

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY	
	Chapter 12: Foster Family Home Licensing	Effective Date: October 1, 2019
	Section 1: Authority To License	Version: 3

STATEMENTS OF PURPOSE

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) is responsible for issuing a license to all foster family homes.

Foster family homes caring for related children must begin the licensing process by either submitting an [Application for Criminal History Background Check \(SF 53259\)](#) or an [Application for Foster Family Home License \(SF 10100\)](#). See separate policy, [12.03 Initial Licensing Packet](#).

DCS will issue a license to qualified applicants who comply with all applicable statutes and regulations. DCS requires all potential foster parents to:

1. Be individuals at least 21 years of age;
2. Have a stable living arrangement;
3. Maintain sufficient income to live without foster care per diem;
4. Exercise good judgment in the handling of a child;
5. Possess physical and mental health that is not detrimental to the health and welfare of the foster children; and
6. Be a married couple, an unmarried cohabitating couple who have lived together at least one (1) year, or a single person. For married couples and unmarried cohabitating couples, both individuals must be approved as foster parents.

A foster family home license is issued for a period of four (4) years.

All licensed foster family homes will follow the same licensing procedures and documentation requirements regardless of licensure by a DCS local office or an LCPA.

Code References

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

PROCEDURE

DCS Local Office Directors (LOD) or their designees are responsible for the:

1. Home study of prospective foster family homes;

2. Completion of final review; and
3. Approval of licensing DCS local office resource parents.

Licensed Child Placing Agencies (LCPAs) are responsible for the:

1. Home study of prospective foster family homes; and
2. Making a recommendation to the Central Office Licensing Unit regarding issuing a license to an LCPA foster family home.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

If a potential foster family home caring for a related child is located outside the county where the Child in Need of Services (CHINS) petition has been filed, the DCS local office where the relative lives will license the home, regardless of where the CHINS petition has been filed. See separate policy, [8.5 Out of County Placements](#).

FORMS AND TOOLS

1. [Application for Criminal History Background Check \(SF 53259\)](#)
2. [Application for Foster Family Home License \(SF 10100\)](#)

RELATED INFORMATION

Resource parent's homes are categorized as:

1. Foster family homes;
2. Prospective adoptive homes (licensed and unlicensed); and
3. Unlicensed relative homes.

Homes with the intent of adoption only are not required to be licensed. Next steps for adoption only homes are included in separate policy, [12.02 Responding to Initial Inquiries](#).

Foster Family Home

A foster family home is a place where an individual resides and provides care and supervision on a 24 hour basis to a child who is receiving care and supervision under a juvenile court order or for purposes of placement.

Foster Family Homes with a Therapeutic Certificate

A foster family home 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.

Licensure of Noncitizens

DCS may issue a foster family home license to an applicant or licensee with legal status of permanent resident or who possess a permanent resident card (form I-551). DCS may issue a foster family home license to an applicant or licensee with the legal status of qualified alien with prior written approval from the Deputy Director of Field Operations or designee.

Undocumented aliens may be considered as a relative placement. Critical decision making skills should be utilized when assessing the appropriateness for placement.

Resource Care for Related Placements

If a child alleged to be a Child In Need of Services (CHINS) is taken into custody under an order of the court, the court is required to consider placing the child with a relative. Relatives to be considered for placement include, but are not limited to adult siblings including step- and half-siblings, maternal or paternal grandparents, adult aunt or uncle, adult cousins, parents and extended family of half-siblings, former step-parents and extended family, or any other adult relative suggested by either parent of a child. The DCS local office should issue a foster family home license to the relative upon completion of all licensing requirements. DCS does not mandate the removal of related children from homes of relatives who are denied licensure, voluntarily withdraw their application, or who do not complete the licensing requirements.

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