

***Submitting for an Agency Decision Maker Descision for Adoption***





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Submitting for an ADM decision for Adoption Workflow

Decision made to Parallel Plan for a plan of Adoption and Agency Decision Maker decision is required.

Social worker sends email to Adoption Panel Admin (acadoptionpaneladmin@westsussex.gov.uk) requesting a slot and providing required information.

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One to one support session with LAAA around ADM process, CPR writing available.

Adoption Panel Admin provide social worker with available dates, date of submission of paperwork, reminder list and ADM guidance checklist.

**Papers to be submitted by the social worker:**

* Child Permanence Report (CPR) (Quality Assured by Team Manager)
* Chronology & Genogram
* Birth Certificate
* Viability Assessment of all family and friends undertaken
* Specialist/expert/risk assessments undertaken within the court or that are pertinent to submission
* Legal Advice Report
* Adoption Agency Medical Summary
* Adoption Support Plan & Adoption Welfare Checklist

Papers submitted for Decision

**Papers to be emailed to** **acadoptionpaneladmin@westsussex.gov.uk** **by 12 noon on the date of submission**

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Local Authority Agency Advisor (LAAA) completes final review of papers submitted.

Information missing or further information required.

LAAA will provide advice on what is missing to social worker and Team Manager

LAAA completes summary for ADM

Social worker sends finalised CPR to legal for filing

Papers complete and finalised and submitted for ADM Decision

Social worker addresses gaps identified.

**ADM Decision**

**ADM agrees child ‘should be placed for adoption’** -Adoption Panel Admin provides decision sheet following ADM decision

**ADM does not agree child should be placed for adoption** – LAAA will notify social worker, team manager and service manager

ADM Letter to birth parents sent to both parents (if known) regarding each child’s decision.

**ADM provides rationale to LAAA**

Meeting held with social worker, team manager, service manager, Head of Service and LAAA to share rationale from ADM.

LAAA sends decision document to social worker, team manager, CRO, Legal, ASE and adds to child’s file on Mosaic.

Review ADM date booked

1. **Introduction**

The aim of this practice guidance is to assist the Children's Social Care teams with the requirements and process of submitting paperwork to the Agency Decision Maker (ADM) for a 'should be placed for adoption' (SHOPA) decision and ensuring this decision is compliant with the Adoption Agencies Regulations 2005.

1. **Requesting an ADM slot**

As soon as you are aware that you may need an ADM decision email the administrator on acdadoptionpaneladmin@westsussex.gov.uk to request a slot. When requesting a slot, you need to provide the following information:

* Name of each child and their mosaic number
* Name of allocated social worker
* Name of team manager
* Name of Local Authority Solicitor
* Name of Conferencing and Independent Reviewing Officer (CRO)
* The timetable for filing final evidence and date of Issues resolution hearing
* Evidence that the Adoption Decision episode is triggered from a review Permanency planning meeting on MOSAIC
* Evidence that a request for an Initial Health Assessment and adoption medical has been requested. In addition to this an agency medical advisor summary must be requested to meet regulation 15 & 17.

There are four ADM slots available per week and the Administrator will provide a full list of dates when a slot is requested. There is limited scope for decisions outside of the scheduled dates. Any requests for urgent decisions will need to be made by the team manager to the Local Authority Agency Advisor (LAAA), explaining the reasons why the submission could not or cannot be achieved in time for a scheduled decision. The final decision will lie with the LAAA as to whether there is capacity to complete this request. The ADM requires two weeks to review the papers and make their decision known, this will need to be considered within Court and when timetabling.

The administrator will make the social worker aware of the date that papers must be submitted by. The Administrator will also provide a reminder list and the ADM guidance checklist from Tri.x to assist the social worker to write the Child Permanence Report (CPR). However, this guide is not exhaustive. **Papers must be submitted by 12 noon on the submission date. A final review is completed on this day by the LAAA to prepare the LAAA summary for the ADM. Any that are not received by 12 noon will be moved to the holding bay or the next available ADM date.**

Parallel planning for adoption guidance is on tri.x and should be followed for all children where there is a parallel plan for adoption.



1. **Child Permanence Report (CPR)**

The Child Permanence Report (CPR) is one of the most important reports a social worker will be asked to complete. It provides information that will be the basis of how the child understands their history during their childhood and throughout their adult life. The CPR must be completed on the child’s mosaic file, via the adoption decision pathway which would be started by the team manager. The Child Permanence Report should be completed by the social worker who knows the child best, however they must meet the statutory requirements of the Restrictions on the Preparation of Adoption reports Regulations 2005 (ARR). The regulations state:

*‘the Social Worker completing the CPR must have at least three years’ post qualifying experience in child care social work, including direct experience of adoption work, or be supervised by a social worker who is employed by the local authority and has at least three years’ post qualifying experience in child care social work, including direct experience of adoption work’.*

The LAAA can offer one to one support in relation to completion of CPRs and advise around the ADM progress if required. The LAAA can also provide support by reviewing the CPR prior to submission to provide advice and guidance. In addition, the Guide to completing a Child Permanence Report should be read and followed and can be found via Tri.x.

1. **Adoption Medical Advisor Summary**

It is essential that there is an Adoption Medical Advisor summary with all paperwork submitted to ADM. The Adoption Medical Advisor is required to provide a summary or confirm that no further report is necessary. This Agency Medical Advisor summary then forms part of the CPR (section 10).

1. **Conference and Reviewing Officer Views**

The Conferencing and Reviewing Officer (CRO) needs to ratify the plan of adoption. This needs to be clearly recorded on the child’s mosaic file. The LAAA will email each allocated CRO, at least one calendar month in advance of the ADM deadline, to remind them to diary in a time to review the papers and give a rationale of their views in writing for the CPR and add this to the child’s record. The ADM is unable to consider an ADM decision until the CRO has either:

* Ratified the plan of adoption and recorded this on Mosaic, or
* If the CRO does not agree with the plan for adoption, this has been through the resolution process and a copy of the minutes from this are included in the papers for submission for the ADM to consider.
1. **Required Paperwork for ADM Decisions**

All papers must be uploaded onto the Adoption Decision episode within the child’s file on Mosaic. The required paperwork are as follows:

* **Email confirmation from the author of the CPR to confirm papers are ready for submission and have been fully quality assured and agreed by the team manager**.

All relevant dates are provided and are accurate and the social worker needs indicate if they have three years post qualifying experience to write a CPR. If the social worker does not have the three years post qualifying experience, the team manager must sign and verify section 2 and add their post qualifying experience. This information is mandatory, and we must report on this every six month. The team manager must verify by email that they have read all the paperwork and agree with the information provided.

* **A fully completed CPR** with no sections left blank or partially completed (see good practice points at the end of this guide for further information on what to include in your CPR).
* **A fully completed genogram** that includes both maternal and paternal family and all family known to us (anyone mentioned in the paperwork or on Mosaic); that indicates the relationship between the family member and the child and that gives the ages of any minors so that the ADM knows they do not need ruling out as potential carers. All siblings whether full or half must be included on the genogram. If a family member is deceased, this must also be clear. The genogram is a mandatory and regulatory part of the submission to ADM. **Please note that the genogram must be submitted at the time of the CPR and a reflective review cannot be completed without it.**
* **A copy of the child's birth certificate** – the legal name on this certificate must tally with the Mosaic record of their name.
* **A copy of any Viability Assessments/Connected Persons Assessments/Special Guardianship Assessments completed on family or friends.**
* **A copy of any specialist/expert/risk assessments that have been requested by court and/or that are pertinent to your submission.** Such as Psychological and Psychiatric assessments, and Independent Social Work assessments. This list is not exhaustive. These documents need to be named correctly, i.e., type of report name of person it relates to, name expert and date completed.
* **Legal advice report.** This is obtained by the Adoption panel admin team on submission of ADM papers. The ADM cannot make a decision without this legal advice.
* **Adoption Agency Medical summary**. The allocated social must make this request in addition to requesting a joint initial health assessment and adoption medical report. As highlighted above to ensure that the adoption medical paperwork is available for the medical advisor to consider and complete their report prior to the ADM submission date. The Agency Adoption Medial Advisor summary must have been held within six months of the date of the ADM decision.
1. **Submitting paperwork for a ‘should be placed for adoption’ (SHOPA) decision**
2. All paperwork is to be submitted via the Adoption Decision Episode on Mosaic and received by the administrator by 12 noon on the submission date. This enables a final review check to be completed by the LAAA and for any amendments to be made if required. Please be aware that amendments will need to be completed within 24 hours.
3. A submission confirmation should be sent via email to the admin team mailbox at ACDadoptionpaneladmin@westsussexlgov.uk.  It is essential that this email address is used for all submissions and not sent to individuals. The Local Authority Agency Advisor can be copied into the email to enable them to start the final review at the earliest availability.
4. Ensure the full cohort of documents required are submitted (see the list provided above) by the submission deadline. Partial submissions cannot be reviewed and the procedure in such cases is to automatically move incomplete submissions to the next available ADM date.
5. Ensure that there are no outstanding assessment. This includes assessments of family and friends who may wish to care for the child, as well as specialist/expert assessments. The ADM is unable to make a decision until all assessments have been concluded.
6. **What happens after the papers are submitted?**

The LAAA will complete a final review of all papers that have been submitted. This is to ensure that the papers submitted meets the requirements of the following:

* The ADM - all the relevant information they need in order to make an ADM (SHOPA) decision should be included within the CPR report (although relevant reports also need to be attached).
* The adult child – the information is presented in an adult-child friendly style and recognise the need to provide the adopted person with the narrative, the detail, and the analysis of their early life so that they can make sense of it. There should be no abbreviations or jargon terms used.

The completed reflective review will indicate to the social worker and team manager if there are any areas identified where further work is required or further information needed. The LAAA will provide a table indicating which section and paragraph to consider.

The social worker and team manager will receive a completed review via email within one working days of submission. By following all the guidance provided any additional information should be minimal.

If further information is required and a reflective review is received, notification will be given of the date for any final amendments. This will usually be a short timescale of one working day only. This is because there is just two weeks between submission date and the date the ADM needs the review all the papers to make a final decision for SHOPA.

On completion of any further information/amendments, notification should be sent to the Local Authority Agency Advisor and the administrator. **Documents should not be sent; the final copies should be placed in the Adoption Decision episode on Mosaic.** The administrator will download pdf copies for the ADM pack.

The LAAA will then complete a final review to advise the ADM if all amendments have been completed or if any are still outstanding. If these continue to not meet the standards required, the papers will not be submitted to the ADM for a SHOPA decision. Please note that there is no scope for any further amendments following this final review. This is due to the final review being completed on the day the agenda is closed and papers are sent to the ADM.

The finalised copy of the CPR will need to be sent to the LA solicitor for filing with the court by the allocated worker.

The LAAA provides the ADM with a summary to consider and make a recommendation as to whether a child is put forward to be heard but the ADM may still defer it if they have any additional queries. You will be notified if the ADM requires further amendments before reaching a decision by the LAAA.

**Any decisions that are deferred either by the LAAA or the ADM will be moved to the next available ADM date**. If a decision is deferred the social worker will need to liaise with the administrator so that they are aware of any new deadlines or if to arrange a different ADM (SHOPA) date.

The social worker will receive a decision sheet from the Adoption Panel administrator once the ADM has reached a decision. The ADM will also offer feedback on the quality of the reports. It is possible to gain a verbal judgement prior to the receipt of the decision sheet but only once the ADM has considered the submission in full by the scheduled date via the LAAA.

1. **What if the ADM does not agree the child should be placed for adoption?**

If the ADM is not in support of the proposed plan of adoption, notification will be sent to the social worker and team manager of this via the LAAA. An urgent meeting will need to be arranged by the social work team.

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| **Key membership** | Head of Service (chair), Service Manager, Team Manager*,* Allocated Social Worker, Local Authority Agency Advisor (LAAA) and Legal Representative (optional) |

The LAAA will discuss with the ADM prior to the meeting the rationale for the decision and/or the gaps identified for this decision being made and provide this to the meeting. A plan of action to address the gaps identified will be agreed by the Head of Service and the legal advisor will be informed of the need to advise parties of this. A review ADM decision will need to be rebooked with the required updated paperwork completed within the agreed deadlines. A record of this meeting and the agreed planned should be recorded on to the child’s mosaic record by the Head of Service, unless delegated.

1. **Conclusion**

There are short and strict deadlines in place for the submissions to ADM and an expectation that all paperwork will be of a good standard. There is also the following support available to assist in adhering to this.

* This guidance and procedures uploaded onto Trix. Example of a good CPR is available on Trix. Video clip also available.
* Coram Baaf book is a very useful guide, Completing a Child’s Permanence Report by Elaine Dibben, Lyn Bugarski, Nicky Probert, and Julia Wilson.
* Workshops available to teams or individuals on how to complete a CPR from the LAAA.
* There are advanced practitioners in each team who can provide practical support to complete a submission to the ADM.
* Social workers can contact the Local Authority Agency advisor for further support and guidance.
* The mailboxes for admin support have been provided in the above report.

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