decision.*

- 2.3 An extension to temporary approval should only be sought in these circumstances.

3. Procedure

- 3.1 The steps to be followed when seeking an extension to temporary approval are set out in the following paragraphs.
- 3.2 It is the responsibility of the Fostering Social Worker to identify when an extension is required, and to initiate the approval process before the expiry of the original 16-week period.
- 3.3 The Fostering Social Worker should complete Form C, Section D. They should ensure that the Summary of Assessment field contains the following information:
- The child's legal status and any other key background information
 - When the eight-week extension period would expire, if granted
 - The assessment work that has already been undertaken, including titles of individual assessments, interviews and references

- Assessment work that remains to be completed, and why this cannot be completed within the standard 16-week timescale
 - Assurance that the temporary placement with the Connected Person(s) will remain safe and appropriate during the extended approval period
- 3.4 The Fostering Social Worker should submit Form C, Section D to their Team Manager for Quality Assurance; there is no need to complete the panel checklist. At the same time, they should share Form C, Section D with the applicants.
- 3.5 The Fostering Social Worker should start the Refer to Fostering Panel workflow on Mosaic.
- 3.6 The extension request will be presented to panel by the FSW. Applicants are welcome to attend but it is not necessary.
- 3.7 Immediately following the panel, the FSW must complete the fostering panel meeting date request step, tick that the meeting has taken place and complete the Refer to Fostering Panel step.
- 3.8 Recommendation from panel will be made by the end of the panel slot and panel business support will complete the Mosaic request to the Designated Agency Decision Maker (ADM) within 24 hours.
- 3.9 The ADM will review Form C, Section D and decide whether to approve the extension and notify Business Support.
- 3.10 If the extension is granted, Business Support will complete the step on Mosaic and close the workflow. They should then initiate a new assessment for the Fostering Social Worker.
- 3.11 The extension will be for a further 8 weeks under Reg 25 of the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations 2010. The Fostering Social Worker should rebook the final Panel date.
- 3.12 Should the further 8 week period of temporary approval (24 weeks in total) expire, and the connected person has not been approved as a local authority foster carer in accordance with the 2002 Regulations, the responsible authority must terminate the placement after first making other living arrangements for the child.
- 3.13 Where approval has not been given, then prior to the expiry of the 24 week period, the Fostering and Child Care Social Workers should hold a meeting that also includes the relevant Service Managers, and the QARO. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the immediate plan for the child in relation to accommodation. At this meeting a decision should be made as to whether the child should remain in the connected placement until the child's assessment is completed.

3.14 The fostering social worker should inform panel of the decision reached under 3.11 and only return to present the child's assessment to panel for recommendation when all documentation is available, and the assessment is complete.

4. Implementation

4.1 This guidance will be issued via the Workforce Wordout and hosted in the Local Resources section of the Children's Services Procedures library.

4.2 It is the responsibility of Fostering Team Managers to ensure that Social Workers and others are aware of the requirements of this guidance.