

**BEST BUSINESS PRACTICES**  
Confirmation of Foster Care Dependency

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this Best Business Practice is to create a uniform procedure for all judicial districts to follow when confirming that an individual had been in an out of home placement situation for reasons other than incarceration. Confirmation of an individual's placement out of the home is sometimes required for financial aid purposes at institutions of higher education.

**DEFINITION: Orphan, foster child, or ward of the court.** A student who was an **orphan**—both her parents were dead—when 13 or older is independent even if she was subsequently adopted. Likewise, a student who was at any time since the age of 13 a **foster child** or a **ward of the court** is independent even if her status changed later. A student is a ward of the court if it has assumed legal custody of her. In some states the court may impose its authority over a juvenile who remains in the legal custody of her parents; such a student is not a ward of the court. Also, incarceration of a student does not qualify her as a ward of the court. In some states the phrase “ward of the state” is used. This is considered the same as a ward of the court for dependency status as long as the student is a ward of the state **not** due to incarceration.

**BUSINESS PROCESS:** Upon receipt of a Confirmation of Foster Care Dependency the clerk should verify that an Out of Home Placement order (OHPO) had been entered in the case for the individual requesting the confirmation and enter the date of the OHPO on the confirmation form as well as an OHPV, if applicable.

Should there be multiple OHPO entries, the date of the order that is entered closest to the individual's 13<sup>th</sup> birthday should be used on the verification form.

If the request is from an individual that aged out of the system, turned 18, or has been emancipated this form could use this process as well.

The individual making the request for Confirmation of Foster Care Dependency must make the request to the court where the case in which the out of home placement was ordered.

Note: If you are submitting your request by mail, you must sign the Confirmation of Foster Care Dependency in front of a Notary Public.

**RESOURCES:**

[Federal Student Aid Handbook 2013-2014](#)

Family Unit, Court Services Divisions – William (Bill) M. DeLisio, Alison Young