

Determining a Caregiver

The following guide includes questions to think about when determining an alternative caregiver for a child in the event the parents are detained/deported. When reviewing these questions, consider what categories are most important to the family given their situation. It is not necessary for a caregiver to meet every criteria in order to be a “good fit” – this is just a way to get parents thinking about what they are comfortable with.

HOUSING

- Does the caregiver have permanent/stable housing? Are they at risk of being evicted or being forced to move?
- Is the caregiver’s housing safe? Does it have heat/hot water/electricity? Is it located in a safe neighborhood?
- Does the caregiver’s housing have enough room for your child/all of your children? Where would your children sleep? Are there enough beds/bedding for all your children?
- Who else lives in the house? Are you comfortable with everyone that would be around your child?

SCHOOL/EDUCATION

- Does the caregiver live in the same school district as you? Would your child be able to go to their current school?
- Is the caregiver able to provide transportation to and from school?
- Does your child have any special educational or developmental needs (ADHD, autism, needs tutoring, etc.)? Would the caregiver be able to meet those needs/continue any current supports?
- Are you comfortable with the caregiver making educational decisions for your child?

FINANCIAL

- Does the caregiver have sufficient income/resources to support your child financially? Would the caregiver be able to maintain this support long term?
- Do you foresee any large expenses that will arise for your child (medical bills, tuition, activities etc.)? Would the caregiver be able to cover these expenses?

MEDICAL

- Is the caregiver able/willing to take your child to the doctor as needed?

- Are you comfortable with this person making medical decisions for your child?
- Does your child have any special medical needs? Would this caregiver be able to meet these needs? What resources, if any, would you need to provide the caregiver?
- Does the caregiver have the same beliefs as you about medical care (ex: vaccinations, holistic medicine, etc.)?
- Is the caregiver able to transport your child to and from the doctor as needed?

PARENTING/CARETAKING

- Does the caregiver have children of their own? What is their parenting style? Are you comfortable with that parenting style being used on your child?
- Is the caregiver willing to act as a parent for your child? Will the caregiver meet your child's emotional needs?
- Does the caregiver have the ability to act as a parent and care for your child?
- Do you trust this person to make good caregiving decisions?

SOCIAL/COMMUNITY/EMOTIONAL

- Does your child know the caregiver well? Would your child be comfortable living with the caregiver?
- If you have multiple children, would the caregiver be able to care for all of them? If your children are split up, would the caregiver ensure that your child is able to keep in contact with their siblings?
- Is the caregiver connected to your community/support system? Would your child have access to other family members or community supports if they lived with the caregiver?
- Are you comfortable with the caregiver's friends/family being around your child? Is there anyone that you feel would be unsafe?
- Would the caregiver ensure that you are able to communicate with your child, if possible?
- Is your child involved in any activities/sports? Would they be able to continue these activities with the caregiver?
- Will the caregiver maintain any religious/cultural practices that you have?

PERMANENCY/LONG TERM PLANNING

- Is the caregiver at risk of detention or deportation? What would happen to your child in the event their caregiver was detained/deported?
- Do you believe that the caregiver would follow your instructions/requests about the care of your child?
- Have you talked to the caregiver about taking guardianship of your child? Are they willing to take your child long term?
- In the event you were unable to return to the US, would you want your child to remain in the U.S. or return to your home country? Would the caregiver follow this request?
- Is the caregiver willing to be an advocate for your child and fight for legal custody if necessary?
- In the event CYF becomes involved in your case, would the caregiver be willing to comply with CYF instructions? Would they pass a criminal background check/home inspection?
- Is the caregiver willing to travel to you to reunify you with your child in your country of origin?