Cuyahoga County Department of Children and Family Services (CCDCFS) Policy Statement

Policy Chapter:	Client Rights
Policy Number:	7.06.02
Policy Name:	Rights of Children in Agency, Foster or Residential Care

Original Effective Date:	07/01/2000
Revision Date(s):	01/01/2019, 11/01/2015, 09/01/2015, 11/17/2000
Current Revision Date:	02/01/2022
Approved By:	Cynthia G. Weiskittel

PURPOSE: To establish the rights of children with Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS), and those with whom DCFS contracts, to provide child welfare practice and caregiving in accordance with applicable state codes.

SCOPE: This policy applies to all applicable DCFS staff and any agency, foster caregiver or residential facility, or any employee thereof, or of any other institution with which DCFS contracts to provide caregiving services for children.

POLICY

A. No agency, foster caregiver or residential facility or any employee of an agency or residential facility shall in any way violate any of the following rights of children:

1. The right to enjoy freedom of thought, conscience, and religion or to abstain from the practice of religion.

2. The right to reasonable enjoyment of privacy.

3. The right to have his or her opinions heard and be included, to the greatest extent possible, when any decisions are being made affecting his or her life.

4. The right to receive appropriate and reasonable adult guidance, support, and supervision.

5. The right to be free from physical abuse and inhumane treatment.

6. The right to be protected from all forms of sexual exploitation.

7. The right to receive adequate and appropriate medical care, including the right to seek LGBTQ - specific medical care.

8. The right to receive adequate and appropriate food, clothing, and housing.

9. The right to express gender identification via clothing and language in a safe, non-judgmental setting.

10. The right to his or her own money and personal property in accordance with the child's service or case plan.

11. The right to live in clean, safe surroundings.

12. The right to participate in an appropriate educational program.

13. The right to identify or be in questioning of one's sexual orientation, gender or gender expression and to be provided LGBTQ resources and support.

14. The right to communicate with family, friends, and "significant others" from who he or she is living apart, in accordance with the child's service or case plan.

15. The right to be taught to fulfill appropriate responsibilities to himself or herself and to others.

PROCEDURES

A. A residential facility shall include the above list of children's rights in the handbook for residents and their families required pursuant to rule 5101:2-9-15 of the Administrative Code.

B. An agency operating a foster care or independent living program shall include the list of children's rights identified in paragraph (A) of this rule in any handbook used by the agency for children in the care of the agency.

C. If an agency places any restrictions upon a child's rights for more than two hours, the agency shall:

1. Inform the child and the child's custodian of the conditions of and the reasons for the restriction of rights;

2. Place a written report summarizing the conditions of and reasons for the restriction of the child's rights in that child's record maintained pursuant to rule 5101:2-5-10 of the Administrative Code;

3. When a restriction of a child's rights affects another individual, inform the individual, as appropriate, of the conditions of and reasons for the action;

4. Document review of this decision at least weekly. Any such restriction shall be included in the service plan and approved by the child's custodian.

SEE ALSO:

Ohio Administrative Code

Section: 5101:2-5-35   Foster Youth Bill of Rights

Section: 5101:2-9-15   Residential Facility Handbook for Residents and Their Families

Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services Policies and Procedures Manual

Policy 7.06.01   Agency Civil Rights Plan, Clients' Civil Rights and Procedures