

REASONABLE AND ACTIVE EFFORTS: Ensuring Timely Child Safety, Permanency, and Wellbeing

Scott County

Permanency Technical Assistance Workshop

Shakopee, MN

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Minnesota Department of **Human Services**

Active Efforts

- Active efforts means not just identification of the problems or issues, but energetic efforts that show an active attempt to assist in alleviating the problems or issues that led to removal of the child from the family.
- Child welfare workers should consider cultural norms of the child's tribe and Indian community in making judgments about the family.

Reasonable Efforts

- The juvenile court, in proceedings under sections [260B.178](#), [260C.178](#), [260C.201](#), [260C.202](#), [260C.204](#), [260C.301](#), or [260C.503](#) to [260C.521](#), shall make findings and conclusions as to the agency's provision of **reasonable efforts**.



Reasonable Efforts

When determining whether reasonable efforts have been made, the court shall consider whether services to the child and family were:

1. relevant to the safety and protection of the child;
2. adequate to meet the needs of the child and family;



Reasonable Efforts

(continued)

3. culturally appropriate;
4. available and accessible;
5. consistent and timely; and
6. realistic under the circumstances.



Best Interests

The Best Interest Of the Youth Are Best Served By The Recommendation Because:

- Youth's current functioning and behaviors:
- Medical, educational and developmental needs of the youth:
- Youth's history and past experience:
- Youth's religious and cultural needs:



Best Interests

(continued)

- Youth's connections with a community, school and church:
- Youth's interest and talents
- Youth's relationship to current caretakers, parents and relatives
- Reasonable preference of the youth if the court deems the youth to be of sufficient age to express preferences:

Why? Accounting and Funding

- Court reviews active and reasonable efforts to ensure children and families are receiving the services they need to remain in the home, or reunify.
- These efforts are also tied to federal IV-E funding.
- If the court does not review these efforts at the first hearing and onward, IV-E funding is lost.



Reasonable v. Active Efforts

Housing Example

Reasonable

- Identify counseling resource and refer family.
- Refer family to housing resource. Pay first month's rent and security deposit.

Active

- Identify and refer family, make appt., pick family up and deliver to the appointment.
- Refer family, help family apply, drive to interview with landlord, pay rent and security, line up utilities, help family move in. Provide skills work in budgeting and house keeping.



Reasonable v. Active Efforts

Visitation Example

Reasonable

- Set up visitation schedule, make arrangements to supervise, provide gas cards or taxi for parents.

Active

- Set up visitation schedule, make arrangements to supervise, pick up parents and children, based on parents schedule.
- Remove barriers, money, housing, work, etc....

System Strategies to Meet Timelines

- Concurrent Permanency Full Disclosure Document
- Review DHS “Paths to Permanency”
- Placement Teams
- Permanency Teams
- Scheduling orders
- Monthly court reviews for children under 8
- 60 or 90 day court review for children over 8



QUESTIONS?
