

(iv) the length of time the child has resided with the current caregiver;

(v) the potential emotional, developmental, and educational harm to the child if moved from the child's current placement; and

(vi) the potential harm to the child by remaining in State custody for an excessive period of time.

(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 department is the guardian;

(ii) placing the child with relatives to whom adoption, 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;

(iv) placing the child in a court approved permanent foster home with a specific caregiver;

(v) an independent living arrangement; or

(vi) long-term foster care.

(3) SUBJECT TO PARAGRAPHS (1) AND (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION AND TO THE EXTENT CONSISTENT WITH THE BEST INTERESTS OF A CHILD IN AN OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT, IN DETERMINING A PERMANENCY PLAN, THE LOCAL DEPARTMENT SHALL CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING IN DESCENDING ORDER OF PRIORITY:

(I) PLACEMENT OF THE CHILD IN THE LOCAL JURISDICTION WHERE THE CHILD'S PARENT OR GUARDIAN RESIDES; OR

(II) IF THE LOCAL DEPARTMENT FINDS, BASED ON A COMPELLING REASON, THAT PLACEMENT OF THE CHILD AS DESCRIBED IN ITEM (I) OF THIS PARAGRAPH IS NOT IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CHILD, PLACEMENT OF THE CHILD IN ANOTHER JURISDICTION IN THE STATE AFTER CONSIDERING:

~~1. THE NUMBER OF OTHER CHILDREN IN OUT OF HOME PLACEMENTS IN PROXIMITY TO THE CURRENT OR PROPOSED OUT OF HOME PLACEMENT;~~