

Executive Summary MEPA

Course Description

The MEPA Training is designed to provide an overview of the Multi-Ethnic Placement Act and how this interfaces with the Adoption and Safe Families Act as well as how this directly applies to child welfare best practice and successful outcomes for children and families. This is a part of CORE training for new workers who will be accountable to the federal and state laws and outcomes surrounding permanency and placement. Included in the content is information on requirements surrounding recruitment of placement and permanency options under the federal law. The course utilizes lecture, case studies, small group interaction, and case scenarios to help participants integrate the information.

Target Audience

This training is appropriate for new workers. New workers will be exposed to new information to assist with beginning case work while enhancing understanding of key concepts and applications to children and families.

Outcome Objectives

1. Participants will receive an overview of the federal Multiethnic Placement Act of 1994, as amended in 1996 to strengthen the earlier prohibitions against discrimination in foster and adoptive placements. For purposes of this training, the 1994 and 1996 federal statutes will be referred to together as MEPA.
2. Participants will receive an overview of MEPA's basic goals and requirements.
 - A. MEPA prohibits all state agencies and other entities that receive federal funds from any source, and that are involved in foster care or adoptive placements, from delaying or denying the foster care or adoptive placement of a child on the basis of the race, color, or national origin of the person or of the child involved or the prospective foster or adoptive parent.
 - B. MEPA prohibits these state agencies and other entities from denying to any person the opportunity to become an adoptive or a foster parent on the basis of the race, color, or national origin of the person or of the child involved.
 - C. MEPA requires that to remain eligible for Title IV-B funds, every state must have a state plan for child welfare services which includes provisions for the diligent recruitment of potential foster and adoptive families that reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in the state of whom foster and adoptive homes are needed.
3. Participants will receive information about the compliance reviews that are being conducted by the federal Office of Civil Rights (OCR) and the California State Department of Social Services (CSDSS).

Ways that Supervisors can support the Transfer of Learning from the classroom to the job...

BEFORE the training

1. Supervisors should talk with new workers about their beliefs regarding transracial placement playing devil's advocate to whichever position is represented by the worker: pro or con in order

to stimulate thinking about both sides of the argument surrounding MEPA instructing the worker to find the support or research for the pro side of transracial placement in the training.

2. Supervisors should ask the worker to meet with the foster parent recruitment team for their agency in order to understand the how foster parents are recruited beginning with advertisements, marketing, target groups, and how specific targeted recruitment enters into the practice while informing the worker that the supervisor will be asking for comparison of the practice to the MEPA requirements.

AFTER the training

1. Supervisors should ask the trainee to cite the reasons MEPA was enacted and how it is designed to meet the best interests of the child.
2. Supervisors should ask the trainee to compare what they learned from the foster parent recruitment team about county recruitment to the MEPA requirements and list how the team meets the standards.