



INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY

Chapter 12: Foster Family Home Licensing

Section 01: Authority to License

Effective Date: September 1, 2022

Version: 4

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POLICY OVERVIEW

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) issues a foster family home license to qualified applicants who comply with all applicable statutes and regulations. The licensing process verifies that a foster family home is equipped to ensure child safety and meet the needs of the child.

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PROCEDURE

Resource parent's homes are categorized as:

1. Foster family homes;
2. Prospective adoptive homes; and
3. Unlicensed relative or kinship homes.

Foster Family Homes

All licensed foster family homes will follow the same licensing procedures and documentation requirements regardless of whether the home is licensed by DCS or a Licensed Child Placing Agency (LCPA). A foster family home license is issued for a period of four (4) years.

Note: LCPAs are responsible for completing the home study for a prospective LCPA foster family home and making a recommendation to the Central Office Foster Care Licensing Team regarding issuing a license.

Prospective Adoptive Homes

Next steps for homes with the intent of adoption are included in policy 12.02 Responding to Initial Inquiries.

Unlicensed Relative or Kinship Homes

If an unlicensed relative or kinship home wishes to pursue licensure, the licensing process begins by submitting an Application for Foster Family Home License. See policy 12.03 Initial Licensing Packet for additional information.

Note: The potential foster home, which is caring for a related/kinship child, will be licensed within the county in which the foster home is located, regardless of where the Child in Need of Services (CHINS) petition has been filed. See policy 8.05 Out of County Placements and Practice Guidance for additional information.

DCS requires all potential foster parents to:

1. Be individuals at least 21 years of age;
2. Pass a criminal history background check including but not limited to a Fingerprint-Based Check. See policies 13.09 Conducting Background Checks for Foster Family Home Licensing and 13.10 Evaluating Background Checks for Foster Family Home Licensing for more information;
3. Demonstrate financial stability;
4. Own or rent housing that meets physical safety standards;
5. Provide medical statements from a physician for all household members;
6. Successfully complete pre-service training requirements. See policy 12.05 Pre-Service Training Requirements for additional guidance;
7. Successfully complete first aid, Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and Universal Precautions training. See policy 12.06 Medical Training Requirements for more information;
8. Provide four (4) or more positive personal references;
9. Demonstrate a stable home/living arrangement;
10. Complete a home-study assessment with the licensing agency; and
11. Agree to abide by the licensing rules in 465 IAC 2-1.5.

Licensure of Noncitizens

Noncitizens are eligible to apply for a foster family home license if they are a Permanent Resident, Qualified Alien, or have obtained Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status. Noncitizens who are not Permanent Residents, Qualified Aliens, or are without DACA status are eligible for a foster family home license only if the following two (2) requirements are met:

1. The foster family home qualifies as a relative/kinship placement, and
2. The noncitizen applicant is married to a citizen of the United States.

Note: All noncitizen applicants must otherwise be eligible in accordance with the requirements of Indiana Code (IC), Indiana Administrative Code (IAC), and DCS Policy.

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RELEVANT INFORMATION

Definitions

Foster Family Home

A foster family home is a place where an individual resides and provides licensed care and supervision on a 24-hour basis to a child.

Foster Family Homes with a Therapeutic Certificate

A foster family home with a therapeutic certificate is a foster home licensed through an LCPA that has been granted a certificate indicating the home is able to provide care to a child who has serious emotional disturbances, significant behavioral health needs and functional impairments, or developmental or physical disabilities; or the child receives treatment in a family home through an integrated array of services supervised and supported by qualified program staff from DCS, a provider that contracts with the Division of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHA) or an LCPA.

Forms and Tools

- [Application for Foster Family Home License \(SF 10100\)](#)

Related Policies

- [8.05 Out-of-County Placements](#)
- [12.02 Responding to Initial Inquiries](#)
- [12.03 Initial Licensing Packet](#)
- [12.05 Pre-Service Training Requirements](#)
- [12.06 Medical Training Requirements](#)
- [13.09 Conducting Background Checks for Foster Family Home Licensing](#)
- [13.10 Evaluating Background Checks for Foster Family Home Licensing](#)

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LEGAL REFERENCES

- [IC 31-9-2-9.3: "Applicant"](#)
- [IC 31-9-2-46.7: "Foster care"](#)
- [IC 31-9-2-46.9: "Foster family home"](#)
- [IC 31-9-2-89\(c\): "Person"](#)
- [IC 31-9-2-99.3\(c\): "Provider"](#)
- [IC 31-27-2-1: Duties of department of child services](#)
- [IC 31-27-4-1: License required to operate foster family home; exception](#)
- [IC 31-27-4-16: Duration of license; limitations; renewal](#)
- [465 IAC 2-1.5: Licensing of Foster Family Homes for Children](#)

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PRACTICE GUIDANCE- DCS POLICY 12.01

Practice Guidance is designed to assist DCS staff with thoughtful and practical direction on how to effectively integrate tools and social work practice into daily case management in an effort to achieve positive family and child outcomes. Practice Guidance is separate from Policy.

Resource Care for Kinship Placements

If a child alleged to be a CHINS is taken into custody under an order of the court, the court is required to consider placing the child with a relative or kinship caregiver. Relative or kinship caregivers to be considered for placement include but are not limited to:

1. Adult siblings including step- and half-siblings,
2. Maternal or paternal grandparents,
3. Adult aunt or uncle,
4. Adult cousins,
5. Parents and extended family of half-siblings,
6. Former stepparents and extended family,
7. Any other adult relative suggested by either parent of a child, or
8. Any other individual with whom a child has an established and significant relationship.

A foster family home license may be issued to the relative or kinship caregiver upon completion of all licensing requirements. DCS does not mandate the removal of related children from homes of relatives or kinship caregivers who are denied licensure, voluntarily withdraw their application, or who do not complete the licensing requirements.

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