

Article - Family Law

5-525.

(e) (2) To the extent consistent with the best interests of the child in an out-of-home placement, the local department shall consider the following permanency plans, in descending order of priority:

(i) returning the child to the child's parent or guardian, unless the LOCAL department is the guardian;

(ii) placing the child with relatives to whom adoption, ~~]~~ ~~OR~~ CUSTODY AND guardianship, ~~]~~ ~~or~~ care and custody, ~~]~~ in descending order of priority, are planned to be granted;

(iii) adoption in the following descending order of priority:

1. by a current foster parent with whom the child has resided continually for at least the 12 months prior to developing the permanency plan or for a sufficient length of time to have established positive relationships and family ties; or

2. by another approved adoptive family; OR

(IV) ~~PLACING THE CHILD IN ANOTHER PLANNED PERMANENT LIVING ARRANGEMENT; THAT:~~

1. ADDRESSES THE INDIVIDUALIZED NEEDS OF THE CHILD, INCLUDING THE CHILD'S EDUCATIONAL PLAN, EMOTIONAL STABILITY, PHYSICAL PLACEMENT, AND SOCIALIZATION NEEDS; AND

2. INCLUDES GOALS THAT PROMOTE THE CONTINUITY OF RELATIONS WITH INDIVIDUALS WHO WILL FILL A LASTING AND SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN THE CHILD'S LIFE.

~~[(iv)] (V) placing the child [in a court approved permanent foster home with a specific caregiver] WITH A NONRELATIVE GUARDIAN; OR~~

~~[(v)] (VI) [an independent living arrangement; or~~

~~(vi) long term foster care] CONTINUATION IN A SPECIFIED PLACEMENT ON A PERMANENT BASIS BECAUSE OF THE CHILD'S SPECIAL NEEDS OR CIRCUMSTANCES.~~

(i) The Administration shall adopt regulations that:

(1) [for the 12-month period beginning on October 1, 1983, and for each subsequent 12-month period, establish specific goals as to the maximum number of children who will remain in foster care for more than 2 years] ESTABLISH GOALS AND SPECIFY PERMANENCY PLANNING PROCEDURES THAT:

(I) MAXIMIZE THE PROSPECT FOR REDUCING LENGTH OF STAY IN OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF CHILDREN; AND