



Policy/Procedure:	COUNTY APPROVED SETTINGS FOR COLORADO WORKS
Reference:	C.R.S. 26-2-706.6; 26-2-709 9 CCR 205-6
Rule/Statute:	3.602.1.E.3.D
Effective Date:	3/1/2022

BACKGROUND & PURPOSE

The Colorado Works program allows for minor parents to receive grant payments on behalf of their own children. Before approving grant payments for minor parents who are not married, emancipated, living with an adult relative or in the care of another adult who is responsible for them, Routt County must identify that the minor parent resides in a “county approved setting.”

Routt County evaluates that the minor parent’s living situation is appropriate in order to ensure the health and safety of minor children, and to ensure appropriate supports are provided to minors who do not have a suitable place to live. Living arrangements deemed appropriate according to this policy constitute an approved setting for the Colorado Works program.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the process that Routt County follows to evaluate whether a minor parent resides in an appropriate place and is connected to necessary supports and services available in the community and through Routt County. The policy will also outline steps that will be taken to find an appropriate living arrangement for the minor parent and their child(ren) if their initial situation is not identified as appropriate.

DEFINITIONS

Assessed need - Any identified need of a client or family receiving CW grant payments beyond ordinary, routine living expenses that is designed to deal with a specific crisis situation or episode of need, is not intended to meet recurrent or ongoing needs, and will not extend beyond four months without a new assessment.

Basic Cash Assistance (BCA) - A recurrent cash payment intending to meet ongoing needs.

Client - A current or past applicant or a current or past recipient of a CW grant payment.

Colorado Works - The TANF program in Colorado.

County worker - An employee or designated representative of the county department.

Statewide automated system - The electronic platform used to calculate public assistance program benefits and grant payments.

Supportive payment - A payment and/or service in addition to basic cash assistance or diversion that is based on an assessed need.

Workforce Development (WD) - The program provided to clients determined to be work eligible as described in section 3.607.

POLICY

Population



A county approved setting is required for a minor parent (or pregnant minor) who is under the age of eighteen and is the head of household on a Colorado Works case and:

1. Does not live with another adult who exercises responsibility for the minor parent's care and well-being,
2. Does not live with an adult relative,
3. Is not emancipated, and
4. Is not/has never been married.

When a minor parent does reside with a parent or another caretaker who exercises responsibility for them, the minor may not receive assistance as an adult and the head of household in their own case. They will be paid as a child in an assistance unit with their parent or caretaker as the head of household. (A non-parent caretaker does not have to receive Colorado Works grant payments on behalf of themselves). In this scenario a county approved setting is not required.

Evaluation Process

When a minor parent must have a county approved setting evaluated, Routt County will take the following steps:

1. The Colorado Works eligibility worker will notify the Child Welfare unit of the need for evaluation of a county approved setting.
 - a. The eligibility worker will provide the name, address and contact information for the minor parent.
2. The Child Welfare unit will:
 - a. Contact the minor parent to discuss their living situation.
 - i. Conduct a home visit, if the contact with the minor parent alone is not deemed sufficient to determine whether the situation is appropriate,
 - ii. For a setting to be determined appropriate in Routt County, the minor parent's living arrangements must consist of a dwelling that is designed for human habitation that is free from anything that may endanger the health or welfare of the minor child(ren).
 - a. Provide appropriate resources and referrals to the minor parent as identified in the Referrals section.
 - b. Notify the eligibility worker if the setting is determined appropriate (a.k.a. approved) or data-enter the information into CBMS directly.
 - c. If the setting is not yet approved, the Child Welfare unit will work with the client to establish an appropriate setting, and communicate progress with the eligibility worker.

Unapproved Settings

Routt County may determine that a setting is inappropriate and therefore not an approved setting, and in these situations, Routt County will take the following steps to ensure that the minor parent and their child are able to relocate to an approved setting:



1. Together with the minor parent, discuss options of places to live which would be safe and supportive for the minor and their child(ren) such as living with a parent, legal guardian or other appropriate adult relative.
2. If living with a parent, guardian or adult relative is not a safe or supportive option, Routt County will discuss with the minor parent whether there are any other trusted adults who might provide a safe and supportive environment to live.
3. If no informal living arrangements with a safe and trusted adult are suitable, Routt County will provide, or assist the client in locating, a second chance home (adult-supervised, supportive group homes or apartment clusters for teen mothers and their children who cannot live at home because of abuse, neglect or other extenuating circumstances), maternity home (a form of supportive housing provided to pregnant women), or other appropriate adult-supervised supportive living arrangement, taking into consideration the needs and concerns of the individual.
4. Routt County may approve Colorado Works for a maximum of thirty days while the designated county department / individual is actively working with the minor parent to relocate to an appropriate living situation.
5. If the change in living arrangement significantly alters the client's circumstances, updates may be required to the Colorado Works case, or the minor parent may choose to withdraw their request for Colorado Works.

If child abuse or neglect is suspected or uncovered when evaluating whether a minor parent resides in an appropriate setting, Routt County will make referrals to Child Welfare by calling the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline (1-844-CO-4-KIDS) in accordance with Mandatory Reporter requirements.

Referrals

Routt County staff are responsible for connecting clients to resources that will help support their long-term economic security, as well as ensuring clients receive appropriate support in a timely manner. The purpose of referrals is to connect clients with various services available within the community. Referrals include but are not limited to:

- advocacy (such as domestic violence advocacy)
- counseling
- prevention and intervention
- mediation services
- physical and mental health services
- substance abuse counseling
- legal services
- food banks

Signed by:

CHAIR, ROUTT COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

DATE