

**RCW 13.38.180 Placement preferences.** (1) When an emergency removal, foster care placement, or preadoptive placement of an Indian child is necessary, a good faith effort will be made to place the Indian child:

- (a) In the least restrictive setting;
- (b) Which most approximates a family situation;
- (c) Which is in reasonable proximity to the Indian child's home;

and

(d) In which the Indian child's special needs, if any, will be met.

(2) In any foster care or preadoptive placement, a preference shall be given, in absence of good cause to the contrary, to the child's placement with one of the following:

- (a) A member of the child's extended family;
- (b) A foster home licensed, approved, or specified by the child's tribe;

- (c) An Indian foster home licensed or approved by an authorized non-Indian licensing authority;

- (d) A child foster care agency approved by an Indian tribe or operated by an Indian organization which has a program suitable to meet the Indian child's needs;

- (e) A non-Indian child foster care agency approved by the child's tribe;

- (f) A non-Indian family that is committed to:

- (i) Promoting and allowing appropriate extended family visitation;

- (ii) Establishing, maintaining, and strengthening the child's relationship with his or her tribe or tribes; and

- (iii) Participating in the cultural and ceremonial events of the child's tribe.

(3) In the absence of good cause to the contrary, any adoptive or other permanent placement of an Indian child, preference shall be given to a placement with one of the following, in descending priority order:

- (a) Extended family members;

- (b) An Indian family of the same tribe as the child;

- (c) An Indian family that is of a similar culture to the child's tribe;

- (d) Another Indian family; or

- (e) Any other family which can provide a suitable home for an Indian child, such suitability to be determined in consultation with the Indian child's tribe or, in proceedings under chapter 13.34 RCW where the Indian child is in the custody of the department or a supervising agency and the Indian child's tribe has not intervened or participated, the local Indian child welfare advisory committee.

(4) Notwithstanding the placement preferences listed in subsections (2) and (3) of this section, if a different order of placement preference is established by the child's tribe, the court or agency effecting the placement shall follow the order of preference established by the tribe so long as the placement is in the least restrictive setting appropriate to the particular needs of the child.

(5) Where appropriate, the preference of the Indian child or his or her parent shall be considered by the court. Where a consenting parent evidences a desire for anonymity, the court or agency shall give weight to such desire in applying the preferences.

(6) The standards to be applied in meeting the preference requirements of this section shall be the prevailing social and

cultural standards of the Indian community in which the parent or extended family members of an Indian child reside, or with which the parent or extended family members maintain social and cultural ties.

(7) Nothing in this section shall prevent the department or the court from placing the child with a parent to effectuate a permanent plan regardless of the parent's relationship to the child's tribe.  
[2011 c 309 § 18.]