**Section 316.20 Definitions**

"Administrative case review" or "ACR" means a review of permanency planning open to the participation of the parents of the child, conducted by a person who is not responsible for the case management of, or the delivery of services to, either the child or the parents who are the subjects of the review. (See 42 U.S.C. 675(6)). The administrative case review is also open to the participation of other professionals involved in assessing or treating the child, any legal representative of the parent or child, and the foster parents as specified in this Part.

"Administrative case reviewer" or "Reviewer" means a trained professional who is not responsible for the case management of, or delivery of services to, either the child or the parents who are the subjects of the review.

"Case plan" means a written plan on a form prescribed by the Department that guides all participants in the plan toward the permanency goals for children and youth in DCFS custody.

"Children for whom the Department is legally responsible" means children for whom the Department has temporary protective custody, custody or guardianship via court order, or children whose parents have signed an adoptive surrender or voluntary placement agreement with the Department.

"Contact between siblings" means contact between or among siblings who are residing apart from one another and may include, but is not limited to: telephone calls; video conferencing; in person visitation; sending/receiving cards, letters, emails, text messages, gifts, etc.; sharing photographs or information; use of any approved social media (e.g., Facebook); and any other agreed upon forms of communication.

"DCFS" or "Department" means the Department of Children and Family Services.

"Family" means one or more adults and children, related by blood, marriage, civil union, or adoption and residing in the same household.

*"Fictive kin" means any individual, unrelated by birth or marriage, who is shown to have close personal or emotional ties with the child or the child's family prior to the child's placement with the individual or is the current foster parent of a child in the custody or guardianship of the Department pursuant to* a court order*, if the child has been placed in the home for at least one year and has established a significant and family-like relationship with the foster parent, and the foster parent has been identified by the Department as the child's permanent connection.* [20 ILCS 505/7(b)].

"Godparent" is a person who sponsors a child at baptism or one in whom the parents have entrusted a special duty that includes assisting in raising the child if the parent cannot raise the child. If the person is considered to be the child's godparent, in order for placement to occur, the same placement selection criteria as contained in 89 Ill. Adm. Code 301.60 (Placement Selection Criteria) must be met. If the godparent is not a licensed foster parent, all the conditions currently in effect for placement with relatives in 89 Ill. Adm. Code 301.80 (Relative Home Placement) must be met.

"Parents" means the child's legal parents, whose rights have not been terminated. Biological fathers are considered legal parents when paternity has been established as required by 89 Ill. Adm. Code 315 (Permanency Planning).

"Permanency goal" means the desired outcome of intervention and service, that is determined to be consistent with the health, safety, well-being, and best interests of the child. A permanent legal status is usually a component of the permanency goal.

"Permanent connection" means a family-like relationship, consistent with a child's best interests, health, safety, and well-being, that provides safe, stable, and committed parenting; unconditional love and lifelong support; and a permanent legal status between child and family. For a child for whom the Department is legally responsible, a permanent connection may be the child's parents or another caregiver in the child's home of origin. When the child cannot be safely returned home, a permanent connection may be the current or former foster parent or relative caregiver, an individual identified as an adoptive or legal guardianship placement resource, or another individual from among the child's or family's lifelong connections with whom a child has developed a familial relationship.

*"Relative"*, for purposes of placement of children for whom the Department is legally responsible, *means any person, 21 years of age or over, other than the parent, who:*

*is currently related to the child in any of the following ways by blood or adoption: grandparent, sibling, great-grandparent, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, first cousin,* first cousin once removed (children of one's first cousin to oneself),second cousin(children of first cousins are second cousins to each other)*, godparent* (as defined in this Section)*, great-uncle, or great-aunt; or*

*is the spouse*, or party to a civil union, *of such a relative; or*

*is the child's step-father, step-mother, step-grandfather, step-grandmother, or adult step-brother or step-sister;* or

is the partner, or adult child of a partner, in a civil union with the child's mother or father; or

is a fictive kin as defined in this Section; or

is *a person related in any of the foregoing ways to a sibling of a child, even though the person is not related to the child when the child and its sibling are placed together with that person. For children who have been in the guardianship of the Department, have been adopted, and are subsequently returned to the temporary custody or guardianship of the Department, a "relative" may also include any person who would have qualified as a relative under this definition prior to the adoption, but only if the Department determines that it would be in the best interests of the child to consider this person a relative.* [20 ILCS 505/7(b)]

"Siblings" means children who have at least one parent in common. Children continue to be considered siblings after parental rights are terminated, if parental rights were terminated while a petition under Article II of the Juvenile Court Act of 1987 was pending. Children continue to be considered siblings after one or more of the children are adopted or placed in private guardianship if they were in the custody or guardianship of the Department pursuant to the Juvenile Court Act of 1987 [705 ILCS 405] immediately prior to the adoption or guardianship. Step-siblings may be considered "siblings" when the children enter into substitute care together, have a positive relationship and share at least one parent in common.

"Substitute care" means the care of children who require placement away from their families. Substitute care includes: foster family care; care provided in a relative home placement (89 Ill. Adm. Code 301.80 (Relative Home Placement)); care provided in a group home; care provided in a maternity center or a childcare, mental health or other institution, licensed by the Department and care provided in an independent living arrangement.

"Visitation" means face-to-face contact:

between parents and their children who are in substitute care;

between siblings in substitute care who are placed apart from one another; or

between siblings in substitute care with siblings who are not in substitute care (e.g., emancipated, case closed due to independence, adopted, placed in private guardianship, living in home of parent, etc.).

(Source: Amended at 48 Ill. Reg. 12195, effective August 1, 2024)