**Section 309.160 Post-Placement Services**

a) Purpose of Post-Placement Services

 Post-placement services are services provided to the child and adoptive family from the date of placement of the child in the adoptive home to the date of finalization of the adoption for the purpose of:

1) continuing the activities around the preparation of the child for adoption;

2) ensuring the health and safety of the child;

3) ensuring successful integration of the child in the adoptive home;

4) providing continuing support and placement stabilization in order to minimize the risk of placement disruption and multiple placements of the child; and

5) facilitating adoption finalization.

b) Services Provided

 During the post-placement period, the primary services the Department will provide are those activities that are directed toward:

1) Empowerment of the Adoptive Family

 The Department or adoption agency will help the family recognize successes, understand the stages of adjustment, and assume a decision making role on behalf of the child.

2) Continued Assessment of the Child and Family

 The Department or adoption agency will continue to assess the child and family after placement has occurred to ensure that all existing and potential needs have been identified, and appropriate support services are in place prior to finalization.

3) Assessing Adjustment of the Family and Child to the Placement and Providing Supportive Services

 The services provided by the Department or adoption agency will be related to the needs of the adoptive family and the special needs of the adopted child, particularly if the child is older, has medical conditions, or physical, mental, or emotional disabilities, or is of a different ethnic, racial, or cultural background than the adoptive family. The assessment will explore the level of attachment occurring within the adoptive family and will utilize specific activities designed to promote and enhance attachment.

4) Further Discussion of the Child's Background Information

 The Department or adoption agency will encourage discussion of the child's background to include specific behaviors exhibited by the child in order to ensure their understanding and acceptance.

5) Predicting and Interpreting Behaviors and Problem Solving

 The Department or adoption agency will provide information relating to potential behaviors which may be exhibited by the child and assist the family in dealing with specific behaviors and problems that may arise.

6) Identification of Resources

 The Department or adoption agency will make reasonable efforts to ensure that services are accessible and that referrals have been made where appropriate.

7) Completion of Necessary Finalization Papers and Reports

 Information relating to the finalization of the adoption is provided to the family and efforts are directed toward completing all necessary reports required prior to finalization.

8) Disruption Services

 Although the goal of post-placement services is to maintain the adoptive placement, it may be necessary to provide disruption services when it has been determined that continuation of the placement is not in the best interest of the child and family and removal is necessary.

c) The Department or adoption agency will schedule regular in-person contacts with the family and child following placement until the adoption is finalized.

d) The length of time between placement and legal adoption may vary due to the uniqueness of each situation, but will extend for at least six months unless waived by the court. The actual length of time shall be determined jointly between the worker, the court, and the adoptive parents.