



INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY

Chapter 12: Foster Family Home Licensing

Section 02: Responding to Initial Inquiries

Effective Date: May 1, 2023

Version: 3

- [Procedure](#)
- [Definitions](#)

- [Forms and Tools](#)
- [Related Policies](#)

- [Legal References](#)
- [Practice Guidance](#)

POLICY OVERVIEW

Responding to initial inquiries from a prospective foster family home (FFH) is a critical first step in the licensing process to evaluate the prospective FFH's readiness to begin the licensing process and their ability to meet the roles and responsibilities of an FFH.

[Back to Top](#)

PROCEDURE

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) or the Licensed Child Placing Agency (LCPA) will be responsible for collecting, tracking, and responding to initial inquiries.

Note: Inquiry statistics should be reported by the LCPA when requested by DCS.

Upon assignment of an initial inquiry, the licensing worker will:

1. Contact the prospective FFH within two (2) business days of receiving the initial inquiry;
2. Provide general introductory information. These may include but are not limited to:
 - a. Purpose of foster care and/or adoption,
 - b. Roles and responsibilities (i.e., role in Child and Family Team [CFT] Meetings and Case Plan Conferences, supporting permanency, including reunification, as applicable, and utilizing current supports),
 - c. Need for foster care and adoption in the agency and community, and
 - d. Anticipated timeframes to become a licensed FFH.
3. Gather additional information from the prospective FFH. These may include but are not limited to:
 - a. Demographic information of the family,
 - b. Motivation to become an FFH, and
 - c. Eligibility (i.e., criminal history and non-negotiables).
4. Provide basic information on licensing requirements. These may include but are not limited to:
 - a. Background Checks (see policy 13.09 Conducting Background Checks for Foster Family Home Licensing),

Note: Background checks will not be completed prior to receiving an Application for Foster Family Home License.

- b. Bedroom arrangements,
- c. Mental/physical health,
- d. Home safety requirements,
- e. Required trainings, and
- f. An overview of the family preparation process.

5. Enter information received from the prospective FFH in the case management system.

See policies 12.03 Initial Licensure Documentation, 12.05 Pre-Service Training Requirements, and 12.07 Licensing Home Visits for additional guidance.

[Back to Top](#)

RELEVANT INFORMATION

Definitions

Licensing Worker

The licensing worker refers to the DCS Regional Foster Care Specialist (RFCS) or the Licensed Child Placing agency (LCPA) worker.

Forms and Tools

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

Related Policies

- [12.03 Initial Licensing Packet](#)
- [12.05 Pre-Service Training Requirements](#)
- [12.07 Licensing Home Visits](#)
- [13.09 Conducting Background Checks for Foster Family Home Licensing](#)

[Back to Top](#)

LEGAL REFERENCES

N/A

[Back to Top](#)

PRACTICE GUIDANCE- DCS POLICY 12.02

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.

N/A

[Back to Top](#)