

**MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

**Cover Memorandum accompanying the August 24, 2006 filing of a Notice of Proposed Rule Adoption by the Division of Family and Children's Services proposing to issue revised Siblings Placed Together policy for its policy manual.**

Listed below are the two new or amended rules to the agency's policy manual that accounts for the substantive differences between the former policy about siblings placements that was listed under the old policy as just Siblings and is now listed as Siblings Placed Together.

1. Proposed Rule:

Section 43-15-13(8)(h) of the Mississippi Code of 1972, as amended, states MDHS shall determine appropriateness of placement of siblings.

Current Rule:

Every effort should be made to place siblings together.

2. Proposed Rule:

If siblings are placed together, the worker must select the "yes" box on the Placement screen  in MACWIS. If "no" is selected that indicates siblings separated and worker must choose the appropriate justification from the pick list in the drop down box on the same screen. The worker's Supervisor and the Regional Director must approve any "no" selection. Prior approval must be received from the Supervisor and Regional Director before siblings are placed separately.

Current Rule:

The child's case record and case plan (ISP) must contain justification for the separation of siblings.

## ***Siblings Placed Together***

### **Siblings**

Section 43-15-13(8)(h) of the Mississippi Code of 1972, as amended, states MDHS shall determine appropriateness of placement of siblings. ~~Every effort should be made to place siblings together.~~ If siblings are not placed together initially, diligent efforts must be made to place them together as expeditiously as possible. ~~The child's case record and case plan (ISP) must contain justification for the separation of siblings.~~

If siblings are placed together, the worker must select the “yes” box on the Placement screen  in MACWIS. If “no” is selected that indicates siblings separated and worker must choose the appropriate justification from the pick list in the drop down box on the same screen. The worker's Supervisor and the Regional Director must approve any “no” selection. Prior approval must be received from the Supervisor and Regional Director before siblings are placed separately.

When siblings are not placed together, it is very important that regular contacts be maintained, unless the case record justifies that this is not in the best interest of the children. ~~they must be allowed frequent contact, including visitation with one another.~~ The sibling's visitation plan and any visits between siblings must be included on the appropriate  MACWIS screen.