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Special Guardianship - Support

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Regulatory framework for Adoption and Special Guardianship support

● Special Guardianship Support

the local authority must make arrangements for the provision of special guardianship support services (section 14F, CA 1989)

financial support (SGR 3(1)(a))

services to enable ...children, Special Guardians and the parents to the child ... to discuss matters relating to special guardianship (SGR 3(1)(b))

Assistance...in relation to contact between the child and their parents or relatives ...(SGR 3(1)(c))

therapeutic services for the child (SGR 3(1)(d))

assistance *to enable* the continuance of the relationship between the child and his special guardian or prospective special guardian, including training ... to meet any special needs of the child; including respite care; and mediation ...(SGR3(1)(e))

counselling, advice and information (section 14F(1)(a) CA 1989)

● Adoption Support

the local authority adoption service must include the provision of adoption support services (section 3(2)(b) ACA 2002)

financial support (ASR 3.1.a)

services to enable ...adoptive children, adoptive parents ...parents or former guardians to discuss matters relating to adoption (ASR 3.1.b)

Assistance...in relation to contact between an adoptive child and a ...parent ...sibling, guardian or related person (ASR 3.1.c)

therapeutic services for adoptive children (ASR 3.1.d)

assistance *to enable* the continuance of the relationship between an adoptive child and his adoptive parent, including training ... meet any special needs of the child; and respite care (ASR 3.1.e)

counselling, advice and information (section 2(6)(a) ACA 2002)

assistance *following* disruption of an adoptive placement or adoption arrangement ... or where this is in danger of occurring...(ASR 3.1.f)

Special Guardianship support - other matters

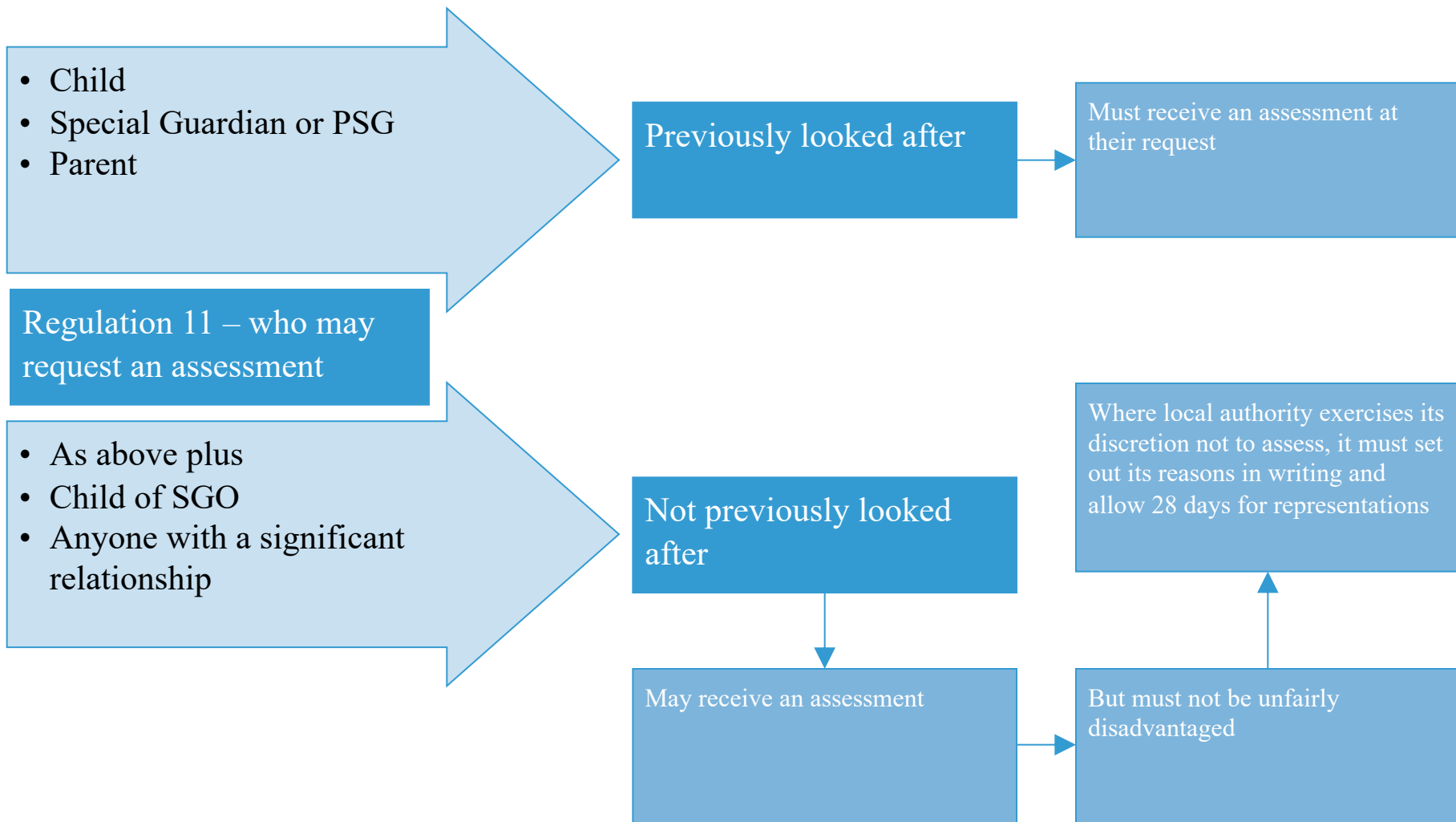
- Services should be coordinated with other services such as adoption support and universal services
- Information about entitlement to social security benefits and tax credits should be made available¹
- Cash should be made available for baby sitting or petrol for contact visits and not be means tested²
- Respite care should be available³
- Support services can be delivered through statutory and regulated voluntary bodies

¹ and will be required by the LA in any means test

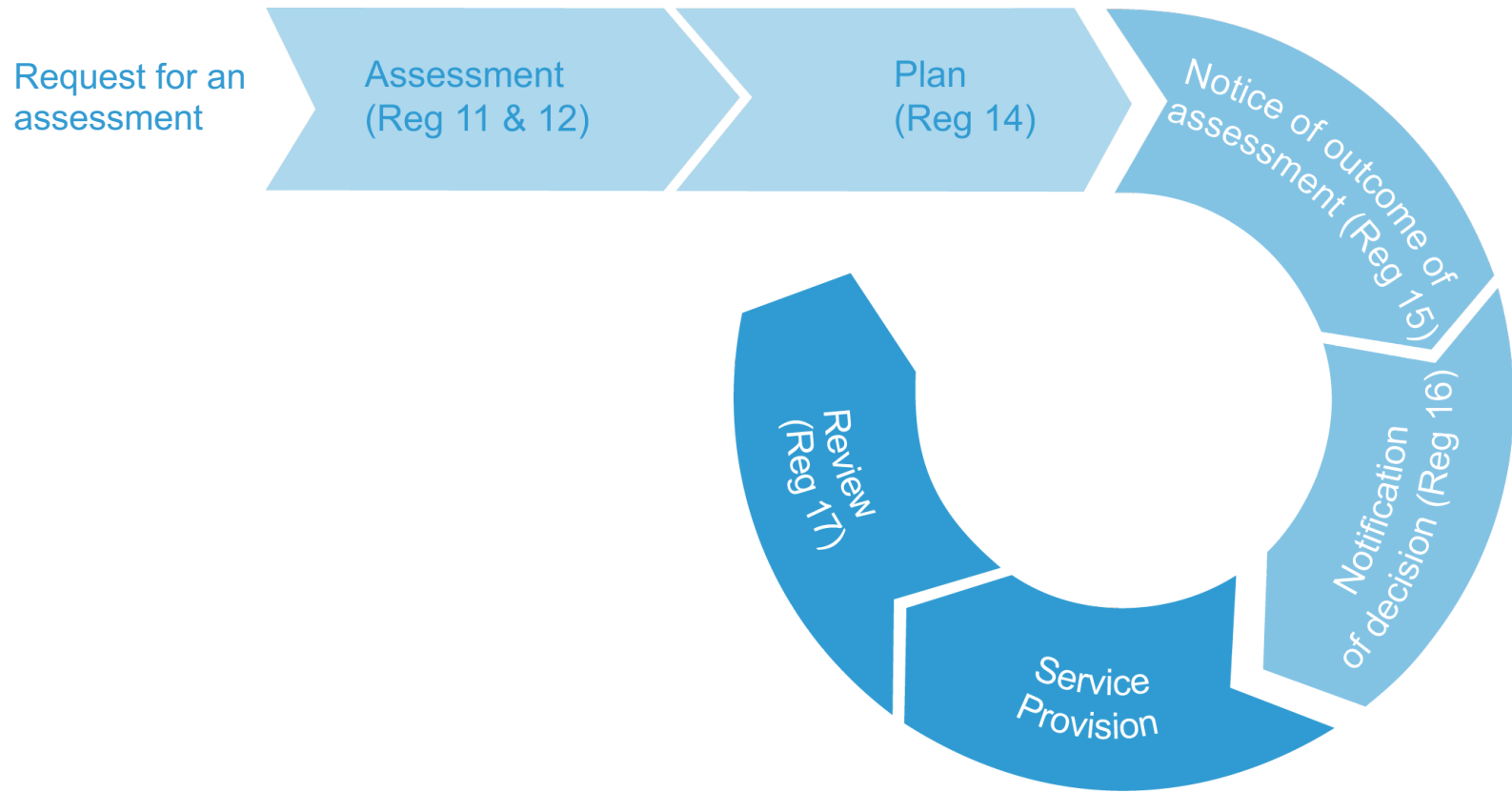
² if the cash is a direct alternative to a service which has been identified

³ provided by the LA or s59 accommodation

Who can be assessed?



Adoption support – the process



Provision of financial support

- Financial issues should not be the sole reason for a special guardianship arrangement failing to survive. The central principle is that financial support should be payable in accordance with the Regulations to help secure a suitable special guardianship arrangement where such an arrangement cannot be readily made because of a financial obstacle.
- Special Guardianship Guidance, paragraph 37

Determining the maximum payment allowable

- In determining the amount of any ongoing financial support, the local authority should have regard to the amount of fostering allowance which would have been payable if the child were fostered. *The local authority's core allowance plus any enhancement that would be payable in respect of the particular child*, will make up the *maximum payment* the local authority could consider paying the family. Any means test carried out as appropriate to the circumstances would use this maximum payment as a basis.

SGR, 2005, Paragraph 65

Support - summary

- There is no evidence that children who become subject to Special Guardianship Orders have needs that are different to those found among adopted or looked after children
- There are however significant differences when it comes to Special Guardians
- When a Care Order is discharged and the child leaves the care of the local authority, the need for assessment and the provision support services is a priority issue whatever the order.