

A visual process guide for noticing:  
Intent to Change Placement  
and  
Change of Placement

# Notifications Field Guide

Office of Children's Services

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## Table of Contents

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Overview .....	2
Key Definitions .....	3
<b>Process Map .....</b>	<b>4</b>
Process Detail Pages .....	5
FAQs .....	15

## Overview

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### Purpose

This Field Guide is to be used by current and future OCS team members as a governance document that establishes what, who, how and when activities must occur in order to ensure we notify legal parties of an Intent to Change placement or Change of Placement in a timely and accurate manner.

- Insight and transparency into the steps and key milestones
- An “on-boarding” document for new personnel
- A reference document for internal stakeholders
- A standardized and ongoing repeatable set of processes
- Drives accountability across the cross-functional teams
- A method of discovering opportunities for improvement in processes, tools and policies

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### Version Control

The version and date of the Field Guide is noted below. Always check the date below as new versions of the Field Guide may be released.

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### Use of Documents

The process steps, sub-activities and tools are recommended practice but may require a combination or adaptation to achieve specific results. Use the Field Guide as a “living document” – that is, a compilation of the most current standards, tools, and procedures.

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### Organization

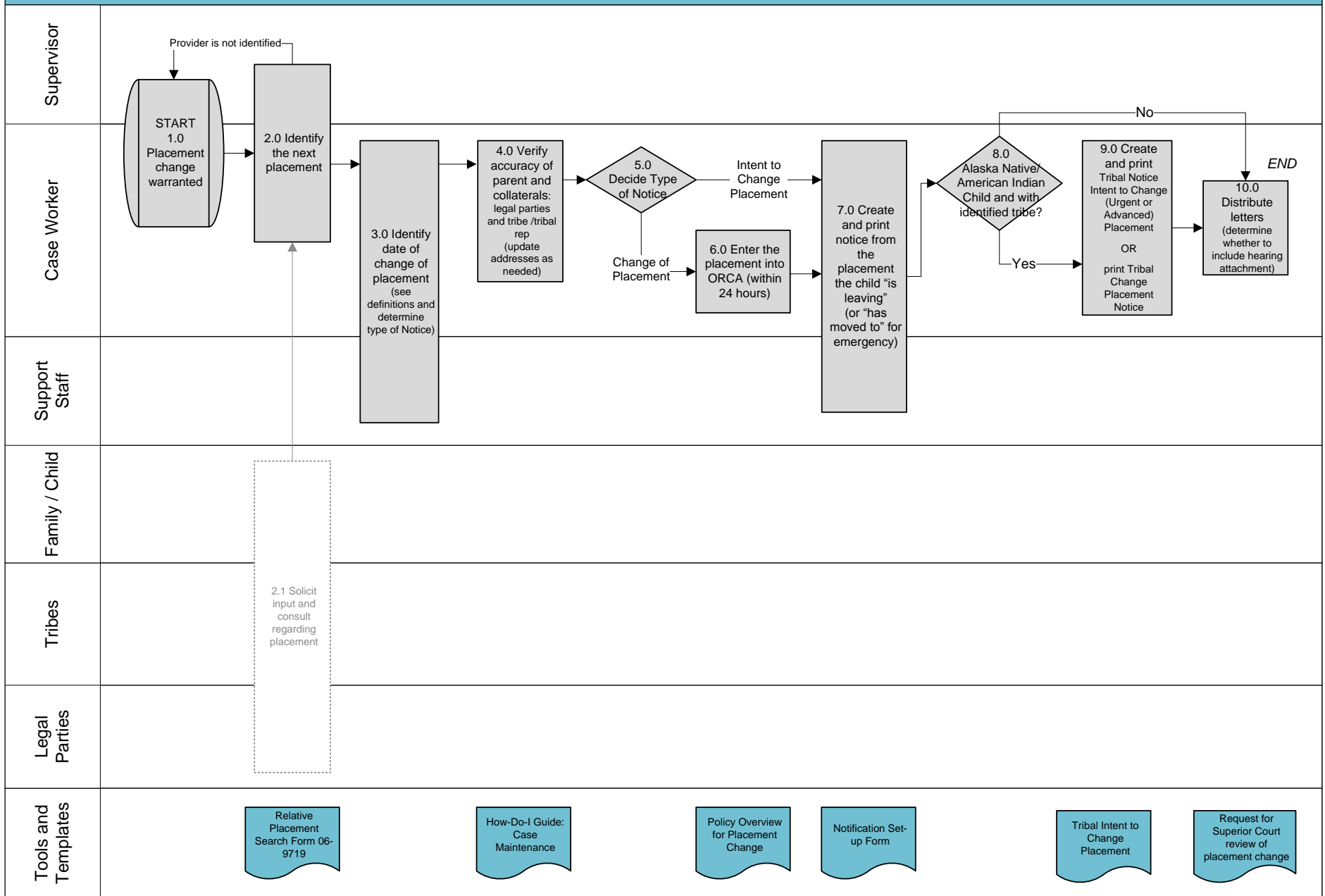
This Field Guide focuses on an overall integrated and visual process map. The process map is a single page and is intended to clearly outline the steps in a simple manner, with additional details in “activity sheets.” For every box in the process map, there is an activity sheet.

**Version 1.0**  
**February 2012**

## Key Definitions

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- Intent to Change Placement (Advanced Notice):
  - Foster parents must receive at least 48 hours before the change (according to regulation)
  - OCS policy is to send 10 days prior to move when possible (note: in many circumstances it is not possible to send within 10 days)
  - All other legal parties also receive notice in advance (when possible, non-intervening tribes)
  - OCS initiated move
- Intent to Change Placement (Urgent)
  - A change in placement will be occurring in less than 10 days (“delayed”)
  - OCS is not instigating the move (e.g. placement disruption)
- Change of Placement
  - Less than 48 hours from move
  - placement change has occurred
  - Must be mailed within 5 days of placement
- Legal Parties:
  - Parents/Legal Guardian or Indian Custodian and their attorneys
  - Intervening Tribe
  - GAL/CASA
  - Occasionally grandparents (consult with your AAG)



<b>Process Step</b>	<b>1.0 Placement Change Warranted (placement change is going to occur)</b>
<b>Process Owner</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Caseworker (Social Worker I/II or Children Services Specialist I/ II)</li> </ul>
<b>Individual(s) Involved</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Supervisor as needed</li> </ul>
<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ After it has been determined that a placement change is going to occur, this step triggers to launch the notification process.</li> </ul>
<b>Input / Output</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Input: Start of process (a warranted placement change)</li> <li>▪ Output: Not applicable as it the start of the process</li> </ul>
<b>Key Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. There are not any actual activities associated with process step as it is the launch of the process.</li> </ul>
<b>Key to Success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The determination of whether the placement change is warranted occurs before this step, but it should be noted that there are many factors and situations where the Case Worker must make an appropriate decision on whether the placement is warranted.</li> <li>▪ While we may informally communicate notices up-front, (before step 2.0) we still must go into ORCA and conduct the process steps formally.</li> <li>▪ If you know that the child is going to have to move, then it may be a good idea (in the best interest of the child) to notice immediately to related parties, however, all steps must be completed from the process map.</li> <li>▪ You may verbalize to other parties that the child placement change is going to occur (especially in remote areas).</li> </ul>
<b>Tools and Templates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ None (although hand-written notes are used to manage the case)</li> </ul>
<b>Quality Measurement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ N/A as this is the start</li> </ul>



Process Step	
<b>2.0 Identify and select the next placement</b>	
<b>Process Owner</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Caseworker (with Supervisor oversight)</li> </ul>
<b>Individual(s) Involved</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Families, Child, Tribes (should be involved for consultation; but may not be involved in emergency situations)</li> <li>▪ Legal Parties</li> </ul>
<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To review available options for placement and select the best possible resource/s based on the needs of the child.</li> <li>▪ To identify the least restrictive and least intrusive placement option.</li> <li>▪ To consult with and receive feedback from families or any supporting parties as appropriate</li> </ul>
<b>Input / Output</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Input: Placement change that is warranted</li> <li>▪ Output: Next identified placement</li> </ul>
<b>Key Activities</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess options that are available for the next placement</li> <li>Solicit input and consult the families, tribes and legal parties regarding placement</li> <li>Select the best option based on OCS Policy 2.7 (continue to explore all options) that addresses safety, permanency and well-being for the child                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reference ICWA preferences in Policy 2.7</li> </ol> </li> <li>Document relative search activities in ORCA.</li> </ol>
<b>Key to Success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In some regions, Team Decision Making (TDM) exists and you can use this mechanism to solicit comprehensive feedback and agreement (you can create an informal team meeting if TDMs aren't in place)</li> <li>▪ If no option is available, ultimately, you must keep trying by any means necessary or the child may not have a bed to sleep in</li> <li>▪ When looking at placements, consider people that the child is familiar with or have a history with the child – the extended support system within the community is also an important connection for the child</li> </ul>
<b>Tools and Templates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ OCS Policy 2.7 has additional detail on searching for placements</li> </ul>
<b>Quality Measurement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 100% placement identified</li> </ul>



<b>Process Step</b>	<b>3.0 Identify date of change of placement (see definitions regarding type of Notice)</b>
<b>Process Owner</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Case Worker</li> </ul>
<b>Individual(s) Involved</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ (Supervisor)</li> </ul>
<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The purpose of this step is so that we can determine what type of notice is required (either Intent to Change (Advanced or Urgent)” or “Change of Placement.” These placement changes are defined based on the number of days relative to the placement change (past or future).</li> </ul>
<b>Input / Output</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The case file and related information</li> <li>▪ Identified date of placement</li> </ul>
<b>Key Activities</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Discuss when it is appropriate to move the child based on the best interests of the child; this is usually done in a team-based setting unless it is an emergency.</li> <li>b. Determine the date of the change of placement</li> <li>c. Provide this information to whoever is responsible for creating the notice</li> </ol>
<b>Key to Success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The date of change of placement is a very important piece of information and it must be either captured directly by you or you must ensure that it is communicated directly to the person handling the notice generation.</li> <li>▪ This step must be followed by action.</li> </ul>
<b>Tools and Templates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ None</li> </ul>
<b>Quality Measurement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 100% accurate</li> </ul>





Process Step	
<b>4.0 Verify Accuracy of Parent and Collaterals</b>	
<b>Process Owner</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Caseworker</li> </ul>
<b>Individual(s) Involved</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Caseworker</li> <li>▪ Support Staff</li> </ul>
<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensures that a notice is distributed to the right parties at the right location</li> <li>▪ Facilitates the generation and distribution of a notice, whether by support staff or in a more automated means</li> </ul>
<b>Input / Output</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Input: Designated case participants, collaterals, and contact information (may be case file or through ORCA page)</li> <li>▪ Output: Relevant parties and their roles displayed on the Placement Notification and Placement Notice Distribution page and accurate contact information displays on the Notice</li> </ul>
<b>Key Activities</b>	<p>Within ORCA:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure all parents are documented on the Maintain Case page, Participants tab</li> <li>Ensure parents are identified for each child. Select each child's name (hyperlink) on the Maintain Case page, Participants tab. On client info tab search and select the child's mother and father. Ensure all legal parties and their roles are documented on the Maintain Case page, Collaterals tab. This includes relatives, tribal representatives, attorneys, Guardian Ad Litem.</li> <li>Ensure parents and relative collateral addresses are accurate. Select their person name (hyperlink) to update their Address tab. The notice will display either a Primary or Mailing address.</li> </ol>
<b>Key to Success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ideally this information is already up-to-date prior to the need for a notice to be generated. Keeping this information current insures that the right people receive notices.</li> <li>▪ All tribal contact information, including the current tribal representative, can be viewed from the collateral tab once the tribe has been added to the child's person record.</li> </ul>
<b>Tools and Templates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Interactive Training 'Placement Transfer Notification' should be completed by all staff members who contribute to any part of the noticing process</li> <li>▪ How-Do-I Guide: Case Maintenance provides detailed step by step directions on how to add Case participants and collaterals, and update Address information on the Person Management page</li> </ul>
<b>Quality Measurement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Relevant parties and their roles display on the Placement Notification and Placement Notice Distribution page and accurate contact information displays on the Notice (target 100%).</li> </ul>



Process Step	5.0 Decide Type of Notice
<b>Process Owner</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Caseworker</li> </ul>
<b>Individual(s) Involved</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Supervisor (to ensure the right decisions are made)</li> <li>▪ (TDM SSA for Anchorage)</li> </ul>
<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Decide what legal notice OCS needs to provide to the legal parties to the case, and then channel accordingly. There can only be one of two options:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Intent to Change Placement (can be an Advanced Notice or an Urgent Notice)</li> <li>○ Change of Placement</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Input / Output</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Input: Preliminary case information</li> <li>▪ Output: Decision on which form to initiate and not</li> </ul>
<b>Key Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the situation to evaluate cause of placement change</li> <li>• Reasons to necessitate a change:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the child ran away we do not send a notice of Change of Placement; we do notify the parties that the child is missing.                                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Once the child is placed, OCS will send the notice form as soon as possible (longer than 5 days is considered non-compliant)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• If the TDM practice is in place in your Region and there is sufficient time to schedule a meeting, this is a good precursory step before making a placement decision                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schedule the TDM, have the meeting, and consider alternatives</li> </ul> </li> <li>• If the notice is Intent to Change Placement, click the checkbox within ORCA whether the notice is either:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Urgent” is when the placement change will happen between 3 and 9 business days</li> <li>• “Advanced” is when placement change will happen 10 or more business days out</li> </ul> </li> <li>• In Anchorage, the TDM SSA would receive the specification as to what type is notice needs to be issued</li> </ul>
<b>Key to Success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ This step is an important task that should not just be viewed as administration, but rather a decision that is made based on the best interest of the child</li> </ul>
<b>Tools and Templates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Case file is used to assess information</li> <li>▪ Case participants / Collaterals</li> <li>▪ ORCA will be used once the decision on which notice to send has been made</li> </ul>
<b>Quality Measurement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 100% of notices channeled correctly and within the appropriate timeframe</li> </ul>



Process Step 6.0 Enter Placement into ORCA	
<b>Process Owner</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Caseworker (may be support staff in some Regions)</li> </ul>
<b>Individual(s) Involved</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ N/A</li> </ul>
<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To capture a timely and accurate recording of when and where the child has been placed.</li> <li>▪ To enable timely and accurate payment of foster payments.</li> </ul>
<b>Input / Output</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Input: Case file and accurate collaterals (date, service type, provider, placement preference and child are correct)</li> <li>▪ Output: Entered data</li> </ul>
<b>Key Activities</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document the placement change within 24 hours.</li> <li>Accurately set up provider record in ORCA.</li> </ol>
<b>Key to Success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If you are unable to document the change within 24 hours, contact the help desk.</li> <li>▪ When placement documentation is delegated to Support Staff, timely communication is key (provide all required information to delegated staff)</li> <li>▪ If a Support Staff handled the child directly then the Support Staff should own this process step</li> <li>▪ Setting up information accurately the first time is critical (to not do so creates inefficiency and may prevent placement).</li> <li>▪ Understand the placement rules (e.g. held-bed and end-dates); there is training available</li> <li>▪ ORCA training will help ensure you enter data efficiently and accurately</li> <li>▪ Attempt to enter the placement within 24 hours; contact the Help Desk if you cannot or encounter barriers</li> </ul>
<b>Tools and Templates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ORCA Interactive Training and How-Do-I Guide</li> </ul>
<b>Quality Measurement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 100% accurate and timely placement data (within 24 hours)</li> </ul>



<b>Process Step</b>	<b>7.0 Create and print notice</b>
<b>Process Owner</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Case Worker</li> </ul>
<b>Possible Individual(s) Involved</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Intake Staff</li> <li>▪ Support Staff</li> <li>▪ TDM Facilitator</li> </ul>
<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To ensure that the notification is filled out accurately and printed so that it is routed correctly and prepared for issuance to legal parties.</li> </ul>
<b>Input / Output</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Case file/record with validation of “intent to change placement”</li> <li>▪ Printed notification form</li> </ul>
<b>Key Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ NOTE: Regions may have slight variations to this process.</li> <li>a. Caseworker determines need for placement change (in some situations, an emergency change may have already occurred)                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In some regions this prompts a TDM</li> <li>• In some regions the worker is required to complete a Notification Set Up form which is given to an Intake or Support Staff. In these regions, the responsible staff person is given an assignment in order to create the notice.</li> </ul> </li> <li>b. Caseworker, Intake or Support staff generates the notice from the appropriate placement</li> <li>c. Caseworker, Intake or Support staff prints the notice</li> <li>d. Caseworker, Intake or Support staff copies and distributes (mails the hardcopies)                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In regions where an intake worker or support staff creates the notice, the assignment to this person is ended after the notice work is complete.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Key to Success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Each Region may have variations to these activities, however, when possible please use this page for guidance; ultimately this is about entering data accurately, printing and mailing the notice</li> <li>▪ Use the Contact icon on the collaterals tab to view all Legal Party and Tribal contact information</li> </ul>
<b>Tools and Templates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Notification Set-up Form For some regions</li> <li>▪ Printed Notice</li> <li>▪ How Do I Guides and Captivate Trainings on ORCA In-Site</li> </ul>
<b>Quality Measurement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 100% of the notices are created and printed in a timely manner</li> </ul>



Process Step	
<b>8.0 Alaska Native/American Indian Child and with identified Tribe?</b>	
<b>Process Owner</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Case Worker</li> </ul>
<b>Individual(s) Involved</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supervisor (if issues arise)</li> </ul>
<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To determine whether the child is an Alaska Native/American Indian Child and with an identified Tribe – and then handle accordingly.</li> </ul>
<b>Input / Output</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Printed Notification Form triggers this step (reference supporting case information as potentially documented on ICWA tab in ORCA)</li> <li>Decision whether child is an Alaska Native/American Indian</li> </ul>
<b>Key Activities</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update person management page information to reflect AK Native or American Indian as race                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure Tribes are identified</li> </ol> </li> <li>If the child is Alaska Native/American Indian <i>and</i> has a Tribe identified, go to next step (Create and print Tribal Notice Intent to Change Placement)</li> <li>If the child is <u>not</u> Alaska Native/American Indian, skip the above step and go to step “Distribute letters.”</li> </ol>
<b>Key to Success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early identification of Tribes and verification of their involvement is critical. If no Tribe is identified, Tribal notices are not required (even though the child is believed to be Native)</li> </ul>
<b>Tools and Templates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notification Form</li> <li>ICWA tab in ORCA</li> </ul>
<b>Quality Measurement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% correct decision-making and proper routing of form</li> </ul>



<b>Process Step</b>	<b>9.0 Create and print “Intent to Change Placement” or “Change Placement”</b>
<b>Process Owner</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Case Worker</li> </ul>
<b>Individual(s) Involved</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support Staff (handles this in Anchorage, other Regions)</li> <li>▪ TDM Facilitator (Anchorage, they will fill out parts)</li> </ul>
<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To document the future placement in ORCA and to generate/print the notice for issuance to legal parties.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ For Intent to Change (advanced) notices: to ensure that sufficient time is provided to legal parties for due process.</li> <li>○ For Change of Placement () notices, the purpose is to inform legal parties of the move and to provide due process.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Input / Output</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Case file (or information) with a child that is both Alaska Native/American Indian and with identified Tribe or Tribe</li> <li>▪ Printed form</li> </ul>
<b>Key Activities</b>	<p>a. Create Notice in ORCA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assignment is required for this task. If you don’t already have an assignment, get a supervisor to create an assignment to you.</li> <li>• Expand the placement services icon and verify that the current placement is accurate.</li> <li>• Click on the child’s current out-of-home placement in ORCA.</li> <li>• From the options drop-down box, select notice of change of placement.</li> <li>• From the placement notification page, select “insert.”</li> <li>• Under Notice Type, select intent to change placement - Tribe.</li> <li>• Under the distribution list, select “add or edit.”</li> <li>• Select the child’s Tribal representative and designate their role as recipient.</li> <li>• Leave all other roles as “N/A.”</li> <li>• Click save and close.</li> <li>• Launch the notice</li> <li>• Select the “delayed” title if you did not meet the notice timeline.</li> <li>• Check the box that says “will occur no sooner than 10 days” if all of the parties did NOT agree to the placement change; OR, check the box that says “has already been agreed upon by all legal parties.”</li> <li>• Enter the name of the new placement</li> <li>• Enter the reason for the placement change.</li> <li>• Enter the court contact information.</li> <li>• Enter the date that the notice was created.</li> </ul> <p>b. Print Notice from ORCA.</p>

- Key to Success**
- Early identification of early future placement.
  - Follow all steps above to ensure ALL data is captured correctly the first time.
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- Tools and Templates**
- ORCA.

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- Quality Measurement**
- 100% data integrity.
  - 100% of forms are entered and printed in the appropriate timeframe.



<b>Process Step</b>	
<b>10.0 Distribute Letters (determine whether to include hearing attachment)</b>	
<b>Process Owner</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Case Worker (in some Regions, Support Staff or other designated role may own this step)</li> </ul>
<b>Individual(s) Involved</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support Staff</li> </ul>
<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To send notices to all identified parties in a timely manner of a placement change.</li> </ul>
<b>Input / Output</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Input: Notice (if the child is AK Native/Indian and with identified Tribe, then there would be a second Tribal notice included)</li> <li>Output: Distributed letters</li> </ul>
<b>Key Activities</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For now, we must manually write down the address from ORCA onto the envelopes (a good practice is to look at the second page of the notice in ORCA to see the addresses).</li> <li>Put notice/s in envelope/s and mail.</li> <li>Note: The preceding steps 6.0, 7.0 and 8.0, along with this step, should be done concurrently.</li> </ol>
<b>Key to Success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Immediately send the envelopes after printing (within 24 hours at the latest).</li> <li>There are tricks in ORCA to get the addresses shown within ORCA</li> <li>When we send the intent to change notice, insert the attachment “Request for Superior Court Review hearing of a Placement Transfer” with the foster parent’s copy of the notice. Do not send this attachment to others on the distribution list.</li> <li>We are striving to more automate the delivery process with technology and other means (we may be able to automate email delivery from ORCA in 2012).</li> <li>Various Regions may split delegation of various notification process steps between Case Worker, Support Staff or other admin team members: communication is key and “delegation protocols” between these staff must be established.</li> </ul>
<b>Tools and Templates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None</li> </ul>
<b>Quality Measurement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% of notices sent.</li> </ul>



## FAQs

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- Do we have to have a placement identified to send a notice *Yes*
- Can we use email or fax for notices? *You can email/fax the notice template if the parties request this option.*
- Do we have to send the superior court review hearing attachment? *You only have to send the hearing form to the caregiver that the child has left*
- Do immediate family friends have the right to request placement hearings? *Adult family members and adult family friends have a right to request a hearing on the denial. In this case, OCS has an obligation to explain the decision.*
- Explain adult family – is it the same process? *Yes.*
- Do we send a copy of the change notice to the court? *No. The court gets current placement updates when court reports are submitted, but is not notified of every change.*
- Who can and can't appeal a placement change? *Any legal party.*
- Do we send a change notice if a child returns from runaway status? *A notice is required if the child returns to a different placement than they ran away from. A notice is not required if the child returns to the same placement.*
- If no Tribe has intervened, do we notice potential Tribes? *If no Tribe has intervened, notify all Tribes that may be the child's Tribe. If a Tribe has intervened, noticing other involved tribes is optional.*