**Section 302.40 Department Service Goals**

a) The Department provides, directly or through purchase, a number of services for children and families that are individually planned to meet the needs of each child and family. These services are directed toward four service goals:

1) family preservation;

2) family reunification;

3) adoption or attainment of a permanent living arrangement;

4) youth development.

b) Family Preservation

When family preservation is the goal, services are directed toward ensuring the children's development, safety and well-being in the home of their family and preventing placement of children away from their family. Families may have been reported to the Department for alleged child abuse or neglect or referred to the Department for services. The service constellation for these children and families may include:

1) counseling/advocacy;

2) emergency caretaker;

3) homemaker;

4) protective and family maintenance day care and child development;

5) family planning;

6) parent education;

7) self-help groups;

8) emergency family shelter;

9) intensive family preservation services;

10) other placement prevention services;

11) referral for substance abuse treatment services;

12) referral for financial assistance and employment related day care;

13) referral for housing assistance or housing advocacy;

14) referral for legal services.

c) Family Reunification

When family reunification is the goal, services are directed toward returning a child to his/her parent's or private guardian's home when the child was removed because of alleged child abuse or neglect or other reasons. Family reunification services are directed toward helping the children's parents or private guardians achieve minimum parenting standards ensuring the children's safety and well‑being upon return home, and preserving and supporting sibling relationships. The service constellation for these children and families may include:

1) counseling/advocacy;

2) homemaker;

3) protective and family maintenance day care and child development;

4) foster family home care;

5) relative home care;

6) residential care;

7) family planning;

8) parent education;

9) intensive family preservation services;

10) referral for substance abuse treatment services.

d) Adoption or Attainment of a Permanent Living Arrangement

1) When adoption or attainment of a permanent living arrangement is the goal, services are directed at securing a new legal status in a permanent living situation for children who cannot return to their legal families. A goal of permanent living arrangement means that the child is to remain with a relative or foster family permanently and the Department has transferred or intends to transfer legal guardianship to the family. The service constellation for these children may include:

A) counseling;

B) adoption;

C) subsidized guardianship;

D) relative home care;

E) foster family home care;

F) intensive family preservation services.

2) When a prospective adoptive parent or guardian has a medical and/or physical condition that may render him/her unable to care for the child into adulthood, the Department shall request that the prospective adoptive parent or guardian develop a back-up care plan for the child that includes a "back-up caregiver" willing and able to care for the child into adulthood. The Department shall assess the back-up care plan and meet with the prospective adoptive parent or guardian and the back-up caregiver to review the Department's expectations with regard to the caregiver's role and responsibilities, the child's needs, available services, and financial assistance such as Subsidized Guardianship and/or Adoption Assistance. The Department shall obtain a signed statement from the back-up caregiver acknowledging that he/she is aware of the child's needs and that the back-up caregiver will assume responsibility for the child's care in the event that the adoptive parent or guardian is no longer capable of providing care. The statement will also inform back-up caregivers for guardianship that any subsidy the guardian was receiving is not transferable.

e) Youth Development

1) When youth development is the goal, services are directed at helping youth live independently or assisting unmarried youth with planning for the birth or care of their child. Youth shall also be encouraged to develop and maintain contact with their siblings. The Department shall provide services to youth for whom it is legally responsible and who are:

A) 16 years of age or older, to help them live independently of adult caregiver supervision and achieve economic self-sufficiency;

B) high school graduates and have been awarded scholarships in accordance with the Children and Family Services Act [20 ILCS 505]; or

C) unmarried and pregnant.

2) The service constellation for youth for whom the Department is legally responsible may include:

A) counseling/advocacy;

B) day care for the children of unmarried youth;

C) homemaker services;

D) family planning;

E) maintenance payments or foster family home, relative home or residential care payment, except that maternity home payment shall be limited to a maximum of 90 days.

f) Sibling Relationships

1) The Department recognizes the importance of encouraging and maintaining relationships among siblings. In order to preserve and strengthen sibling relationships, it is preferable for children to be placed together in one home. However, a placing worker may consider a plan for placement with two or more relatives when the relatives indicate that they are willing and able to develop, nurture and support sibling relationships. When siblings cannot be placed together, priority shall be given to adoptive parents or legal guardians who will agree to frequent sibling visitation and contact.

2) The Department shall provide training for all Department and purchase of service direct service staff, resource development (foster family home licensing) staff, administrative case review and clinical staff, and their supervisors and managers regarding the importance of developing and maintaining sibling relationships and the child's sense of attachment to his/her siblings, the importance of maintaining sibling relationships over the child's lifespan, and the impact on the child if those relationships are severed. In addition, the Department shall incorporate this training in pre-service and in-service training for foster and adoptive families.

(Source: Amended at 40 Ill. Reg. 693, effective December 31, 2015)