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|  | INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL | |
| | Chapter 12: Foster Family Home Licensing | Effective Date: October 1, 2012 |
| | Section 1: Authority To License | Version: 2 |

POLICY [REVISED]

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 Licensing \(SF 10100\)](#). See separate policy, [12.3 Initial Licensing Packet](#).

[REVISED] 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 a 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 31-27-4-16: Duration of license; limitations; renewal](#)
8. [IC 31-27-2-1: Duties of department of child services](#)
9. [IC 31-27-4-1: License required for operation](#)
10. [IC 31-27-4-9: Licensing of applicants providing care and supervision to relatives](#)

PROCEDURE **[REVISED]**

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 family homes.

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 a LCPA foster family home.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

[NEW] If a potential foster family home caring for related children 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 Licensing \(SF 10100\)](#)

RELATED INFORMATION

Resource family 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, [12.2 Responding to Initial Inquiries](#).

[REVISED] Foster Family Home

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.

[REVISED] 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

[REVISED] 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 Placement Support and Compliance, 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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| | Chapter 12: Foster Family Home Licensing | Effective Date: October 1, 2012 |
| | Section 2: Responding to Initial Inquiries | Version: 2 |

POLICY [REVISED]

[REVISED] The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will accept and respond to inquiries from prospective foster parents via telephone, e-mail, fax or face-to-face. The Regional Foster Care Specialist (RFCS) or Licensed Child Placing Agency (LCPA) will be responsible for collecting, tracking, and responding to initial inquiries. Inquiry statistics should be reported by the LCPA when requested by DCS.

Code References

1. [IC 31-27-4-9: Licensing of applicants providing care and supervision to relatives](#)
2. [IC 31-27-4-10: Investigation of applicants](#)

PROCEDURE

DCS staff will forward all initial inquiries from prospective foster parents to the RFCS by:

1. Recording all contact information on the [Initial Inquiry Regarding Foster Family Home Licensure \(SF53204\)](#) form; and/or
2. **[REVISED]** Entering the prospective foster parent’s demographic information into the Management Gateway for Indiana’s Kids (MaGIK) as an inquiry.

After receipt of an initial inquiry from prospective foster parents, the RFCS (or LCPA for LCPA licensed homes) will:

1. Contact the prospective applicant within three (3) business days;
2. Provide general introductory information that explains the purpose of foster care and adoption, the need for foster care and adoption in the community, roles and expectations of resource and adoptive parents, and so forth;
3. Provide basic information on licensing requirements, including training and an overview of the family preparation process; and
4. Provide prospective applicants training information (i.e. schedule and location) for Resource and Adoptive Parent Training (RAPT).

See separate policies, [12.3 Initial Licensing Packet](#) , [12.5 Pre-Service Training Requirements](#) and [12.7 First Licensing Home Visit](#).

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

Inquiry Conversation Outline

The following are suggested topics that could be addressed during the inquiry conversation:

1. Purpose of foster care and role of foster parent;
2. Agency foster care needs;
3. Foster Parent Qualities;

4. Casey Foster Family Assessments (<http://fosterfamilyassessments.org/>);
5. Family matters to consider in foster parenting; and
6. Practical matters:
 - a. Licensing requirements,
 - b. **[REVISED]** Responsibilities of the foster parent, including their role in Child and Family, Team (CFT) Meetings and Case Conferencing, and
 - c. Utilizing current supports.

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| FORMS AND TOOLS |
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[Initial Inquiry Regarding Foster Family Home Licensure \(SF53204\)](#)

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| RELATED INFORMATION |
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N/A

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| | Chapter 12: Foster Family Home Licensing | Effective Date: October 1, 2012 |
| | Section 3: Initial Licensing Packet | Version: 2 |

POLICY [REVISED]

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will ensure that all prospective foster parents receive and complete an initial licensing packet. See Forms and Tools for necessary forms.

[REVISED] It is recommended that the Initial Licensing Packet be distributed prior to the prospective foster parent attending the first pre-service training session.

Code References

[465 IAC 2-1.5: Licensing of Boarding Homes for Children](#)

PROCEDURE

[REVISED] The licensing worker¹ will ensure that all prospective foster parents who enroll in the Resource and Adoptive Parent Training (RAPT) receive an initial licensing packet. The packet will be distributed by the licensing worker:

1. Through the mail when the prospective applicant signs up for training;
2. At the initial inquiry meeting, see separate policy [12.2 Responding to Initial Inquiries](#);
3. At the first home visit; or
4. At the RAPT I pre-service training session.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

N/A

FORMS AND TOOLS [REVISED]

1. [IAC Title 465, Article 2, Rule 1](#) (Licensing of Boarding Homes for Children);
2. [Application for Foster Family Home License \(SF10100\)](#);
3. [Medical Report for Caregivers \(SF45145\)](#);
4. [Medical Report for household Members \(SF 45144\)](#);
5. [Request for Child Protection Service \(CPS\) History Check \(SF 52802\)](#);
6. [Foster / Adoptive Family Inventory \(SF54607\)](#);
7. [Resource Parent Role Acknowledgement \(SF54642\)](#);
8. [Water Agreement \(SF54612\)](#);
9. [Application for Criminal History Background Check \(SF53259\)](#);
10. [Child Care Plan \(SF54608\)](#);

¹ The licensing worker refers to the DCS Regional Foster Care Specialist or the Licensed Child Placement Agency worker

11. [Record of Child Placement \(SF54610\)](#);
12. [Residential Pool Requirements / Body of Water Safety Plan \(SF54609\)](#);
13. [Initial Licensure Checklist for Foster Family Homes \(SF53153\)](#);
14. [Vendor Information \(SF53788\)](#) (attach mock completed Vendor Information form and instructions);
15. [Resource Family Home Physical Environment Checklist \(SF53186\)](#);
16. [Claim for Support of Children Payable from Family and Children Funds \(SF28808\)](#) (attach mock completed Claim form and instructions).

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| RELATED INFORMATION |
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Medical Forms

Medical forms must be completed by a licensed physician or a certified health practitioner (Nurse practitioner).

Completing the Licensing Packet

The documentation involved in completing the packet may be overwhelming to the prospective foster parent. The licensing worker should assist the prospective foster parent in completing the forms as needed. If special circumstances are required for assistance, the procedure is to be flexible in order to accommodate all prospective applicants.

Agency Accreditation

Due to accreditation standards, LCPAs may require additional documentation. This information can be added in the comment section of state forms or documented in the licensing file. State forms cannot be altered.

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| | Chapter 12: Foster Family Home Licensing | Effective Date: October 1, 2012 |
| | Section 5: Pre-Service Training Requirements | Version: 3 |

POLICY [REVISED]

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will require all applicants to successfully complete Pre-Service Training.

DCS will require applicants for a foster family home to successfully complete 10 hours of Pre-Service Training prior to initial licensure.

[REVISED] DCS will require all applicants to complete 20 hours of Pre-Service Training for a therapeutic certificate. The training must include:

1. 10 hours of Pre-Service Training to be licensed as a foster parent; and
2. 10 hours of additional preselected training in therapeutic foster care.

If an application for licensure has been closed through a voluntary withdrawal by the applicant, the Pre-Service training should be taken again under a new application if more than four (4) years have lapsed since the training completion date. If less than four (4) years have lapsed since the training completion date, the previous Pre-Service training hours can be used in obtaining the license. A waiver can be requested to carry forward previously taken Pre-Service training if more than four (4) years have passed. The waiver will be approved through the Central Office Licensing Unit on a case by case basis. See separate policy, [12.19 Waivers](#).

Code References

[465 IAC 2-1-16: Foster parent training](#)

PROCEDURE

[REVISED] For DCS licensed foster homes, after Resource and Adoptive Parent Training 1 (RAPT) , the Regional Foster Care Specialist (RFCS) will inform the RAPT Coordinator of the applicant's completion of the RAPT sessions.

[REVISED] Following the completion of the RAPT sessions, the RAPT coordinator will (for DCS licensed homes):

1. Obtain from the RAPT trainer any written feedback regarding the applicant's training experience using the [Pre-Service/In-Service Evaluation of Trainee \(SF52760\)](#);
2. Evaluate feedback for any concerns;
3. Submit the written feedback to the licensing worker¹; and
4. Place a copy in the applicant's file.

Following the completion of the Pre-Service Training, the licensing worker will:

¹ The licensing worker refers to the Regional Foster Care Specialist (RFCS) or the LCPA worker.

1. Verify that all Pre-Service Training has been completed by each person being licensed; and
2. Ensure training hours are documented in the Indiana Management Gateway for Indiana's Kids (MaGIK).

The applicant is in applied status until the effective date of their license. Issuance of the foster care license demonstrates that all license requirements are met.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

DCS has established a statewide Pre-Service Training program, using the RAPT Curriculum, as a component of the family preparation process designed to complement the mutual assessment process.

FORMS AND TOOLS

[Pre-Service/In-Service Evaluation of Trainee \(SF52760\)](#)

RELATED INFORMATION

Resource and Adoptive Parent Training (RAPT)

Pre-Service Training for Resource and Adoptive Parents licensing. RAPT consists of:

RAPT I – three (3) hours - Introduction to DCS

RAPT II – four (4) hours – Effects of Abuse and Neglect. Classes may be taken on-line at <http://www.fosterparentcollege.com/>; cost will be billed directly to DCS for DCS foster parents . Licensed Child Placing Agencies will be responsible for the cost for their foster parents.

RAPT III – three (3) hours – Discipline, Attachment and Effects of Care Giving on the Family

RAPT IV – six (6) hours – Adoption (can be taken at a later date for in-service training hours; see separate policy, [12.14 In-Service Training Requirements.](#))

[NEW] Note: Exceptions to Adoption Training Requirement for Relative Resource

DCS may provide an exception to the adoption requirement for relative resource homes that desire to adopt a child in their family. The pre-service adoption training required prior to initiation of the adoption home study process for unlicensed relative resource homes, and the six (6) hours of “Permanency for Children” training required for licensed relative resource homes can be waived in the DCS Local Office Director (LOD) approves the exception in writing. The approved written exception should be placed in the child’s case file.

[REVISED] The Resource and Adoptive Parent Training Curriculum

Incorporates 10 hours of training both in person and online and focuses on the concepts of the following competencies:

1. Teambuilding;
2. Impact of Abuse and Neglect on Child Development;
3. Attachment, Separation, and Placement ;
4. Discipline; and
5. Effects of Care Giving on the Family.

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| | Section 6: Medical Training Requirements | Version: 2 |

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The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will require a licensee to complete a Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), First Aid, and Universal Precautions training prior to initial licensure. Additionally, each certification must be current in order to maintain a foster family home license.

Code References

N/A

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| PROCEDURE |
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[REVISED] The licensing worker¹ will ensure that training accepted for credit meets the minimum requirements of these guidelines:

1. Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) must be completed at least every two (2) years. The program must be certified in pediatric CPR and pediatric airway obstruction under the [American Heart Association guidelines](#). On-line, internet based courses are **not** acceptable;
2. First Aid training must include first aid for seizures, poisoning, and hemorrhaging. Any nationally accredited agency that provides First Aid Training to public and private agencies is acceptable. On-line, internet based courses are **not** acceptable; and
3. Universal Precautions training must cover blood-borne pathogens which include, but are not limited to, hepatitis B virus (HBV), hepatitis C virus (HCV), human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), and the transmission of communicable diseases. Any nationally accredited agency that provides Universal Precautions training to public and private agencies is acceptable. The trainer must be certified. On-line, internet based courses are acceptable.

The foster family home applicant or licensee will submit a copy of the certificate of completion to the licensing worker.

Exception: Prior medical training received as part of applicant's profession (e.g. Medical Doctor (M.D.), Registered Nurse (R.N.), paramedic, etc) may replace the training requirements upon approval by the Central Office Licensing Unit. See separate policy, [12.20 Variances](#).

The licensing worker will:

1. Ensure documentation of the completed medical training is entered in the Management Gateway for Indiana's Kids (MaGIK); and

¹ The licensing worker refers to the Regional Foster Care Specialist (RFCS) or the Licensed Child Placing Agency (LCPA) worker.

2. Maintain copies of certificates and documentation supporting completion of training.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

N/A

FORMS AND TOOLS

1. [American Heart Association guidelines](#)
2. [American Red Cross Learning Center](#)

RELATED INFORMATION

[NEW] DCS has a contract with the Red Cross to offer instructor led classroom courses for foster parents licensed by DCS. The courses offered are Standard First Aid with CPR for Adults, Children, and Infants. The Blood-borne Pathogens/Universal Precautions Training is only offered on-line. These courses will be billed directly to DCS. Registration is to be completed on-line at the [American Red Cross Learning Center](#). A coupon code must be obtained from the RFCS prior to registering for direct billing. The Red Cross contract is only valid for DCS foster homes and does not include homes licensed by LCPAs.

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| | Chapter 12: Foster Family Home Licensing | Effective Date: November 1, 2012 |
| | Section 7: Licensing Home Visits | Version: 2 |

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| POLICY [REVISED] |
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[REVISED] The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS), its designee, or a licensing worker will conduct a minimum of 2 visits to the home of the prospective foster family for the purpose of assessing the physical environment of the home and engaging in a thoughtful dialogue with all members of the household about foster parenting or adoption.

[REVISED] Dually licensed homes are licensed to provide both foster care and licensed child care or adult foster care. Licensing of child care homes is done by Family Social Services Agency (FSSA) Division of Family Resources and adult foster care homes is done by the Bureau of Developmental Disability Services (BDDS). In the event that a licensed home is a foster family home and a child care home/adult foster care home, licensing workers from each agency are to coordinate the licensing process. A foster family home must have DCS approval prior to being licensed for daycare/adult foster care. A waiver will be required for homes seeking to be dually licensed.

Code References

1. [IC 31-27-4-4: Consultation with fire prevention and building safety commission](#)
2. [IC 31-27-4-10: Investigation of applicants](#)
3. [IC 31-27-4-16: Duration of license; limitations; renewal](#)
4. [IC 31-27-4-18: Inspection of foster family homes](#)
5. [IC 31-27-4-19: Records of monitoring activities and inspections](#)
6. [IC 31-27-4-20: Cooperation by licensees](#)

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| PROCEDURE |
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[REVISED] The licensing worker will:

1. Ensure that the applicant has received the forms in the licensing packet prior to the first licensing visit using the [Initial Licensure Checklist for Foster Family Homes \(SF53153\)](#). See separate policy, [12.3 Initial Licensing Packet](#);
2. Schedule the first home visit concurrently with the Pre-service Training phase;
3. Define the goals of the visit prior to meeting with the foster family based on the [Casey Foster Family Assessments](#) and other indicators of the family's readiness to foster;
4. At the home visits:
 - a. Ensure the applicant has received the [Foster Parent Resource Guide](#);
 - b. Review and discuss the content of all forms with the applicant and answer any questions;
 - c. Provide the applicant with assistance in completing the forms, if necessary; and
 - d. Collect all completed forms.

[REVISED] Note: The medical forms, child care plan, residential pool requirements/body of water safety plan and water analysis forms may be completed and returned as late as at the second home visit.

5. Discuss family member feelings (attitudes, expectations, concerns) about resource parenting;
6. Discuss the family's [Child Care Plan \(SF54608\)](#);
7. Conduct an assessment of the physical environment of the home, documenting findings on the [Resource Family Home Physical Environment Checklist \(SF53186\)](#);
8. Discuss any concerns about the physical environment of the home with the applicant;
9. Verify the identify of all household members. See separate policy, [2.9 Verifying Identity](#);
10. Verify marriage and divorce status, if applicable;
11. Complete [Financial Profile](#), included in the [Foster / Adoptive Family Inventory \(SF54607\)](#);
12. Ensure that appropriate background checks have been completed. See separate policy, [12.19 Conducting Background Checks for Foster Family Home Licensing](#).
13. Request a waiver from the Central Office Foster Care Licensing Unit for the home to be dually licensed. See separate policy, [12.19 Waivers](#).

[REVISED] When the licensing worker receives the forms from the applicant, copies of the [Child Care Plan \(SF54608\)](#) and [Resource Parent Role Acknowledgement \(SF54642\)](#) forms should be:

1. Given to the applicant; and
2. Placed in the licensing file.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE [REVISED]

Discussing Family Member Feelings About Fostering

When adults make a decision to become foster parents they also make the decision for their children to become part of a family that fosters. Fostering is a very significant change in anyone's life, even more so for the children within the family. Children, even within the same family, will often have very different views about the prospect of becoming a family that fosters.

Initially many children are very enthusiastic about the idea of fostering. During the course of the assessment, if the child is capable of understanding, the licensing worker must talk to him or her about the idea of a foster child coming to stay. The licensing worker will evaluate how realistic the children's expectations are and how difficult or easily they might adapt to life within a family that fosters. The licensing worker must talk to them regularly throughout the application process. The parents should have regular family meetings to discuss how being a resource family will affect each family member and how current or future difficulties will be addressed.

Children's views may change from loving fostering to hating it, particularly in the early stages when the expectations of the children come up against the realities of the situation. For example, a child may have been looking forward to a new playmate that they could play football and other sports with, but then later find out that the foster child is not interested in sports and only wants to play computer games. This kind of disappointment can be quite hard on him or her.

The licensing worker should also bear in mind that many children will not want to tell their parents about their dissatisfactions with fostering, for fear they might be seen as letting their parents down. The licensing worker should continuously explore how the children are feeling

and coping with fostering. This should continue even after they have fostered for a few years. As children mature, they may be more open to the idea of having foster children in their home at certain times and less open at others. It is not uncommon for a foster family to take a break from fostering for short periods of time to focus on their family and children.

Evaluating a home for dual license

The Licensing Unit should be sent the following information when evaluating whether a family or individual should be granted a waiver to be dually licensed:

1. How many biological children does the foster parent have in the home and what are their ages?
2. Have any of the household children been adopted and if so what are their current needs?
3. How many children does the foster parent provide daycare for and what are their ages? If it is adult foster care, how many adults do they provide care for or plan to provide care for and what are their needs?
4. Does the foster parent have anyone who works in the daycare on a regular basis and if so, what is their schedule? Does this person provide care for daycare children and foster children?
5. What is the family structure within the home?
6. Who are the foster family's support system?
7. Check the following link: www.childcarefinder.in.gov and note if there are any concerns regarding the daycare license.

FORMS AND TOOLS [REVISED]

1. [Resource Parent Role Acknowledgement \(SF54642\)](#);
2. [Child Care Plan \(SF54608\)](#);
3. [Initial Licensure Checklist for Foster Family Homes \(SF53153\)](#);
4. [Casey Foster Family Assessments](#)
5. www.childcarefinder.in.gov

RELATED INFORMATION

N/A

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|  | INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL | |
| | Chapter 12: Foster Family Home Licensing | Effective Date: October 1, 2012 |
| | Section 8: Receipt of Application | Version: 2 |

POLICY [REVISED]

Licensure applications will include the [Application for Foster Family Home License \(SF10100\)](#) and the [Application for Criminal History Background Check \(SF53259\)](#).

The application date for a foster family home license shall be the date the [Application for Foster Family Home License \(SF10100\)](#) and the [Application for Criminal History Background Check \(SF53259\)](#) are signed, according to whichever is signed first.

[REVISED] Relative families who have placement of a related child must sign the [Application for Criminal History Background Check \(SF53259\)](#) on or prior to the date of placement to begin the licensing process.

[REVISED] The application for a foster family home license will be completed by the applicant and should be collected by the licensing worker¹ at the earliest possible time in the licensing process.

[REVISED] Once an application has been received, one (1) of the following disposition decisions will occur:

1. The applicant becomes licensed;
2. The application is denied;
3. The application has been voluntarily withdrawn by the applicant; or
4. The application will automatically be closed by the Management Gateway for Indiana's Kids (MaGIK) 365 days from the application date if one (1) of the three (3) above dispositions has not occurred.

Note: If the applicant is in the revocation process, they may not voluntarily close their license unless DCS consents. See separate policy, [12.21 Revocations](#).

Code References

[IC 31-27-4-5: Applying for license](#)

PROCEDURE

Upon receipt of the [Application for Foster Family Home License \(SF10100\)](#) or [Application for Criminal History Background Check \(SF53259\)](#), the licensing worker will:

1. Input the application date and other information into MaGIK;
2. Determine if all required documentation has been provided by the agency or individual;

¹ The licensing worker refers to the DCS Regional Foster Care Specialist (RFCS) or the Licensed Child Placing Agency worker

3. Notify the applicant in writing of any incomplete forms or omission in the documentation and the date forms are due by utilizing the [Initial Licensure Checklist for Foster Family Homes \(SF53153\)](#); and
4. Mail a minimum of four (4) [Request for Personal Reference Statement for Foster Family Home License Applicants \(SF53203\)](#) to the applicant's references.

If an applicant chooses to withdraw an application for licensure prior to becoming licensed, the applicant will complete and sign a [Voluntary Withdrawal of Application for Licensure or Relinquishment of Foster Family Home License and Exit Survey \(SF53237\)](#). This will document that the applicant is voluntarily withdrawing the application for licensure.

Upon receipt of a [Voluntary Withdrawal of Application for Licensure or Relinquishment of Foster Family Home License and Exit Survey \(SF53237\)](#), the licensing worker will:

1. Process the voluntary closure in MaGIK; and
2. Submit the recommendation electronically for approval:
 - a. The DCS local office licensing worker submit to their DCS Local Office Director or designee, and
 - b. Licensed Child Placing Agency (LCPA) licensing worker submit to the Central Office Licensing Unit.

Upon receipt of the recommendation, the Central Office Licensing Unit Manager will process the recommendation in MaGIK.

If a license is being denied or revoked, see separate policies:

1. [12.18 License Denials](#)
2. [12.21 Revocations](#)

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

N/A

FORMS AND TOOLS

1. [Application for Foster Family Home License \(SF10100\)](#)
2. [Application for Criminal History Background Check \(SF53259\)](#)
3. [Request for Personal Reference Statement for Foster Family Home License Applicants \(SF5320\)](#)
4. [Initial Licensure Checklist for Foster Family Homes \(SF53153\)](#)
5. [Voluntary Withdrawal of Application for Licensure or Relinquishment of Foster Family Home License and Exit Survey \(SF53237\)](#)

RELATED INFORMATION

N/A

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| | Chapter 12: Foster Family Home Licensing | Effective Date: October 1, 2012 |
| | Section 11: Resource Family Preparation Assessment | Version: 3 |

POLICY

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will require all foster family home studies to be prepared using the [Resource Family Preparation Assessment](#) summary outline. For foster family homes licensed by a local DCS office, the [Casey Foster Family Assessments](#) should be utilized to support the summary. Licensing Child Placement Agencies (LCPAs) should use the [Child Behavioral Health Challenges](#) to support their summary.

The family preparation assessment summary must be completed within 30 business days of the final home visit. An addendum will be completed when any significant changes occur within the foster family home.

Code References

1. [IC 31-19-8-5: Agency report and recommendation; filing requirements; waiver of report](#)
2. [IC 31-9-2-51: "Hard to place child" or "hard to place children"](#)
3. [IC 31-19-8-6: Contents of report](#)

PROCEDURE

[REVISED] The licensing worker¹ will complete the [Resource Family Preparation Assessment](#) summary outline by:

1. Incorporating feedback from prospective foster family interviews completed during the first and second licensing home visits, information from the training feedback form, and information from other required forms and the [Casey Foster Family Assessments](#);
2. Conducting additional interviews or obtaining additional records as necessary; and
3. Documenting the licensing recommendation and supporting evidence within the summary.

Following the completion of the [Resource Family Preparation Assessment](#) summary, the licensing worker will:

1. Meet with the applicant to have the applicant review the summary, submit any feedback; and
2. Complete the [Resource Family Preparation Assessment Cover/Signature Page \(SF 52795\)](#) for the recommendation of the summary following a team or supervisory staffing.

[REVISED] The [Resource Family Preparation Assessment](#) summary must be updated by completing an addendum when any significant changes occur within the foster family home, such as but not limited to:

1. Change in address;

¹ The licensing worker refers to the DCS Regional Foster Care Specialist (RFCS) or the Licensed Child Placing Agency worker

2. Change in employment or finances of the home;
3. Additional household members being added or deleted from the family composition; and
4. Changes to the living environment that affect the structure of the home.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

The Resource Family Home Preparation process is essential to provide the family with the information and skills required to meet the needs of the child in placement and, therefore, to avoid placement disruptions. The Resource Family Preparation Process consists of submission of the application, completion of background checks, and gathering data, sharing information about the children, the agency, and policies, and mutually assessing the applicant's willingness and ability to foster a certain type of child. During home visits, the licensing worker will guide the process and gather appropriate data. The result of this process is a written summary (home study) prepared by the licensing worker and signed by the foster parents.

FORMS AND TOOLS

1. [Resource Family Preparation Assessment \(SF 52795\)](#) - Cover page/Signature page
2. [Resource Family Preparation Assessment](#) Summary Outline
3. [Casey Foster Family Assessments](#)

RELATED INFORMATION

N/A

| | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
|  | INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL | |
| | Chapter 12: Foster Family Home Licensing | Effective Date: October 1, 2012 |
| | Section 12: Foster Family Home Capacity | Version: 2 |

POLICY [REVISED]

[REVISED] The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will require the foster family home to only care for the number of children authorized on the license and only at the address that is designated by the license.

The maximum capacity requirements are based on the age, needs and category of supervision of the child.

A foster family home may not provide supervision and care as a foster family home for more than:

1. Five (5) individuals, each of whom is either:
 - a. Less than 18 years of age, or
 - b. At least 18 years of age and is receiving care and supervision under an order of a juvenile court.
2. Four (4) of the five (5) individuals are children less than six (6) years of age.

Note: The maximum capacity includes the children in the home for whom the foster parent is a parent, stepparent, guardian, custodian, or other related or non-related children for whom the provider provides continuous and direct care and supervision.

A foster family home with a therapeutic certification may not provide supervision and care as a therapeutic foster family home to more than four (4) total children at the same time; including the children for whom the foster family home is a parent, stepparent, guardian, custodian, or other relative. Only two (2) of the four (4) may be foster children.

Note: The capacity for a foster home with a therapeutic certificate will also apply to all licensed homes who care for a therapeutic child.

DCS may grant a child specific exception to capacity when it is determined that:

1. The placement of siblings in the same foster family home is desirable;
2. A foster child has an established, meaningful relationship with the foster family; and/or
3. It is otherwise in the foster child's best interest.

DCS may grant a general exception for the foster family home when it is in the best interest of the foster children.

A foster family home that has a therapeutic foster child placed with them may not accept a non-related child who is not therapeutic unless it is in the best interest of the child being placed. An exception must be granted for non-siblings.

Code Reference

1. [IC 31-27-4-1: License required for operation](#)
2. [IC 31-27-4-8: Supervision and care limits](#)

PROCEDURE

[REVISED] Prior to requesting initial capacity for a foster family home or an exception to capacity, the licensing worker¹ will:

1. Consider the number, ages, and special needs requirements of each child (household and foster) already in the home;
2. Determine that the housing requirements found on the [Foster Family Home Physical Environmental Checklist \(SF53186\)](#) can accommodate the number of children who need placement;
3. Evaluate the ability of the foster parent to meet the needs of the children currently in the home, in addition to the foster children;
4. If an exception is required, submit an exception request **prior** to placing children in the home (see practice guidance section).
 - a. For emergency placements occurring during business hours, submit an **urgent** email to the Foster Care Licensing Unit including the resource ID number and the required information below
 - b. If an emergency occurs after business hours or over the weekend, submit all required information the next business day.
5. Request an exception in the Management Gateway For Indiana's Kids (MaGIK).

Note: Once the exception is no longer needed, a request to reduce capacity should be submitted via MaGIK.

The Central Office Licensing Unit Manager or designee will:

1. Print the approved license reflecting the capacity; and
2. **[REVISED]** Mail the license to the licensing worker so it can be forwarded to the foster family and a copy should be retained for Central Office files.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

[NEW] Below is a list of necessary information needed for the Central Office Foster Care Licensing Unit to evaluate a request for a **child specific** exception to capacity. Use the outline below as a format for submitting information regarding exception requests:

1. The number of household children under the age of 18 (e.g. biological, adopted and guardianship), in the home, their age, sex, category of supervision, and a brief summary of their behavioral, emotional, and physical needs;
2. The number of foster children currently in the home and a brief summary of their

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- behavioral, emotional and physical needs. Include their age, sex and category of supervision;
3. The names of the children who need placement and a brief summary of their behavioral, emotional and physical needs at the time of placement, including category of supervision;
 4. A description of the foster family's support system;
 5. A description of the foster parents' work schedules and their child care plan;
 6. Written statements (email or letter) from each FCM who has foster children placed in the home detailing whether they are in support of the additional child being placed in the home;
 7. The experience of the foster family:
 - a. number of years fostering,
 - b. areas of expertise, or
 - c. any specific training they have received to meet the needs of the children in their home.
 8. An explanation of the following:
 - a. placement of siblings in the same foster family is desirable,
 - b. the foster child has an established, meaningful relationship with the foster family, or
 - c. it is otherwise in the foster child's best interest for the exception to be granted.
 9. The sleeping arrangements for household members.

[NEW] Below is a list of necessary information needed for the Central Office Foster Care Licensing Unit to evaluate a request for a **general** exception to capacity. Use the outline below as a format for submitting information regarding exception requests:

1. The number of household children under the age of 18 (e.g. biological, adopted and guardianship), in the home, their age, sex, category of supervision, and a brief summary of their behavioral, emotional, and physical needs;
2. The number of foster children currently in the home, their age, sex, category of supervision, and a brief summary of their behavioral, emotional and physical needs;
3. A description of the foster family's support system;
4. A description of the foster parents' work schedules and their child care plan;
5. The experience of the foster family:
 - a. number of years fostering,
 - b. areas of expertise, or
 - c. any specific training they have received to meet the needs of the children in their home.
6. An explanation of why the foster family should be granted an exception and why it is in the foster child's best interest for this family to be granted an exception.

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| FORMS AND TOOLS |
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[Foster Family Home Physical Environmental Checklist \(SF53186\)](#)

RELATED INFORMATION

DCS will require the applicant or licensee to notify the licensing worker within 24 hours of any change in the household composition, such as the number of persons living in the home.

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
|  | INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL | |
| | Chapter 12: Foster Family Home Licensing | Effective Date: October 1, 2012 |
| | Section 13: Licensing Recommendation and Approval Process | Version: 2 |

POLICY [REVISED]

[REVISED] The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will process all recommendations received by the licensing worker¹ within 30 days of receipt.

In accordance with Indiana Code, the expiration date of the license will be four (4) years from the effective date, minus one (1) day. The effective date and expiration date will be listed on the license.

The licensing worker who requests licensing approval cannot be the same person who approves the license.

DCS will not recommend children to be placed into a non-relative home until the license has received final approval.

Once a home is licensed, licensing workers are required to make revisions in the Management Gateway For Indiana’s Kids (MaGIK) when a change occurs.

Code Reference:

[IC 31-27-4-16: Duration of license; limitations; renewal](#)

PROCEDURE

The licensing worker must process the request for licensure in MaGIK within five (5) business days of the completion of the Resource Family Home Assessment. The system will automatically set the effective date of the license to be the date the applicant completes the requirements.

Prior to making a recommendation decision, the licensing worker will:

1. Consider whether the applicant has the ability to meet the needs of the children according to the level of care to be provided;
2. Consider the demographics and number of children that can best be served in the home;
3. Ensure the home fully complies with the licensing requirements and regulations;
4. Ensure all required documents and training have been completed; and
5. Ensure all information is entered in MaGIK.

When processing the licensing recommendation, the licensing worker will:

1. Process the request for licensure in MaGIK; and

¹ The licensing worker refers to the DCS Regional Foster Care Specialist (RFCS) or the Licensed Child Placing Agency worker

2. Submit a recommendation to their Local Office Director (LOD) or designee for approval.

Licensed Child Placing Agencies (LCPAs) must submit recommendations for licensure to the Central Office Licensing Unit for approval.

For DCS local offices, the LOD or designee will process the licensure approval or endorse the denial in MaGIK. See separate policy, [12.18 License Denials](#).

For LCPAs, the Central Office Licensing Unit will process the licensure approval or denial in MaGIK. See separate policy, [12.18 License Denials](#).

Upon approval, the Central Office Licensing Unit Manager or designee will:

1. Print the approved license; and
2. Mail the license to the licensing worker, who will maintain a copy in the file and provide a copy to the foster family home.

Licensing workers are required to make revisions in MaGIK when a change occurs. Changes may include, but are not limited to:

1. Family moving to a new residence within the licensing agency's jurisdiction;
2. People entering or leaving the household. See separate policy, [12.12 Foster Family Home Capacity](#); and
3. Licensee name change.

After receiving the notification of a change, licensing workers will follow the approval process outlined above.

[REVISED] Upon approval of the revision, the Central Office Licensing Unit Manager or designee will:

1. Print the approved license with the revision, keeping the licensure dates the same as the original license; and
2. Mail a copy of the license to the licensing worker to be filed and forwarded to the foster family home.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

[REVISED] Partnership is key in the decision-making process. The applicant's role as a partner in the licensing process is to make an honest assessment of their skills and abilities to foster and if fostering is a good fit for their family. The following are decisions that should be made collaboratively between the agency and the applicants:

1. Whether fostering is a good fit for the foster family as well as the agency or DCS;
2. Whether the family should focus on adopting and/or fostering;
3. Whether the potential foster parents have needs that must be addressed or strengths that must be developed prior to being licensed or during licensure; and
4. What level of care the family will be able to provide.

The concept of foster parent applicants having a role in the licensing decision should be explained and emphasized during orientation, pre-service training and home visits.

FORMS AND TOOLS

N/A

RELATED INFORMATION

N/A

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|  | INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL | |
| | Chapter 12: Foster Family Home Licensing | Effective Date: October 1, 2012 |
| | Section 14: In-Service Training Requirements | Version: 3 |

POLICY [REVISED]

[REVISED] The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will require all Foster Family Home licensees to successfully complete In-Service Training. The In-service training requirements will need to be completed by each licensee in the foster family household.

DCS requires each foster family home to successfully complete 15 hours of in-service training annually, which includes specialized training to meet the child's specific needs.

DCS requires each licensee with a therapeutic certification to successfully complete 20 hours of in-service training annually, which includes 10 hours of general training and 10 hours of additional therapeutic training to meet the child's specific needs.

DCS will allow any in-service training completed in the three (3) month period prior to the end of the current training year to be counted toward the annual requirement for the next training year, if the in-service training credit is not needed to fulfill the training requirement for the current year. No more than five (5) training hours can be carried over to the following year. Rationale for exceptions to In-Service Training requirements must be maintained in an individual file at each licensing agency.

The applicant is in applied status until the effective date of their license. Issuance of the foster care license demonstrates that all license requirements are met and begins the annual cycle for completion of in-service training requirements.

Each DCS region will provide opportunities for in-service training on a regular basis.

DCS will allow licensees to earn up to eight (8) hours through alternative trainings (online trainings, books, videos, etc.)

Note: CPR, First Aid and Universal Precautions cannot count as in-service credit as they are considered licensing requirements.

Code Reference

1. [465 IAC 2-1.5: Licensing of Foster Family Homes for Children](#)
2. [IC 31-27-4-2: Therapeutic Foster Family Home; licenses](#)
3. [IC 31-27-4-3: Special Needs Foster Family Home; licenses](#)

PROCEDURE

[REVISED] Each foster parent who substitutes alternative training hours will:

1. Verify alternative training activities are on [Approved Alternative In-Service Training](#) document lists;
2. Contact the licensing worker to request approval of any non-approved training activities; and
3. Complete and submit an [Alternative Training Verification \(SF52643\)](#) form to be approved by the licensing worker.

The licensing worker will:

1. Maintain documentation for in-service trainings and any training requirement exceptions in an individual file at the DCS local office or Licensed Child Placing Agency (LCPA) office;
2. Log in-service training records, including dates of completion, in the foster family's case file and the Management Gateway For Indiana's Kids (MaGIK);
3. Track training hours and documentation by each participant, not by family or home; and
4. Request approval from the Staff Development Supervisor for any alternative training requests that are not listed on the [Approved Alternative In-Service Training](#) document lists.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

N/A

FORMS AND TOOLS

1. [Approved Alternative In-Service Training](#)
2. [Alternative Training Verification \(SF52643\)](#)

RELATED INFORMATION

[REVISED] For foster family homes licensed by a local DCS office, all in-service training curriculum must be related to the roles of the foster parent in working with families and children and must be approved by the Staff Development Supervisor. Training hours will not be given, nor will they be accepted, if they are not on the [Approved Alternative In-Service Training](#) list. For foster homes licensed by an LCPA, credit for alternative training will be approved by the LCPA.

All requests for additions to the [Approved Alternative In-Service Training](#) document list should be sent to the Staff Development Supervisor for review and approval. Only materials written or produced by credentialed authorities which are available to all resource parents free of charge or at a minimal cost will be approved.

[REVISED] Alternative Training

Those who view the materials on the [Approved Alternative In-Service Training](#) document may receive in-service training credit following these established guidelines:

1. For videos, 60 minutes equals one (1) hour of training credit.
2. For written resources, 60 pages equals one (1) hour of training credit.
3. Time is figured in quarter hour (15 minute) increments and rounded when necessary. For example: 53 pages rounds to 1 hour, 47 pages rounds to .75 hours.

4. Credit hours are not given for completing the Alternative Training Verification Form.
5. Each person is responsible for completing their own verification form even if two (2) people from the same household review the same resource.

[REVISED] Web Based Courses

There are currently only two approved websites for on-line trainings:

1. www.fosterparents.com
2. www.fosterparentcollege.com

These sites offer training on issues directly related to fostering and foster children. When tests are required by the website, a score of at least 80% is needed to earn in-service training credit. A printed certificate will be provided by the website. This certificate must be submitted to the licensing worker¹ for verification and documentation. Fees may be charged by the website, www.fosterparents.com, for utilizing this method. Payment of fees are the responsibility of the foster parent choosing to utilize this option. DCS will pay for four (4) out of the eight (8) alternative training hours for DCS foster parents through www.fosterparentcollege.com. These fees are directly billed to DCS if foster parents choose to take the additional on-line training. LCPAs are responsible for all fees related to on-line training.

[REVISED] College Courses

Some college courses may be approved for in-service training credit hours. These courses must be directly related to children, the care of children, meeting the special needs of children, child welfare, or social services related to foster care or children. Examples of approvable courses include child development, childcare, psychology, and sociology.

To receive credit for a college course, the resource parent must provide a transcript with a passing grade, a syllabus, and/or course schedule. Credit may be given for the completion of appropriate college courses with the number of college credit hours being doubled upon receiving the required documentation. (For example: If a foster parent attends a three (3) hour college course; with appropriate documentation, they could receive six (6) hours of in-service credit.) Partial credit may be given when only portions of the course are applicable. This would be done on a percentage basis and be determined by the Resource and Adoptive Parent Training (RAPT) Supervisor or LCPA.

[REVISED] Foster Parent Recognition Banquets

Foster parent recognition banquets are social in nature, commonly involving networking, door prizes, and a meal, with a limited training component. One (1) hour of in-service training credit may be given when a speaker presents an approved program. Training credit may only be given for one (1) banquet per training year. The determination as to whether one in-service hour may be awarded will be made by the RAPT Supervisor or LCPA after careful review of the information regarding the banquet activities.

[REVISED] Community Training Opportunities

DCS and LCPA licensing staff or foster parents may become aware of training opportunities offered through local sources such as schools, social service agencies, medical or mental health facilities, court systems, etc. It is the responsibility of the resource parent licensed through a local DCS office to submit information related to the training to the RFCS or RAPT Supervisor to determine if there is a training component suitable for awarding in-service training

¹ The licensing worker refers to the DCS Regional Foster Care Specialist (RFCS) or the Licensed Child Placing Agency worker

credit. Suitability will be determined based upon the training topic, its relevance to the role of the foster care provider or foster children, and the credentials of the presenter. Credit will be awarded based upon length of actual training time. LCPA staff will determine whether a training has components suitable for awarding in-service training credit for foster parents licensed by the LCPA. To receive credit for community training opportunities, the foster parent attending them must obtain verification of completion. This can be in the form of a certificate, a training credit form, a written statement from the sponsoring agency, or a copy of the sign-in sheet.

[REVISED] Individual Instruction Opportunities

When service providers come to a foster parent's home to work with a child, this time cannot be used as in-service training hours for the foster parents. However, if the provider is training the foster parent in a one-on-one situation and documents that contact, then that time can be used as in-service training hours (i.e. being trained on medical equipment).

If a foster parent is trained by a medical or mental health professional on issues related to a specific child in the foster parent's care, in-service training credit may be awarded if a statement is received from that professional indicating the date, length of time spent, topic covered, and the reason for the session. This may be on letterhead or a prescription pad. Credit for this method of instruction would be the same as a classroom session, minute for minute. This time would be considered as classroom training and not alternative training.

If a foster parent is told by a medical or mental health professional to read a specific resource that will assist them in understanding and dealing with the issues related to the care of a specific child placed with them, and that resource is not on the state approved list, in-service training credit may still be awarded for the review of this material (following the Alternative Training Guidelines including the verification form and limit of maximum hours) if a statement is received from that professional confirming the request.

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
|  | INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL | |
| | Chapter 12: Foster Family Home Licensing | Effective Date: October 1, 2012 |
| | Section 15: Annual Review | Version: 3 |

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| POLICY |
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[REVISED] The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) requires that each licensed foster family home be visited annually by the licensing worker to update household information, complete background checks and determine if the family continues to meet the requirements for licensure.

DCS requires the annual review to be completed each year until relicensure is due. All licensing workers are responsible for tracking the dates when a foster family home annual review is due and when it has been completed.

[NEW] If the licensed foster parent fails to respond to the licensing worker within 90 days from the annual review due date and does not submit a voluntary withdrawal of the license, the licensing worker¹ must recommend revocation of the foster family home license. See separate policy, [12.21 Revocations](#).

Code Reference

1. [IC 31-27-2-5: Monitoring of licensed entities](#)
2. [IC 31-27-4-18: Inspection of foster family homes](#)
3. [IC 31-27-4-19: Records of monitoring activities and inspections](#)

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| PROCEDURE |
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[REVISED] Prior to the annual review, the licensing worker will:

1. Notify the foster family at least 90 days in advance of the annual review due date of the requirements and paperwork to be completed;
2. Determine with the foster parents their decision to continue fostering;
3. Provide annual review forms and materials;
4. Schedule a home visit;
5. Review and discuss the content of forms with the foster home and answer any questions;
6. Send the [Licensing Staff Inquiry Regarding Foster Family Home \(SF53214\)](#) to the Family Case Manager (FCM) for each child that has been in the home during that licensed year; and
7. Assist the foster parents with completing forms or documentation, as necessary.

¹ The licensing worker refers to the DCS Regional Foster Care Specialist (RFCS) or the Licensed Child Placing Agency worker

Note: If the annual review is due and the licensed foster family has not completed the requirements, the licensing worker should encourage the family to either proceed with licensure or voluntarily withdraw their license. See separate policy, [12.26 Withdrawing from the Foster Family Home Program](#).

8. If the licensed foster parent fails to respond or withdraw their license, the licensing worker must recommend revocation to the DCS Local Office Director (LOD). See separate policy, [12.21 Revocations](#).

To evaluate the home and ensure the home continues to meet requirements, the licensing worker will:

1. Conduct a home visit to update information and determine if the family continues to meet the requirements for licensure;
2. Complete the [Resource Family Home Physical Environment Checklist \(SF53186\)](#);
3. Use the [Annual Review Checklist for Foster Family Homes \(SF53154\)](#) to track the receipt of documents and processing of requirements; and
4. Collect the following completed and signed documents and forms:
 - a. Results from the [Water Agreement \(SF54612\)](#), if applicable,
 - b. Verification of completed [12.14 In-Service Training Requirements](#). See separate policy, [12.14 In-Service Training Requirements](#),
 - c. [Request for a Child Protection Services \(CPS\) History Check \(SF52802\)](#), on all household members, and
 - d. [Application for Criminal History Background Check \(SF53259\)](#).

Following the annual review home visit, the licensing worker will:

1. Process criminal history checks. See separate policy, [12.29 Conducting Background Checks for Foster Family Home Applicants](#);
2. Complete the [Annual Report Regarding Resource Family Home \(SF53213\)](#);
3. Complete the [Annual Review Checklist for Foster Family Homes \(SF53154\)](#) and place in the licensing file;
4. Place the licensed foster family home on a Corrective Action Plan if all licensing requirements are not met by the annual licensure date;

Note: If there are safety concerns (i.e., background checks are not completed) the home should be placed on probation with a Corrective Action Plan until all licensing requirements are met. No new placements are permitted while the home is on probation. See separate policy, [12.17 Probationary Status](#).

5. Process the annual review update in the Management Gateway For Indiana's Kids (MaGIK).

See separate policies, [12.22 Licensing File Requirements](#) and [12.16 Foster Family Home Relicensure](#).

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| PRACTICE GUIDANCE |
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N/A

FORMS AND TOOLS

1. [Resource Family Home Physical Environment Checklist \(SF53186\)](#)
2. [Annual Review Checklist for Foster Family Homes \(SF53154\)](#)
3. [Water Agreement \(SF54612\)](#)
4. [Request for a Child Protection Services \(CPS\) History Check \(SF52802\)](#), on all household members
5. [Application for Criminal History Background Check \(SF53259\)](#)
6. [Annual Report Regarding Resource Family Home \(SF53213\)](#)
7. [Licensing Staff Inquiry Regarding Foster Family Home \(SF53214\)](#)
8. [Annual Review Checklist for Foster Family Homes \(SF53154\)](#)

RELATED INFORMATION

N/A

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
|  | INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL | |
| | Chapter 12: Foster Family Home Licensing | Effective Date: October 1, 2012 |
| | Section 16: Foster Family Home Relicensure | Version: 3 |

POLICY [REVISED]

[REVISED] The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) requires each licensed foster family home to complete relicensure every four (4) years.

An application for relicensure should be signed and dated before the date of expiration of the license.

If the application for relicensure is not received timely, and the home intends to apply for relicensure, the license will remain in effect until renewed.

If the requirements for relicensure have not been met but the licensed foster family and DCS has determined that relicensure will proceed, it will be necessary for the licensing worker to request a license with a Corrective Action Plan. See separate policy, [12.17 Probationary Status](#).

If the non-compliance of a licensing requirement constitutes a safety concern (i.e. background checks not completed), the licensing worker must submit a request to the Central Office Licensing Unit to place the home on probation in addition to implementing a Corrective Action Plan. See separate policy, [12.17 Probationary Status](#).

If a licensee submits an application for relicensure, whether timely or not, DCS will process the application and issue a decision of licensure or denial.

If the home is relicensed, the relicensure would be effective at the time of expiration of the previous license.

Code Reference

[IC 31-27-4-16: Duration of license; limitations; renewal](#)

PROCEDURE

[REVISED] The application for relicensure of a foster family home should be completed, signed and dated on, or prior, to the expiration date of the license that is in effect. This signature date will be entered into the Management Gateway For Indiana's Kids (MaGIK) as the application date.

Ninety days prior to the license expiration, the licensing worker¹ will:

1. Communicate with the foster parents about the relicensing timeframes and inquire if they wish to be relicensed;
2. Provide applicable forms and documents to be completed for licensure renewal; and
3. Inform the foster family that a visit will be scheduled when it is time for relicensure.

[REVISED] During the relicensure home visit, the licensing worker will:

1. Conduct a home visit to update information and determine if the family continues to meet the requirements for licensure;
2. Complete the [Resource Family Home Physical Environment Checklist \(SF53186\)](#) to ensure the safety of the home;
3. Utilize the [Re-Licensure Checklist for Foster Family Homes \(SF53155\)](#) to track completion of all the relicensure requirements;
4. Collect the following relicensure forms and documents:
 - a. [Application for Foster Family Home License \(SF10100\)](#),
 - b. Verification of the number of training hours required by level of care for the supervision provided by the foster home. See separate policy [12.14 In-Service Training Requirements](#),
 - c. Verification of completion of medical trainings. See separate policy, [12.6 Medical Training Requirements](#),
 - d. Updated [Foster/Adoption Family Inventory \(SF54607\)](#),
 - e. Signed [Application for Criminal History Background Check \(SF53259\)](#),
 - f. Signed [Resource Parent Role Acknowledgment \(SF54642\)](#) for the renewal period,
 - g. Results from the [Water Agreement \(SF54612\)](#), if applicable,
 - h. Completed [Medical Report for Caregivers \(SF45145\)](#), and
 - i. Completed [Medical Report for Household Members \(SF45144\)](#), if applicable.
5. Provide feedback to the foster family home from the Family Case Manager (FCM) by using the [Licensing Staff Inquiry Regarding Foster Family Home \(SF53214\)](#) form regarding the children currently placed in the foster family home, if applicable.

Following the home visit and collection of forms, the licensing worker will:

1. Inform the foster family home of any missing documentation by utilizing the [Initial Licensure Checklist for Foster Family Homes \(SF53153\)](#) form;
2. Process the background checks. See separate policy, [12.29 Conducting Background Checks for Foster Family Home Applicants](#);
3. Update the Foster Family/Adoptive Home Preparation Assessment Summary incorporating changes from the previous three (3) years and as reported in the most recent [Annual Report Regarding Resource Family Home \(SF53213\)](#);
4. Discuss recommendation with Supervisor;
5. Update MaGIK with the date each requirement was completed; and
6. Process the licensure recommendation in MaGIK.

See separate policies, [12.13 Licensing Recommendation and Approval Process](#), [12.30 Evaluation of Background Checks for Foster Family Home Licensing](#), [12.18 License Denials](#), and [12.26 Withdrawing from the Foster Family Home Program](#).

¹ The licensing worker refers to the DCS Regional Foster Care Specialist (RFCS) or the Licensed Child Placing Agency worker

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

N/A

FORMS AND TOOLS

1. [Resource Family Home Physical Environment Checklist \(SF53186\)](#)
2. [Re-Licensure Checklist for Foster Family Homes \(SF53155\)](#)
3. [Application for Foster Family Home License \(SF10100\)](#)
4. Foster Family/Adoptive Home Preparation Assessment Summary
5. [Annual Report Regarding Resource Family Home \(SF53213\)](#)
6. [Application for Criminal History Background Check \(SF53259\)](#)
7. [Foster / Adoptive Family Inventory \(SF54607\)](#)
8. [Resource Parent Role Acknowledgment \(SF54642\)](#)
9. [Water Agreement \(SF54612\)](#)
10. [Medical Report for Caregivers \(SF45145\)](#)
11. [Medical Report for Household Members \(SF45144\)](#)
12. [Initial Licensure Checklist for Foster Family Homes \(SF53153\)](#)
13. [Licensing Staff Inquiry Regarding Foster Family Home \(SF53214\)](#)

RELATED INFORMATION

N/A

| | | |
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|  | INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL | |
| | Chapter 12: Foster Family Home Licensing | Effective Date: October 1, 2012 |
| | Section 17: Probationary Status | Version: 3 |

POLICY [REVISED]

[REVISED] The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) Central Office Licensing Unit Manager, or designee, may revise a license to a probationary status for noncompliance with licensing regulations upon recommendation from the Local Office or from a Licensed Child Placing Agency (LCPA).

A licensee with a current valid license may be revised to a probationary status. The probationary status:

1. Will be issued for a specific time period, not to exceed 12 months;
2. May not extend past the expiration date of the license; and
3. May be issued to any licensee if:
 - a. The noncompliance is safety related but does not present an immediate threat to the safety, health or well-being of the child,
 - b. The licensing agency files a [Corrective Action Plan \(SF53171\)](#) with the Central Office Licensing Unit using the Management Gateway for Indiana's Kids (MaGIK) to correct the areas of noncompliance within the probationary period, and
 - c. The Central Office Licensing Unit approves the plan.

Note: If a foster family home is placed on probation, no new placements can be made in the home until the home is removed from probationary status. The licensing worker¹ should initiate a placement hold in MaGIK.

If the non-compliance is not safety related, a [Corrective Action Plan \(SF53171\)](#) without probation can be implemented for violations of the following:

1. DCS policy;
2. Indiana statute; or
3. Administrative rule.

The licensing worker can recommend the revocation of a license if a licensee fails to meet the terms of the probation or corrective action plan. See separate policy, [12.21 Revocations](#).

Code Reference

[IC 31-27-4-17: Probationary status; duration; expiration; extension](#)

¹ The licensing worker refers to the DCS Regional Foster Care Specialist (RFCS) or the Licensed Child Placing Agency worker

PROCEDURE

The licensing worker may request a probationary status for a foster family home by completing the following steps:

1. Work with the family to create a plan of correction;
2. Enter the plan for corrective action into MaGIK;
3. Submit to the local DCS office or LCPA director the required plan of correction stating the noncompliance, the method of correction, and the date that compliance will be achieved;
4. DCS local offices will submit the revision for the probationary status to the DCS Local Office Director or designee for endorsement prior to submission to the Central Office Licensing Unit; and
5. LCPAs will submit the revision for the probationary status to the Central Office Licensing Unit for approval.

The Central Office Licensing Unit Manager will approve or deny the request for the probationary status within 30 business days.

At the end of the probationary status period, the licensing worker will take one of the following actions:

1. Upon successful completion of the corrective action plan:
 - a. Enter the family's compliance into MaGIK,
 - b. DCS local offices will submit the request for reinstatement of the original license to the DCS Local Office Director, or designee, for endorsement prior to submission to the Central Office Licensing Unit,
 - c. LCPAs will submit the request for reinstatement of the original license to the Central Office Licensing Unit for approval, and
 - d. The Central Office Licensing Unit Manager will:
 - 1) Approve or deny the request for licensure reinstatement within 30 business days; and
 - 2) Print and mail a license to the family if the request has been approved.
2. Upon the family's noncompliance, process the recommendation for revocation in MaGIK. See separate policy, [12.21 Revocations](#).

The licensing worker may request a [Corrective Action Plan \(SF53171\)](#) without probationary status by:

1. Signing the plan;
2. Obtaining the foster parent's signature; and
3. Submitting it to the LOD or designee for approval.

The LOD will:

1. Approve or deny the request for a [Corrective Action Plan \(SF53171\)](#) without probationary status; and
2. Notify the licensing worker within seven (7) business days.

If approved the licensing worker must:

1. Place a copy of the [Corrective Action Plan \(SF53171\)](#) without probationary status in the licensing file;
2. Monitor the [Corrective Action Plan \(SF53171\)](#) and ensure compliance occurs:

- a. The Corrective Action Plan can be in place for up to six (6) months,
- b. If the foster family home meets all the requirements prior to six (6) months, the family should be notified in writing that they have been removed from the Corrective Action Plan, and
- c. If the licensed foster family has made substantial progress over a period of six (6) months but has not yet met the licensure requirements, then the licensing worker can consider requesting an extension of up to six (6) months.

Note: If the foster parent refuses to sign the [Corrective Action Plan \(SF53171\)](#) and fails to voluntarily relinquish his or her license, the licensing worker must submit a recommendation to revoke to the LOD. See separate policy, [12.21 Revocations](#).

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

N/A

FORMS AND TOOLS

[Corrective Action Plan \(SF53171\)](#)

RELATED INFORMATION

[REVISED] Examples of the use of a plan of correction without probation:

1. Lack of training hours;
2. Licensing paperwork not completed; and/or
3. Licensing complaints.
4. Background checks not completed.

The Corrective Action Plan

The purpose of the Corrective Action Plan is to support the foster parent in the development and utilization of more appropriate methods of meeting the needs of children under DCS care and supervision. In addition, the Corrective Action Plan clarifies the role of DCS and the foster parent to prevent further violations of DCS policy. The Corrective Action Plan serves as a supportive intervention rather than a punitive intervention.

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
|  | INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL | |
| | Chapter 12: Foster Family Home Licensing | Effective Date: October 1, 2012 |
| | Section 18: License Denials | Version: 3 |

POLICY [REVISED]

[REVISED] The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) and its licensing workers¹ should not recommend licensing a foster home if there are any concerns about placing a child in the home. The licensing worker will recommend denial of a foster family home initial or relicensure application if:

1. The applicant or the applicant's household members, employees, or volunteers who are required to have background checks do not pass the background checks. See separate policies, [12.29 Conducting Background Checks for Foster Family Home Licensing](#) and [12.30 Evaluation of Background Checks for Foster Family Home Licensing](#) for more information on the background check requirements;
2. The applicant made false statements on the application or the records required for licensure or relicensure; or
3. The applicant failed to meet any other foster care licensing requirements as set out in Indiana Statute or Indiana Administrative Code.

[REVISED] If a denial is based on a report of abuse or neglect that was substantiated prior to October 15, 2006, the DCS Local Office Director (LOD) or Regional Manager (RM) should review the substantiation prior to the licensing worker requesting the denial. The applicant can also request this review at any time in the process.

Code References

1. [IC 31-27-4-5: Applying for license; criminal history checks](#)
2. [IC 31-27-4-6: Grounds for denial of license applications](#)
3. [IC 31-27-4-13: Denial of license](#)
4. [IC 31-27-4-16: Duration of license; limitations; renewal](#)
5. [465 IAC 2-1.5: Licensing of Boarding Homes for Children](#)

PROCEDURE

[REVISED] The licensing worker should consult with other DCS staff or agency staff as needed to arrive at a written recommendation about the appropriateness of granting the license based on:

1. Information found in all background checks. See separate policy, [12.30 Evaluation of Background Checks for Foster Family Home Licensing](#);
2. The current home environment; and
3. The ability of the prospective foster parent to provide for the child's safety and well-being.

¹ The licensing worker refers to the DCS Regional Foster Care Specialist (RFCS) or the Licensed Child Placing Agency worker

[REVISED] For all denials, the licensing worker will:

1. Develop a denial recommendation letter containing the following:
 - a. Any specific statute or rule with which the foster family home is not in compliance, and
 - b. A general description of the circumstances which constitute the non-compliance or other grounds for denial, referencing the documentation or observations supporting the decision.
2. Ensure each denial recommendation letter is signed by the following persons:
 - a. DCS LOD, DCS Local Office Attorney, and DCS licensing worker (for DCS Licensed Foster Family Homes), or
 - b. LCPA licensing worker, LCPA Director or designee (for LCPS Licensed Foster Family Homes).
3. Provide a hard copy of the denial recommendation letter and supporting documents to the Central Office Licensing Unit, including a Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) verification form if the denial is based on a substantiation which occurred on or after October 15, 2006; and
4. Enter the denial request and reason for denial into the Management Gateway for Indiana's Kids (MaGIK) and submit to the Central Office Licensing Unit for approval. Ensure the denial recommendation letter is also uploaded into MaGIK.

Upon receipt and **agreement** with the recommendation to deny, the Central Office Licensing Unit Manager will:

1. Send a certified letter to the applicant advising the individuals of:
 - a. The fact that the application for a foster family home license is being denied effective upon the receipt of the letter,
 - b. The nature of the allegation(s) of non-compliance,
 - c. The right to request an informal meeting with the LOD in the county where the home is located within 10 business days of receipt of the letter,
 - d. The right to appeal the decision within 30 days of receipt of the letter,
 - e. The statutory authority of DCS to license resource family homes, and
 - f. The civil and criminal penalties for operating without a license.
2. Send a copy of the certified letter denying the license to the licensing worker for their file.

[REVISED] Upon receipt and **disagreement** with the recommendation to deny a license, the Central Office Licensing Unit will return the recommendation to the recommending agency with guidance on next steps. The recommending agency will follow up based on the guidance from Central Office.

[REVISED] If the denial is based on a substantiated report of abuse or neglect that occurred prior to October 15, 2006, the LOD where the assessment took place must review the substantiation prior to the request for denial being sent to Central Office.

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| PRACTICE GUIDANCE |
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N/A

FORMS AND TOOLS

N/A

RELATED INFORMATION

Denial Appeals

If the foster family home appeals, the DCS Local Office Attorney will be required to represent the DCS local office or LCPA at all Administrative Appeal Hearings. Hearings and appeal staff will schedule and notify the local office attorney and the foster family home of the hearing date.

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|  | INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL | |
| | Chapter 12: Foster Family Home Licensing | Effective Date: October 1, 2012 |
| | Section 19: Waivers | Version: 2 |

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| POLICY |
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[REVISED] The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) may grant a waiver for a foster family home to be noncompliant with a specific rule or regulation, only upon approval from the Central Office Licensing Unit.

Waivers shall be granted only for rules and regulations and not for Indiana statutory requirements.

To receive a waiver, the applicant or licensee must provide proof that compliance with the rule or regulation would constitute an undue hardship and that noncompliance does not compromise the health, safety, and welfare of children.

The Central Office Licensing Unit has sole authority to approve or deny a waiver.

Code Reference

1. [IC 31-27-2-8: Granting of variances and waivers](#)
2. [IC 31-27-2-9: Expiration of variances and waivers](#)
3. [IC 31-27-2-10: Renewal of variances and waivers](#)
4. [IC 31-27-2-11: Revocation of variances and waivers](#)
5. [IC 31-27-4-12: Eligibility for waivers and variances](#)

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| PROCEDURE |
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[REVISED] To request a licensing waiver, the applicant or licensee will submit documentation that:

1. Compliance with the rule or regulation specified in the application for the waiver will create an undue hardship on the applicant for the waiver; and
2. Noncompliance with the rule or regulation specified in the application for a waiver will not be adverse to the health, safety, or welfare of any child receiving services from the applicant for the waiver.

[REVISED] To request a waiver, the licensing worker¹ must:

1. Process the waiver request, including the documentation narrative, in the Management Gateway for Indiana’s Kids (MaGIK); and
2. Submit the request for waiver to the Central Office Licensing Unit.

Upon receipt of the waiver request, the Central Office Licensing Unit will:

¹ The licensing worker refers to the DCS Regional Foster Care Specialist (RFCS) or the Licensed Child Placing Agency worker

1. Review the request and ask for additional information, if applicable;
2. Approve or deny the request; and
3. Notify the licensing worker of waiver approval or denial.

The licensing worker will notify the applicant or licensee of the approval or denial.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

[NEW] Case by case waivers of non-safety related licensing requirements are permitted. An example of a safety related licensing requirement that **cannot** be waived is background checks. Common examples of non-safety related licensing requirements that can be waived include, but are not limited to:

1. Pre-service/in-service training (with the exception of RAPT 1);
2. CPR, Universal Precautions and First Aid (all or just one);
3. Square footage of bedrooms;
4. Bedrooms in a hall, basement or living area;
5. Children must have their own beds;
6. Reference letters; and
7. Licensing a married applicant without licensing his or her spouse due to spouse's physical absence from the household.

FORMS AND TOOLS

N/A

RELATED INFORMATION

Expiration of Waivers

Waivers granted or renewed will expire on one (1) of the following dates, whichever comes first:

1. Date when the license affected by the waiver expires;
2. Date set by the Central Office Licensing Unit for the expiration of the waiver; or
3. Occurrence of the event set by the Central Office Licensing Unit for the expiration of the waiver.

If a licensee violates a condition of a waiver, the licensing worker should contact the Central Office Licensing Unit for consultation on how to proceed. The Central Office Licensing Unit may recommend to the DCS Director or designee an order terminating the waiver before it expires.

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|  | INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL | |
| | Chapter 12: Foster Family Home Licensing | Effective Date: October 1, 2012 |
| | Section 20: Variances | Version: 2 |

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| POLICY |
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The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) may grant a variance for a foster family home to meet the intent of a DCS rule or regulation in an alternate method that still protects the health, safety, and welfare of children. A variance can be granted only upon approval from the Central Office Licensing Unit.

Variances can be granted only for rules and regulations and not for Indiana statutory requirements.

The Central Office Licensing Unit has sole authority to approve or deny a variance.

Code Reference

1. [IC 31-27-2-8: Granting of variances and waivers](#)
2. [IC 31-27-2-9: Expiration of variances and waivers](#)
3. [IC 31-27-2-10: Renewal of variances and waivers](#)
4. [IC 31-27-2-11: Revocation of variances and waivers](#)
5. [IC 31-27-4-12: Eligibility for waivers and variances](#)

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| PROCEDURE |
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[REVISED] To request a licensing variance, the applicant or licensee will submit documentation that outlines the alternative plan for meeting the regulation and supporting information as to how this plan does not compromise the health, safety, or welfare of any child receiving services.

To request a variance, the licensing worker¹ must:

1. Process the variance request, including the documentation narrative, in the Management Gateway for Indiana’s Kids (MaGIK); and
2. Submit the request for variance to the Central Office Licensing Unit.

Upon receipt of the variance request, the Central Office Licensing Unit will:

1. Review the request and ask for additional information, if applicable;
2. Approve or deny the request; and
3. Notify the licensing worker of variance approval or denial.

The licensing worker will notify the applicant or licensee of the approval or denial.

¹ The licensing worker refers to the DCS Regional Foster Care Specialist (RFCS) or the Licensed Child Placing Agency worker

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| PRACTICE GUIDANCE |
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N/A

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| FORMS AND TOOLS |
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N/A

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| RELATED INFORMATION |
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Examples of Possible Variances

1. Substituting bottle water for well water; or
2. Substituting professional medical training for the CPR, First Aid, and Universal Precautions training.

Expiration of Variances

Variances granted or renewed will expire on one (1) of the following dates, whichever comes first:

1. Date when the license affected by the variance expires;
2. Date set by the Central Office Licensing Unit Manager for the expiration of the variance;
or
3. Occurrence of the event set by the Central Office Licensing Unit for the expiration of the variance.

If a licensee violates a condition of a variance, the licensing worker should contact the Central Office Licensing Unit for consultation on how to proceed. The Central Office Licensing Unit may recommend to the DCS Director or designee an order terminating the variance before it expires.

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|  | INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL | |
| | Chapter 12: Foster Family Home Licensing | Effective Date: October 1, 2008 |
| | Section 21: Revocations | Version: 2 |

POLICY

The licensing worker will recommend revocation of a resource family home license if the licensee, **[NEW]** household member, the licensee’s employee, or volunteer who has regular and continuous direct contact with children supervised by the licensee has:

1. Disqualifying criminal history identified by the Department of Child Services (DCS) Central Office Background Check Unit. See separate policy, [12.29 Evaluation of Background Checks for Foster Family Home Licensing](#);
2. A conviction for a felony and all request for disqualification exemption have been denied;
3. Made false statements on the application or the records required for licensure;
4. Failed to meet requirements of the Indiana licensing laws and rules, federal regulations, or county housing and residential code requirements; or
5. **[NEW]** Been named as a perpetrator in a substantiated report of child abuse or neglect. See separate policy, [12.23 Investigation for Negative Licensing Action](#).

The licensing worker will submit revocation requests to the DCS Local Office Director who **may** consider revoking a resource family home license if:

1. Any individuals living in the home, other than the licensee or DCS wards, have disqualifying criminal history;
2. Any individuals living in the home, other than the licensee or DCS wards has Child Protection Services (CPS) history;
3. **[NEW]** The home fails to meet state fire and health codes;
4. The licensee or household members violate DCS policies applicable to licensed resource family homes; or
5. The licensee fails to meet the terms of the probationary corrective action plan within 12 months.

DCS will not allow a licensee to voluntarily relinquish their foster care license or transfer to another Licensed Child Placing Agency (LCPA) once the revocation process has begun.

DCS will not place children in a resource family home whose license is pending revocation or has been revoked.

An indicated finding is not a basis for revocation.

Code References

1. [465 IAC 2-1: Licensing of Boarding Homes for Children](#)
2. [470 IAC 1-4: Administrative Appeals](#)
3. [IC 31-27-4-22: Notice of enforcement actions; informal meetings](#)
4. [IC 31-27-4-23: Administrative hearings](#)
5. [IC 31-27-4-24: Procedure for administrative hearings](#)
6. [IC 31-27-4-25: Issuance of decisions](#)

7. [IC 31-27-4-30: Notice](#)
8. [IC 31-27-4-32: Grounds for revocation of license](#)
9. [IC 31-27-4-33: Compliance with rules; disciplinary sanctions; revocation of license](#)

[NEW] PROCEDURE

If a licensed individual has been named as a perpetrator in a substantiated report of Child Abuse and/or Neglect (CA/N) see separate policy, [12.23 Investigation for Negative Licensing Action](#)) then:

1. A recommendation to revoke must be submitted by the licensing worker to the DCS Local Office Director;
2. Ensure any Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) appeals are complete prior to applying for a waiver. See separate policy, [2.5 Administrative Appeal Hearings](#);
3. The DCS Local Office Director will review and submit the recommendation to the waiver review team within five (5) days of receipt;
4. The waiver review team will review the recommendation and determine whether to grant a waiver allowing the applicant to receive a license (see separate policy, [12.19 Waiver](#)) and notify the Central Office Licensing Unit Manager of the determination.

Note: Every substantiation of a licensee must be reviewed by the waiver review team before a license will be given.

If the recommendation to revoke is approved, the Central Office Licensing Unit Manager will:

1. Forward the recommendation to the DCS Central Office Legal Department for review;
2. Send a certified revocation letter to the resource family home when the decision is made to revoke the license. The revocation letter should include the following:
 - a. The effective date of the license revocation,
 - b. The allegation(s) of non-compliance,
 - c. The right to request, within 10 days after receipt of the certified notice, an informal meeting with the DCS Local Office Director of the county in which the home is located,
 - d. The right to appeal the decision within 30 days of receipt of the letter,
 - e. The statutory authority of DCS to issue and revoke licenses, and
 - f. Civil and criminal penalties for operating a resource family home without a license.
3. Send a copy of the revocation letter to licensing worker for their files;
4. Each revocation letter must be signed by the following persons for an LCPA home:
 - a. DCS Local Office Director,
 - b. DCS Local Office Attorney, or
 - c. The LCPA Director or their designee.

Note: Each revocation letter must be signed by the DCS Local Office Director and DCS Local Office Attorney for a DCS licensed home.

5. Instruct Family Case Manager (FCM) to remove all the children under the care and supervision of DCS and notify any other local DCS offices with children in the home that the children are being removed.

As a result of an approved recommendation to revoke the resource family home license, the DCS Office of General Counsel will:

1. Notify any other agency responsible for supervision of the child in the home that the license has been revoked; and
2. Notify the prosecuting attorney in the county where the home is located and the Attorney General of Indiana if the home does not cease operation.

If the resource family home appeals, the Office of General Counsel will be required to represent the DCS local office or LCPA at all Administrative Appeal Hearings.

If the resource family home appeals, hearing and appeal staff will schedule and notify the following of the hearing:

1. DCS Local Office Attorney;
2. Central Office Licensing Unit Manager; and
3. Resource family home.

If the recommendation to revoke a resource family home license is denied and/or the waiver is granted, the Central Office Licensing Unit Manager will:

1. Send notification of the denial to the licensing agency; and
2. Require the licensing agency to discuss and address areas of concern with the resource family home.

If the licensee does not appeal, or upon the final decision approving the revocation through the administrative hearing process and the home has not ceased operation, the Central Office Licensing Unit Manger will:

1. Notify the prosecuting attorney in the county where the home is located and the Indiana Attorney General regarding the illegal operation; and
2. Notify any other agency responsible for supervision of children in the home that the license has been revoked.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

N/A

FORMS AND TOOLS

N/A

[NEW] RELATED INFORMATION

If the DCS local office staff question the substantiation determination based on previous substantiation history, the licensing file will need to be reviewed by the Regional Manager.

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|  | INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL | |
| | Chapter 12: Foster Family Home Licensing | Effective Date: October 1, 2012 |
| | Section 22: Licensing File Requirements | Version: 2 |

POLICY [REVISED]

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) local office or Licensed Child Placing Agency (LCPA) will be responsible for obtaining and maintaining forms and other materials used to document its decision making process for a foster family home to become licensed and maintain licensure.

The Central Office Licensing Unit will conduct random reviews of DCS local office and LCPA licensing files. The Central Office Licensing Unit will also conduct field audits of LCPA licensing files.

DCS is ultimately responsible for the licensing file as a public record.

Code Reference

[IC 31-27-4-20: Cooperation by licensees](#)

PROCEDURE

The licensing worker¹ will:

1. Use forms, [Initial Licensure Checklist for Foster Family Homes \(SF53153\)](#), [Annual Review Checklist for Foster Family Homes \(SF53154\)](#), and [Re-Licensure Checklist for Foster Family Homes \(SF53155\)](#), to aid in gathering all the necessary documentation for licensure. These may also be used for supervisory review;
2. Log dates of completed forms and other materials in the Management Gateway for Indiana's Kids (MaGIK); and
3. **[REVISED]** Ensure the forms and other materials listed below are in the licensing file, as appropriate, for foster family homes to be licensed and to maintain their license:
 - a. Completed [Application for Foster Family Home License \(SF10100\)](#),
 - b. [Resource Family Home Physical Environment Checklist \(SF53186\)](#) completed annually,
 - c. [Water Agreement \(SF54612\)](#) and documentation of results or statement of city water,
 - d. Original approved [Resource Family Preparation Assessment \(SF52795\)](#), including [Cover Page with signatures](#),
 - e. Original signed [Resource Parent Role Acknowledgment \(SF54642\)](#) and each subsequent signed agreement at licensure and re-licensure,
 - f. Completed [Annual Report Regarding Resource Family Home \(SF53213\)](#),

¹ The licensing worker refers to the DCS Regional Foster Care Specialist (RFCS) or the Licensed Child Placing Agency worker

- g. Updated [Resource Family Preparation Assessment \(SF52795\)](#), including [Cover Page with signatures](#) (at every relicensure) incorporating annual reports,
- h. Completed [Licensing Staff Inquiry Regarding Foster Family Home \(SF53214\)](#) form regarding each child placed in the foster family home at the time of the child's departure from the home or at annual review or re-licensure, whichever comes first,
- i. Verification that the foster parent(s) has met the pre-service training requirement (copy of training records),
- j. Completed [Pre-Service / In-Service Evaluation of Trainee \(SF52760\)](#),
- k. Verification of the required annual in-service training hours (copy of training records),
- l. Verification of Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), first aid, and universal precautions training (copy of training records) at initial and re-licensure,
- m. Completed [Application for Criminal History Background Check \(SF53259\)](#) at initial, annual, and re-licensure,
- n. Results of background checks at initial and relicensure. Results of criminal history checks at annual review. See separate policy, [12.30 Evaluation of Background Checks for Foster Family Home Licensing](#),
- o. Copy of supporting documentation for the waiver or variance, if applicable. See separate policies, [12.19 Waivers](#) and [12.20 Variances](#),
- p. A copy of [Medical Report for Caregivers \(SF45145\)](#) for each applicant at initial and re-licensure,
- q. A copy of [Medical Report for Household Members \(SF45144\)](#) for each household resident at initial and relicensure ,
- r. Four (4) [Request for Personal Reference Statement for Foster Family Home License Applicants \(SF53203\)](#),
- s. Completed [Foster/Adoptive Family Inventory \(SF54607\)](#),
- t. Completed [Family Network Diagram Guide](#),
- u. Completed [Child Behavioral / Health Challenges \(SF53199\)](#),
- v. Completed [Child Care Plan \(SF54608\)](#),
- w. Verification of applicant(s) or licensee(s) birth (birth certificates or other forms of verification),
- x. Verification of applicant(s) or licensee(s) marriage and divorce (if applicable),
- y. Documentation (letters, narratives, forms) related to the closure of a resource home, whether it is the result of a voluntary withdrawal or an action of the DCS local office to revoke the license, if applicable,
- z. Completed [Initial Licensure Checklist for Foster Family Homes \(SF53153\)](#),
- aa. Completed [Annual Review Checklist for Foster Family Homes \(SF53154\)](#), and
- bb. Completed [Re-Licensure Checklist for Foster Family Homes \(SF53155\)](#).

[REVISED] The DCS Central Office Licensing Unit will conduct a licensing file Quality Assurance Review (QAR) process for DCS local offices and LCPAs. Random samplings of hard copy licensing files will be reviewed. The process will be as follows:

1. LCPA and DCS local office's will receive a listing of licensing files that have been selected for review. Licensing staff will forward copies (NOT ORIGINALS) of the total file to the Central Office Licensing Unit. Documentation should be organized as requested. The complete licensing case files are due in Central Office two (2) weeks after the QAR notice is received by the DCS Local Office or LCPA;
2. Upon completion of the review, a feedback notification will be forwarded to the licensing agency. The licensing worker will be expected to correct any errors and provide missing documentation within a two (2) week time period. Anything received by the Central Office Licensing Unit after that two week (2) period will not be reviewed as part of the QAR and will be noted as an error or omission. The licensing worker will provide the

requested information in hard copy to the Central Office Licensing Unit via mail or scanned into email;

3. The Central Office Licensing Unit may request additional licensing case files to be reviewed when errors or omissions appear to be consistent throughout the initial sample files; and
4. A summary outlining the general findings will be sent to each LCPA and DCS local office within 60 days of the QAR completion.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

N/A

FORMS AND TOOLS [REVISED]

1. [Application for Foster Family Home License \(SF10100\)](#)
2. [Resource Family Home Physical Environment Checklist \(SF53186\)](#)
3. [Water Agreement \(SF54612\)](#)
4. [Resource Family Preparation Assessment \(SF52795\)](#), including Cover Page with signatures
5. [Resource Parent Role Acknowledgment \(SF54642\)](#)
6. [Annual Report Regarding Resource Family Home \(SF53213\)](#)
7. [Licensing Staff Inquiry Regarding Foster Family Home \(SF53214\)](#)
8. [Application for Criminal History Background Check \(SF53259\)](#)
9. [Request for a Child Protection Service \(CPS\) History Check \(SF 52802\)](#) on all household members
10. [Medical Report for Caregivers \(SF45145\)](#)
11. [Medical Report for Household Members \(SF45144\)](#)
12. [Request for Personal Reference Statement for Foster Family Home License Applicants \(SF53203\)](#)
13. [Foster/Adoptive Family Inventory \(SF54607\)](#)
14. [Family Network Diagram Guide](#)
15. [Child Behavioral / Health Challenges \(SF53199\)](#)
16. [Child Care Plan \(SF54608\)](#)
17. [Initial Licensure Checklist for Foster Family Homes \(SF53153\)](#)
18. [Annual Review Checklist for Foster Family Homes \(SF53154\)](#)
19. [Re-Licensure Checklist for Foster Family Homes \(SF53155\)](#)

RELATED INFORMATION

Additional Information

Due to accreditation standards, the licensing agency may require additional documentation. This information can be added in the comment section of state forms or documented in the licensing file. State forms cannot be altered.

DCS Central Office Licensing Unit Address

DCS Central Office Licensing Unit
Indiana Department of Child Services, Central Office
302 West Washington Street, E306
Indianapolis, IN 46204

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|  | INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL | |
| | Chapter 12: Foster Family Home Licensing | Effective Date: October 1, 2012 |
| | Section 23: Assessment for Negative Licensing Action | Version: 2 |

POLICY [REVISED]

[REVISED] The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will assess any Child Abuse and/or Neglect (CA/N) allegation regarding licensees of Licensed Child Placing Agency (LCPA) or DCS local office foster homes.

The DCS local office or LCPA responsible for licensing compliance will investigate allegations of licensing rule violations that do not meet the statutory definition of CA/N.

DCS or an LCPA licensing worker¹ may use the results of the Child Protective Service (CPS) assessment as the basis for revocation of a license if CA/N is substantiated or a rule violation is determined. The findings of the licensing complaint investigation may also be used as the basis for corrective action, probationary status, or revocation.

Code Reference

1. [465 IAC 2-1-3\(a\): Foster family; full-time care; health; income; adult boarders; records and reports](#)
2. [465 IAC 2-1-8 \(a\) Personal care of child in boarding home for full-time care of children; supervision; education; religion](#)
3. [IC 31-27-4-17: Probationary status; duration; expiration; extension](#)
4. [IC 31-27-4-18: Inspection of foster family homes](#)
5. [IC 31-27-4-19: Records of monitoring activities and inspections](#)
6. [IC 31-27-4-20: Cooperation by licensees](#)
7. [IC 31-27-4-33: Compliance with rules; disciplinary sanctions; revocation of license](#)

PROCEDURE

[REVISED] DCS Field Staff will:

1. Assess CA/N allegations on foster family homes licensed by DCS local offices and LCPAs;
2. Evaluate the results of the assessment and make appropriate findings; and
3. Submit the completed report to the licensing worker

Upon receipt of the CPS assessment findings or after a licensing complaint investigation, the licensing worker will:

1. Evaluate the findings and present to the DCS Local Office Director or designee, or the LCPA director, and DCS Local Office Attorney for review;

¹ The licensing worker refers to the DCS Regional Foster Care Specialist (RFCS) or the Licensed Child Placing Agency worker

2. Process the recommendation for probationary or negative action in the Management Gateway for Indiana's Kids (MaGIK). See separate policies, [12.17 Probationary Status](#) and [12.21 Revocations](#);
3. Submit written recommendations to the Central Office Licensing Unit for approval;
4. Cooperate with the Central Office Licensing Unit by providing necessary records, documentation, and witnesses upon the request of the Central Office Licensing Unit.

[REVISED] Upon receipt of the findings of the CPS assessment or licensing complaint investigation, the Central Office Licensing Unit will:

1. Gather and review additional information as needed;
2. Make decisions concerning any appropriate sanctions and provide direction and recommendations to the licensing staff; and
3. Inform the appropriate parties of decision.

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| PRACTICE GUIDANCE |
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| FORMS AND TOOLS |
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N/A

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| RELATED INFORMATION |
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N/A

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|  | INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL | |
| | Chapter 12: Foster Family Home Licensing | Effective Date: October 1, 2012 |
| | Section 26: Withdrawing from the Foster Family Home Program | Version: 2 |

POLICY [REVISED]

[REVISED] The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will allow an applicant or licensee to cease participation in the program as a foster parent by:

1. Voluntary closure of initial or relicensure application; or
2. Voluntary closure of a license prior to expiration.

If a foster family does not voluntarily withdraw, then the foster home license will be revoked. See separate policy, [12.21 Revocations](#).

Code Reference
N/A

PROCEDURE

To withdraw from the foster family program, the applicant or licensee will complete and submit to the licensing worker¹ a [Voluntary Withdrawal of Application for Licensure or Relinquishment of Foster Family Home License and Exit Survey \(SF53237\)](#).

Upon receipt of the [Voluntary Withdrawal of Application for Licensure or Relinquishment of Foster Family Home License and Exit Survey \(SF53237\)](#) form, the licensing worker will complete all of the following procedures, as applicable:

1. Request and conduct an exit interview with the applicant or licensee to determine the reasons for voluntarily withdrawing the application;
2. Process the recommendation to close the home in the Management Gateway for Indiana’s Kids (MaGIK); and
3. Notify each Family Case Manager (FCM) of the pending closure of the foster home so that a transition plan may be developed for the child and a new placement located to accommodate the needs of the child. See separate policies [8.38 Placement Changes](#) and [8.41 Transitioning from Out-of-Home Care](#).

PRACTICE GUIDANCE [NEW]

[NEW] Foster parents should be informed that they have the right to withdraw from the foster family home program if they wish. There will be no penalty for implementing a voluntary withdrawal and, if they do so, the home will remain in good standing. If a foster parent wishes to withdraw and does not provide the appropriate documentation, a revocation will be sought.

¹ The licensing worker refers to the DCS Regional Foster Care Specialist (RFCS) or the Licensed Child Placing Agency worker

Revoking a foster parent license means that the license is forcibly closed and is not considered in good standing.

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| FORMS AND TOOLS |
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[Voluntary Withdrawal of Application for Licensure or Relinquishment of Foster Family Home License and Exit Survey \(SF53237\)](#)

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| RELATED INFORMATION |
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N/A

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|  | INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL | |
| | Chapter 12: Foster Family Home Licensing | Effective Date: November 1, 2012 |
| | Section 27: Transferring a Foster Family Home License | Version: 3 |

POLICY [REVISED]

[REVISED] The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will allow a licensed foster family home or a foster family home with an application pending to transfer their current license or application to a different licensing agency.

If a foster family home license transfer is requested, the receiving agency must complete a new Foster Family/Adoptive Home Preparation Assessment Summary (home study). The remainder of the licensing file must be copied and sent by the originating agency to the new agency. It is best practice to send the old home study with the file so the new licensing agency has all historical information on the family. The new licensing worker¹ will be required to complete a new home study.

Note: For purposes of this policy, the “licensing file” is defined as those documents which are required by Indiana code to license a resource home. See separate policies, [12.3 Initial Licensing Packet](#) and [12.11 Family Preparation and Summary](#).

A foster family home license can only be transferred if the home is in good standing with the agency (i.e. no corrective or disciplinary action) unless prior approval is granted by the Central Office Licensing Unit.

Code Reference

N/A

PROCEDURE [REVISED]

[REVISED] When a foster family home licensed by a Licensed Child Placing Agency (LCPA) is transferring their license to another agency or DCS the following procedures must be followed:

1. The foster parent will give the originating agency a signed letter of intent indicating a request to transfer;
2. If the resource is in good standing, the originating agency will fill out the Resource Home License Transfer (SF54781) and send it to the receiving agency;
3. If the resource is NOT in good standing the originating agency will contact the receiving agency to let them know the transfer cannot be completed unless Central Office approval is obtained;
4. If there are children currently placed in the home, the originating agency will obtain statements from all FCMs, who have children in the home, stating they are supportive of the resource transferring to a different agency;

¹ The licensing worker refers to the DCS Regional Foster Care Specialist (RFCS) or the Licensed Child Placing Agency worker

5. The receiving agency will review the Resource Home License Transfer (SF54781) for consideration of the transfer;
6. The receiving agency will send a letter to the originating agency regarding whether or not they are willing to accept the transfer;
7. The originating agency has 14 business days to send the licensing file to the receiving agency once the letter of intent to accept the transfer has been obtained;
8. Both agencies will coordinate a transfer date if all parties agree to accept the licensure transfer;
9. The receiving agency will conduct an initial home visit and complete the Resource Family Home Physical Environment Checklist (SF53186) and the Foster Family Preparation Assessment Summary;
10. The originating agency will maintain all licensing responsibilities for the resource home until the transfer occurs;
11. The originating agency will go into MaGIK and click “Edit” on the “Resource Bar” and change the “Supervising Agency” and the “Assigned Worker” information. **IMPORTANT:** This needs to be completed prior to or on the agreed upon date of the transfer. Once this has been done, the originating agency will no longer be able to complete anything in MaGIK pertaining to the resource so it is imperative to have all licensing information entered in the system prior to changing the supervising agency and licensing worker;
12. The receiving agency will go into MaGIK and submit a recommendation for transfer to the Central Office Licensing Unit which will include completing the Transfer Checklist. The agreed upon date for the transfer must be entered in the last field of the Transfer Checklist in order for the effective date to be correct. **NOTE:** It is important to double check the dates entered on the Transfer Checklist as corrections cannot be made if entered incorrectly. The receiving agency will upload a new home study and update any other licensing information prior to submitting the resource for approval in MaGIK;
13. The Central Office licensing Unit will approve the transfer request in MaGIK and ensure the following are completed:
 - a. Each recommendation for transfer is reviewed, including one from the originating agency and one from the receiving agency,
 - b. Approval or denial of each recommendation for the transfer is entered in MaGIK,
 - c. The approved license reflecting the transfer is printed and the licensure dates from the original license remain the same, and
 - d. A copy of the new license is sent to the receiving agency’s licensing worker to be filed and maintained. The receiving agency has the responsibility to send the license to the foster parent.
14. The originating agency will send the new hard copy license to the resource family home once it is received from Central Office Licensing Unit;
15. The Family Case Manager (FCM) will complete a new Individual Child Placement Referral (ICPR) once the transfer is completed; and
16. If the Central Office Licensing Unit denies the transfer, they will contact the originating and receiving agencies to notify each of the reasons for denial.

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N/A

FORMS AND TOOLS

1. [Foster Family/Adoptive Home Preparation Assessment Summary](#)
2. [Resource Family Home Physical Environment Checklist \(SF53186\)](#)
3. [Request for Personal Reference Statement for the Foster Family Home License Applicants \(SF53203\)](#)
4. [Resource Home License Transfer \(SF54781\)](#)

RELATED INFORMATION

No fees may be charged for transfer of documents.

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|  | INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL | |
| | Chapter 12: Foster Family Home Licensing | Effective Date: October 1, 2012 |
| | Section 28: License Reinstatement | Version: 2 |

POLICY [REVISED]

[REVISED] If a license is closed and it has been four (4) years or less since the date of original license issuance, Indiana Department Child Services (DCS) requires an individual to meet all annual review requirements, including, but not limited to:

1. 15 hours of in-service training prior to obtaining a foster home license; or
2. 20 hours of in-service training prior to obtaining a therapeutic foster home certification.

Note: The expiration date of the reinstated license will be the same expiration date as the original license.

If a license is closed or expired and it has been more than four (4) years since the date of original license issuance, the individual would be treated as a new applicant. DCS will require the individual to meet all initial licensing requirements, including attending new pre-service training. See separate policy, [12.5 Pre-Service Training Requirements](#).

This policy does not apply to licenses that have been revoked.

Code References

[465 IAC 2-1-16: Foster parent training](#)

PROCEDURE

Upon receipt of a license reinstatement request, the following needs to occur:

1. If four (4) years or less has lapsed, upon receipt of a license reinstatement request, the licensing worker¹ will:
 - a. Verify all (annual review) requirements have been completed,
 - b. Open the existing resource in the Management Gateway for Indiana's Kids (MaGIK) and update applicable information, and
 - c. Submit recommendation in MaGIK for approval.

2. If more than four (4) years has lapsed, upon receipt of a license reinstatement request, the licensing worker will:
 - a. Verify all initial application verifications have been met. See separate policies, [12.3 Initial Licensing Packet](#), [12.5 Pre-Service Training requirements](#), [12.6 Medical Training Requirements](#), [12.8 Receipt of Application](#), and [12.29 Conducting Background Checks for Foster Home Applicants](#),
 - b. Open the existing resource in MaGIK and update applicable information, and

¹ The licensing worker refers to the Regional Foster Care Specialist (RFCS) or the Licensed Child Placing Agency (LCPA) worker.

c. Submit recommendation in MaGIK for appropriate approval.

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|  | INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL | |
| | Chapter 12: Foster Family Home Licensing | Effective Date: July 1, 2012 |
| | Section 29: Conducting Background Checks for Foster Family Home Licensing | Version: 3 |

POLICY [REVISED]

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) requires background checks to be conducted for the purpose of foster family home licensing on all persons who:

1. Live in the home; or
2. Work or volunteer in the home and have or will have direct contact, on a regular and continuing basis, with children who are or will be under the direct supervision of the foster parent.

After a child is placed in a foster family home, DCS requires background checks on:

1. New household members who have an intent to reside in the home for at least 21 days (the days do not have to be consecutive); checks must be completed prior to moving into the foster family home;
2. Current household members who turn 14 or 18 years old; fingerprints and LEA are required within 30 days of his/her 18th birthday; and National Sex Offender Registry checks are required within 30 days of his/her 14th birthday; or
3. New employees and/or volunteers; checks must be completed prior to beginning work or volunteering in that licensed resource home.

The following background checks will be conducted on foster family homes:

1. Fingerprint-Based National Criminal History Check (Fingerprint-Based Check);
2. Child Protection Services (CPS History Check) History Check;
3. Sex Offender Registry Check; and
4. Local Law Enforcement Agency (LEA) Records Check.

The type of background check conducted will vary based on the age of the subject of the check.

DCS will not conduct background checks on children under DCS care and supervision; this includes Youth in Collaborative Care.

Note: Youth in Collaborative Care are still in foster care; therefore, background checks are not required unless the child has been out of DCS' care for an extended amount of time. In those cases, the DCS Collaborative Care Case Worker will determine whether or not background checks are necessary.

Fingerprint-Based Checks conducted for foster family home licensing cannot be used for adoption or any other purpose. A new fingerprint check is required.

For Initial and Relicensure of Foster Family Homes

Background checks will consist of the following:

1. For all persons age 18 and older:

- a. Fingerprint-Based Check,
 - b. CPS History Check in every state where the subject of the check has lived during the last five (5) years,
 - c. Sex Offender Registry Check in every state where the subject of the check has lived during the last five (5) years, and
 - d. LEA Records Check in every local police/sheriff jurisdiction where the subject of the check has lived during the last five (5) years.
2. For all persons age 14 – 17 years:
 - a. CPS History Check in every state where the subject of the check has lived during the last five (5) years, and
 - b. Sex Offender Registry Check in every state where the subject of the check has lived during the last five (5) years.
3. For all persons age 0 -13 years, a CPS History Check in every state where the subject of the check has lived during the last five (5) years.

Exceptions to Fingerprinting

The only exception to fingerprinting a subject of the check is if he or she has a physical disability that makes it impossible to obtain the subject's fingerprint. The exception does not apply to subjects who can be printed but the quality of the fingerprints is poor. The exception can only be granted by the DCS Central Office Background Check Unit (COBCU) and is for limited and case-specific situations, such as the following:

1. When the subject does not have fingers;
2. When a person trained to take fingerprints has documented that the subject's disabling condition prevents fingerprinting; or
3. When a qualified medical practitioner has documented the subject's disabling condition prevents fingerprinting.

To receive an exception, the following must be sent to the COBCU:

1. A letter requesting the exception and explaining the disabling condition; and
2. The required documentation from the person trained to take fingerprints, or qualified medical practitioner or evidence that the individual does not have fingers.

If the exception is granted, COBCU will complete the Indiana Limited Criminal History Check (LCH) on the subject of the check. If the subject lived in any other state in the last five years, contact COBCU for guidance on what type of check is needed in that state.

Annual Reviews

DCS requires those who live, work or volunteer in the foster family home to complete the following background checks at the annual review:

1. LCH check (age 18 and older);
2. CPS History Check (all ages);
3. Sex Offender Registry (age 14 and older); and
4. LEA Records Checks (age 18 and older).

Note: Background checks for the annual review process do not require fingerprints.

Extracurricular Activities

DCS does not have the statutory authority to fingerprint individuals involved in the child's participation in extracurricular activities. These would include but are not limited to Scouting, Youth Groups, School Parties, Sleepovers, Roller Skating parties, and Birthday parties. See

separate policy, [8.23 Extracurricular Activities](#). Discretion should be used when deciding whether CPS History Checks, Sex Offender Registry Checks and/or LCH Checks are needed.

Child Care

Background checks have already been completed by the Indiana Division of Family Resources for licensed childcare providers. No additional background check is needed.

DCS does not have the statutory authority to fingerprint in-home or out-of-home unlicensed babysitters that supervise the child(ren) irregularly. Examples of irregular childcare include but are not limited to visiting or spending time with (including overnight visits) with friends and/or relatives, going to the movies, grocery store or other similar activities. Discretion should be used when deciding whether CPS History Checks, Sex Offender Registry Checks and/or LCH Checks are needed.

Unlicensed out-of-home childcare providers that supervise the child(ren) on a regular and continuing basis shall have the following background checks conducted for all household members of the childcare provider's home:

1. CPS History Checks in every state where the subject of the check has lived during the last five (5) years (all persons regardless of age);
2. Sex Offender Registry Checks in every state where the subject of the check has lived during the last five (5) years-(Ages 14 years and older); and
3. LCH Checks (age 18 years and older).

Fingerprint-Based Checks should not be conducted for unlicensed out-of-home childcare providers.

Unlicensed in-home childcare providers that supervise the child on a regular and continuing basis would be considered an employee or volunteer of the foster family home and the background checks required for an employee or volunteer of the home (Fingerprint-Based Check, CPS History Check, Sex Offender Registry Check and a LEA Records Check) should be completed. Examples of regular and continuous childcare include, but are not limited to, childcare provided daily or on a consistent reoccurring schedule while the relative caregiver works or participates in other reoccurring scheduled obligations.

DCS will maintain the confidentiality of all information gained during the background check process, following all applicable state and federal laws. See separate policy [2.6 Sharing Confidential Information](#).

Code References

1. [IC 10-13-3-31: Release of Data to Subject Person; Fee; Challenge of Data Authorized](#)
2. [IC 31-9-2-22.5: Definition of Criminal History Check](#)
3. [IC-34-18-6.1: Predisposition Report; Contents](#)
4. [IC 31-26-5: Family Preservation Services](#)
5. [IC 31-34-20-1.5: Placement in Household with Certain Individuals Prohibited; Exceptions; Criminal History Checks](#)
6. [240 IAC Article 6: Criminal History Record Information](#) Indiana State Police Department

PROCEDURE [REVISED]

For the persons that live, work, or volunteer in the foster family home, the Regional Foster Care Specialist (RFCS) or Licensed Child Placing Agency (LCPA) licensing worker will:

1. Verify the identity of each subject of the check, regardless of age. See separate policy, [2.9 Verifying Identity](#), by reviewing one (1) available and valid, government-issued identification document such as, but not limited to a:
 - a. Driver's license,
 - b. Social Security card,
 - c. Photo identification card,
 - d. Passport, or
 - e. Birth certificate.

2. Have each subject of the check complete the [Application for Criminal History Background Check \(SF53259\)](#):
 - a. The subject of the check must sign and date the form, and
 - b. The licensing worker must place the original in the licensing file after completion of the background check process.

3. Register persons age 18 years and older for the Fingerprint-Based Check, unless requesting an Exception to Fingerprinting:
 - a. Complete the registration process for the subject of the check for electronic fingerprinting through the DCS approved fingerprint vendor and providing the subject with a copy of the registration confirmation number given at the end of the registration process,
 - b. Provide the subject of the check with the customized step by step instructions for registering for fingerprinting which the licensing worker is unable to register the subject of the check (see Registering for Fingerprints below),
 - c. Inform the applicants to use the same government issued identification when registering and completing the fingerprint check,
 - d. Ensure the subject of the check is successfully fingerprinted, and
 - e. Obtain the results of the fingerprint based check. The COBCU will provide a letter via email to the DCS local office or LCPA contact person handling all background check material and inform them of the Fingerprint-Based Check status:
 1. If fingerprints are rejected, follow the instructions on the Reprint Notice. A 'reprint' appointment must be scheduled. Do not start a new registration or there will be a duplicate charge for the cost of printing. Provide the subject of the check a copy of the reprint notice if they will be scheduling their 'reprint' appointment themselves; and
 2. For all other results, see separate policy, [12.30 Evaluation of Background Checks for Foster Family Home Licensing](#).

4. Conduct a Sex Offender Registry Check for all persons age 14 years and older and print the results via the Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Public website at <http://www.nsopw.gov/Core/Portal.aspx>. If a match is found, please refer to separate policy, [12.30 Evaluation of Background Checks for Foster Family Home Licensing](#);

Note: If you are searching a common name and results show multiple matches, narrow the search by state. If this occurs, search every state the subject has lived in for the past five (5) years.

5. Conduct a CPS History Check for all persons:
 - a. For Indiana:
 1. As the requesting agency, the licensing worker will complete Section A of the Indiana [Request for Child Protection Service \(CPS\) History Check \(SF52802\)](#);
 2. Have the subject of the check, or representative if a minor, complete Section B; and
 3. Complete a search of the Management Gateway for Indiana’s Kids (MaGIK) System, and hardcopy files if available, and reflect the results in Section C;

Note: LCPAs are unable to access this information and will need to send a copy of the Indiana [Request for Child Protection Service \(CPS\) History Check \(SF52802\)](#) to DCS COBCU or the DCS local office.
 - b. For all other states, conduct a CPS History check search for every other state the individual has lived during the past five (5) years. Process your search request at <http://www.cclid.ca.gov/AdamWalsh/2609.htm>. Click on “[List of Contacts For Other State’s Child Abuse and Neglect Registries](#)”;
 - c. If the person has CPS history in any state, refer to separate policy, [12.30 Evaluation of Background Checks for Foster Family Home Licensing](#), for further action required.

6. Conduct LEA Records Checks:
 - a. Request a records check from the local or county LEA with jurisdiction of the subject’s home address utilizing the [Application for Criminal History Background Check \(SF53259\)](#), Section titled “For Law Enforcement Use Only”;
 - b. Request searches from the appropriate LEA for ALL other residential addresses the subject of the check has resided during the past five (5) years;
 - c. Upon receiving the results of each check, see separate policy, [12.30 Evaluation of Background Checks for Foster Family Home Licensing](#).

Note: It is the responsibility of the applicant to cover any fees for out-of-state CPS history.

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Undocumented Individuals

If an individual is undocumented, the licensing worker should contact the COBCU for instructions and approval as background checks are still required. The fingerprint registration cannot be completed without a social security number and the assistance of the COBCU.

Notifying the Licensing Worker of Arrest, Convictions or Substantiation of Abuse or Neglect.

The licensing worker must be notified within 24 hours of the arrest, conviction or substantiation of abuse or neglect of the licensee, a household member, employee, and/or volunteer. The licensing worker and supervisor will evaluate the severity and seriousness of the offense on a case-by-case basis and contact COBCU if additional guidance is needed.

Registering for Fingerprints

If the licensing worker is unable to complete the registration process for the subject of the check, the subject of the check is to be provided a copy of the step by step instructions for registration. The name of the DCS local office or LCPA, the licensing worker's name and phone number, and the reason for printing should be given to the subject of the check for registration purposes. The DCS billing code should be given to those being checked through a DCS local office.

Exception to Fingerprinting

If an Exception to Fingerprinting request is granted, COBCU will run an Indiana LCH. The licensing worker will complete the non-fingerprint based checks for all other states where the subject of the check has resided during the past five years to the COBCU. The COBCU will provide a letter via e-mail to the local office or LCPA contact person handling all background check material and inform them of the clearance status resulting from the search.

For purposes of the exception for a physical disability, a "qualified medical practitioner" means the following:

1. A physician licensed under IC 25-22.5;
2. A physician assistant licensed under IC 25-27.5;
3. A physical therapist licensed under IC 25-27;
4. An advanced practice nurse licensed under IC 25-23;
5. A chiropractor licensed under IC 25-10; and
6. A psychologist licensed under IC25-33.

Searching CPS History

Search all available hardcopy records and complete an Indiana Child Welfare Information System search.

FORMS AND TOOLS

1. [Application for Criminal History Background Check \(SF53259\)](#)
2. [Request for a Child Protection Services \(CPS\) History Check \(SF52802\)](#)
3. [Background Check Matrix for Unlicensed Placements and Foster Care Desk Guide](#)

RELATED INFORMATION

Court Ordered Exception and/or Completion of Fingerprint- Based Checks

Neither the court nor any other person or organization has the authority to exclude the subject of the check from completing all required background checks. The only exception to this is if the COBCU grants an Exception to Fingerprinting outlined in this policy.

The court nor any other person or organization cannot require DCS to complete Fingerprint-Based Checks on those subjects over which DCS has no statutory authority to fingerprint nor can DCS be required to pay for the cost of such printing.

If the FCM believes at any time that DCS is being required to completed background checks outside the statutory authority, please contact the Deputy Director of Placement Support and Compliance over COBCU for assistance.

Special Fingerprinting Issues

Homebound

If a subject of the check cannot leave his or her home for fingerprinting, the licensing worker should contact the COBCU for appropriate instruction and approval.

Unreadable Prints and Reprint Notice

Fingerprints may be rejected by the Indiana State Police (ISP) or the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) for a number of reasons. Each rejection is evaluated individually. For each reprint notice issued, the subject of the check must schedule a reprint appointment. Once the necessary number of rejections within the appropriate timeframe has been obtained, COBCU will request that a nonemergency Name-Based Check be processed. Once the name based check has been requested the processing timeframe is longer than a fingerprint check.

Checking the Status of a Fingerprint-Based Check Report

The Local Office Director (LOD), or designee, and all RFCS are provided access to the administrative website to check the status of fingerprints. A username and password may be obtained by emailing the COBCU at background.checkunit@dcs.in.gov.

Limited Criminal History (LCH)

A LCH is a name based search of the ISP database that contains only felonies and Class A misdemeanor arrests within the State of Indiana and can only be conducted on individuals 18 years of age and older. This search should not be used if fingerprinting is being completed. Completeness of this information is based upon local law enforcement participation. This search is available online at <https://secure.in.gov/apps/isp/lch/>. This site can be accessed by the general public and results are immediate. For assistance with username or password issues, please email background.checkunit@dcs.in.gov.

DCS may provide a copy of the LCH Check to the subject of the check.

If any of the checks conducted by DCS reveal an inaccurate record, the record may be formally challenged. A Review Challenge of inaccurate information must be made to the arresting agency. For Indiana convictions, this would be made to the ISP.

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|  | INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL | |
| | Chapter 12: Foster Family Home Licensing | Effective Date: July 1, 2012 |
| | Section 30: Evaluation of Background Checks for Foster Family Home Licensing | Version: 4 |

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| POLICY [REVISED] |
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The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) Central Office Background Check Unit (COBCU) will evaluate the results of all Fingerprint-Based National Criminal History Checks (Fingerprint-Based Checks) on all required persons for the purpose of foster family home licensing. The DCS local office or Licensing Child Placing Agency (LCPA) licensing worker will evaluate the remaining background checks. See separate policy, [12.29 Conducting Background Checks for Foster Family Home Licensing](#). The final results will be placed in the licensing file and documented in the Management Gateway for Indiana’s Kids (MaGIK) System.

Fingerprint-Based Check

The COBCU will evaluate the results and notify the assigned DCS local office or LCPA contact person by emailing the Fingerprint-Based Check Status Letter.

The COBCU will conditionally disqualify all persons whose criminal history is incomplete and requires further verification.

Note: The subject of the check will remain in a conditionally disqualified status until the subject provides the COBCU with a copy of required verification of charges, including but not limited to court orders showing disposition and level of conviction, a court order showing dismissal and/or arrest reports. Upon receipt of all necessary verifications, COBCU will reevaluate the status and issue an amended Fingerprint-Based Check status letter to the assigned DCS local office or LCPA contact person by e-mail.

The COBCU will disqualify all persons whose criminal history report includes the following, although some may be eligible to file for a waiver (see Waivers section below):

1. Any misdemeanor related to the health and/or safety of a child;
2. Any felony;
3. Four (4) or more misdemeanor convictions; or
4. A juvenile adjudication for an act that if committed by an adult would be one of the 21 felonies listed in the Waivers section below.

The COBCU will qualify all persons whose Fingerprint-Based Check Report has no criminal history or reflects arrests and/or convictions that do not result in a conditionally disqualified or disqualified status.

Child Protection Services (CPS) History Checks

The licensing worker will review the completed CPS history results from Indiana, and if applicable, all other states of residency within the past five (5) years to determine if there are reports of any substantiation of abuse and/or neglect for the subject of the check. If there is

substantiated CPS history in Indiana or in another state, the filing and approval of a waiver is required for licensing approval. See below section regarding Waivers.

Note: It is the responsibility of the applicant to cover any fees for out-of-state CPS history.

Sex Offender Registry Check

The licensing worker will evaluate the Sex Offender Registry checks to determine if there are any matches. If there is a match the home cannot be licensed or remain licensed and COBCU should be notified immediately. The COBCU will re-evaluate the Fingerprint-Based Check report.

Local Law Enforcement Agency (LEA) Records Check

The licensing worker will evaluate the results of the LEA Records Check. If there is a felony, four (4) or more misdemeanors, or a misdemeanor that relates to the health and safety of a child, the licensing worker will contact the COBCU immediately. The COBCU will cross-reference the LEA Records Check with the Fingerprint-Based Check History Report to assure the LEA Records Check do not alter the Fingerprint-Based Check Status. At any time the licensing worker believes the LEA Records Check report may alter the status of the Fingerprint-Based Check Report, the licensing worker will contact the COBCU consultant that is listed on the Fingerprint-Based Check Status Letter for further action.

Waivers

COBCU will accept a request for a waiver of disqualified juvenile history or of substantiated CPS history. COBCU will also accept a waiver of disqualifying criminal history if the subject of the check has not been convicted of a misdemeanor related to the health and safety of a child or has not been convicted of any of the felonies listed below:

1. [Murder \(IC 35-42-1-1\)](#);
2. [Causing suicide \(IC 35-42-1-2\)](#);
3. [Assisting suicide \(IC 35-42-1-2.5\)](#);
4. [Voluntary manslaughter \(IC 35-42-1-3\)](#);
5. [Reckless homicide \(IC 35-42-1-5\)](#);
6. [Battery \(IC 35-42-2-1\)](#) within the last five (5) years;
7. [Domestic battery \(IC 31-27-4-13\)](#);
8. [Aggravated battery \(IC 35-42-2-1.5\)](#);
9. [Kidnapping \(IC 35-42-3-2\)](#);
10. [Criminal confinement \(IC 35-42-3-3\)](#) within the last five (5) years;
11. [A felony sex offense under \(IC 35-42-4\)](#);
12. [Carjacking \(IC 35-42-5-2\)](#) within the last five (5) years;
13. [Arson Class \(IC 35-43-1-1\)](#) within the last five (5) years;
14. [Incest \(IC 35-46-1-3\)](#);
15. Neglect of a dependent ([IC 35-46-1-4\(a\)\(1\)](#)) and ([IC 35-46-1-4\(a\)\(2\)](#));
16. Child selling ([IC 35-46-1-4\(d\)](#));
17. Operating a vehicle while intoxicated ([IC 9-30-5](#));
18. A felony involving a weapon within the last five (5) years under ([IC 35-47](#)) or ([IC 35-47.5](#));
19. A felony relating to controlled substances within the last five (5) years under ([IC 35-48-4](#));
20. An offense relating to material or a performance that is harmful to minors or obscene under ([IC 35-49-3](#)); and/or

21. A felony that is equivalent to a felony listed in subdivisions (1) through (20) for which the conviction was entered in another state.

The licensing worker will immediately recommend denial or revocation of the foster family home license if the background check subsequently reveals that an applicant or licensee or an individual living, working, or volunteering in the licensed foster family home:

1. Has a disqualified history or substantiated CPS history that is not waived by DCS; or
2. Has a disqualified history or substantiated CPS history where a waiver is not being actively pursued.

Note: If the household member voluntarily leaves the home, the denial or revocation will not be necessary.

Code References

1. [IC 31-27-4-5: Applying for license; criminal history checks](#)
2. [IC 31-27-4-6: Grounds for denial of license applications](#)
3. [IC 31-27-4-13: Denial of license](#)
4. [IC 31-27-4-32: Grounds for revocation of license](#)
5. [IC 31-27-4-33: Compliance with rules; disciplinary sanctions; revocation of license](#)
6. [IC 9-30-5: Operating a Vehicle While Intoxicated](#)

PROCEDURE

The licensing worker will complete the following steps:

1. For a Fingerprint-Based Check, review the Status Letter received from COBCU. Where the status is either conditionally disqualified or disqualified:
 - a. Provide a copy of the Fingerprint-Based Check Status Letter to the subject of the check,
 - b. Instruct the subject of the check to contact the COBCU consultant listed on the Fingerprint-Based Check Status Letter to determine if the subject of the check is eligible to apply for a waiver. If eligible and the licensing worker supports the waiver, instruct the subject of the check that a request for a waiver must be submitted to the COBCU within 10 days of the date of the Fingerprint-Based Check Status Letter. (See #5 below regarding applying for a waiver), and
 - c. Instruct the subject of the check to contact the COBCU consultant listed on the Fingerprint-Based Check Status Letter within 10 days of the date of the results letter if conditionally disqualified. Provide the requested documentation to the COBCU consultant. Upon reevaluation, if the status is disqualified refer to “b” above.
2. Review the results of the CPS History Check;
 - a. If a substantiated CPS history is discovered the licensing worker will give the subject of the check a copy of the completed Indiana Request for a Child Protection Services (CPS) History Check (SF52802/CW2128) form showing substantiated history. See separate policy, [2.6 Sharing of Confidential Information](#), and
 - b. A request for a waiver should be filed within 10 days of receiving the CPS history at initial licensing, relicensure and annual review. (See Waivers

section below.) The request for the waiver must be granted for the home to be licensed or remain licensed.

3. Review the results of the Sex Offender Registry Check for a match to the subject of the check. If there a match for the subject of the check, do not license the home or recommend revocation;
4. Review the results of the LEA Records Checks and contact COBCU within five (5) days of the check for further evaluation if there is a felony, four (4) or more misdemeanors, or a misdemeanor that relates to the health and safety of a child. At any time the licensing worker believes the LEA Records Check may alter the Fingerprint-Based Check Status, the licensing worker will contact the consultant that is listed on the Fingerprint-Based Check Status Letter for further action; and
5. To request a waiver of disqualified criminal history and/or substantiated CPS history submit the below to the COBCU by fax at 317-234-4633 or scan/e-mail at background.checkunit@dcs.in.gov:
 - a. A signed letter from the subject of the check (parent or guardian may write if the subject of the check is a minor and they are unable to write their own letter; however, the minor should sign if able) explaining in detail the situation involving the substantiation or criminal act and addressing:
 1. The length of time since the person committed the offense, delinquent act, or act that resulted in the substantiated report of abuse or neglect;
 2. The severity of the offense of abuse or neglect, including jail or prison time served and whether they are currently on probation or parole;
 3. Evidence of the person's rehabilitation, including the person's cooperation with a treatment plan, if applicable; and
 4. The ability of the proposed applicant to provide for the child's safety and well-being.
 - b. A signed letter on agency letterhead or email from the licensing worker explaining:
 1. His or her observation of the subject of the check;
 2. The reasons he or she supports or does not support the waiver request; and
 3. If the child is already been placed in the subject's care as a relative placement.
 - c. An [Indiana Request for a Child Protection Service History \(CPS\) History Check state form 52802](#). If substantiation of abuse and/or neglect is found, there must be a paper 311 included for all substantiations reported on the form above. Also if the subject has resided outside the state of Indiana in the past five years, the other state's CPS search results must also be submitted,
 - d. A screen print of the Sex Offender Registry Check completed from the required National Sex Offender website, if 14 years old or older,
 - e. A copy of the written results of all LEA checks, if 18 years and older, and
 - f. A copy of the fingerprint based status letter which was em-mailed to the DCS local office, if requesting a CPS waiver only. This is required for checks completed for the purpose of relative placement showing the fingerprint based status of qualified if 18 years and older.
6. Place a copy of the results documents for all background checks and any waiver letters in the licensing file and document in the Indiana Child Welfare Information System, if applicable.

Note: A criminal history or CPS waiver granted for the purpose of foster family home licensure may not be used for the additional purposes of adoption, employment or any other reason. A new waiver request must be submitted and granted for each additional purpose.

The DCS COBCU will:

1. Evaluate the Fingerprint-Based Checks report within five (5) business days of receipt and notify by e-mail the assigned DCS local office or LCPA contact person regarding the Fingerprint-Based Check status; Re-evaluate history based on the received documentation and issue a new status letter if conditionally disqualified or disqualified provide guidance;
2. For waivers of disqualified criminal history and substantiated CPS history:
 - a. Upon receipt of the complete waiver request packet, the COBCU will summarize, make a recommendation, and submit the request to the Deputy Director of Placement Support and Compliance, or designee.
 - b. The Deputy Director of Placement Support and Compliance, or designee, will submit the recommendation to the Background Check Team for a joint decision.

Note: The Background Check Review Team consists of the Deputy Director of Placement Support and Compliance (or their designee), the DCS Local Office Director (LOD) and Regional Manager (RM) of the DCS local office that has supervision of the child. The team’s decision may be made via phone or email.

- c. Notify by email the assigned DCS local office or LCPA contact person of the waiver decision. A decision will be returned in approximately 10 working days and the status will be either “Waiver granted” or “Waiver not granted.”

- 4 For Exception to Fingerprint request, when the exception is granted, generate the Indiana Limited Criminal History (LCH) check and notify by e-mail the assigned DCS local office or LCPA background check contact person regarding the status.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

N/A

FORMS AND TOOLS

[Background Check Matrix for Unlicensed Placements and Foster Care Desk Guide](#)

RELATED INFORMATION

Factors for the Licensing Worker and Background Check Review Team to Consider When Recommending and/or Approving the Background Check Waivers

Information yielded on all background checks should be considered, including but not limited to the following:

1. The current home environment;
2. The ability of the proposed resource family to provide for the child's safety and well-being;
3. The length of time that has passed since the conviction, juvenile adjudication, or CA/N substantiation;
4. The severity of the offense;
5. Evidence of the person's rehabilitation;
6. The duration and quality of the relationship between the child and the proposed resource family; and
7. Any impact the denial of the placement may have on the ability to keep the sibling group together if siblings are involved.

Disclosing Fingerprint-Based Check Information

Upon request, the DCS local office may receive a copy of the official criminal history transcript that contains criminal history reported by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Indiana State Police (ISP). Neither LCPAs nor the subject of the check will receive a copy of the official FBI or ISP transcript. DCS may verbally disclose the specific crimes to the subject of the check. If any of the checks conducted by DCS reveal an inaccurate record, the subject of the check may formally challenge the record. A Review Challenge of inaccurate information must be made to the law enforcement agency that posted the record. To refute inaccurate Indiana criminal history records or information, please request a Review Challenge from ISP.

Disqualified Fingerprint Status

Disqualified status means that unless a waiver is granted the subject of the check is ineligible to be a:

1. Foster parent;
2. Household member; or
3. An employee or volunteer of the home who has or will have direct contact, on a regular and continuing basis, with children who are or will be under the direct supervision of the foster family home.

Conditionally Disqualified Fingerprint Status

Conditionally Disqualified status means that until the conditionally disqualifying arrest or conviction is resolved and the status is changed to Qualified (or the status is changed to Disqualified and a Waiver is subsequently granted) the subject of the check is ineligible to be a:

1. Foster parent;
2. Household member; or
3. An employee or volunteer of the home who has or will have direct contact, on a regular and continuing basis, with children who are or will be under the direct supervision of the foster family home.

Examples of reported information on a Fingerprint-Based Check Report that will lead to a conditional disqualification include, but are not limited to, an arrest without a disposition or a conviction where additional information on the circumstances of the arrest and conviction are required.

Qualified Fingerprint Status

Qualified fingerprint status means that the subject of the check is eligible to be a foster parent, household member, or have direct contact, on a regular and continuing basis, with children who are or will be under the direct supervision of the foster family home, as long as the subject of the check passes all other background checks.

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|  | INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL | |
| | Chapter 12: Foster Family Home Licensing | Effective Date: October 1, 2012 |
| | Section 31: Financial Verification for Licensure | Version: 1 |

POLICY [NEW]

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) partners with foster family homes to ensure children in foster care are placed in a stable environment. In pursuit of this, DCS will evaluate the financial stability of persons applying for foster family home licensure or re-licensure.

In accordance with 465 IAC 2-1.5-5 (Qualifications Of The Foster Family; Finances), foster parents shall demonstrate that the household has sufficient income and appropriate fiscal management to maintain its stability and security without a foster care payment. Foster care payments received on behalf of the child are intended for the sole benefit and care of the child while in foster care.

Foster family homes will submit accurate financial information including, but not limited to pay check stubs, tax forms, and monthly expenses on [Foster/Adoption Family Inventory \(SF54607\)](#) as part of the licensure process.

Code Reference

1. [465 IAC 2-1.5: Licensing of Foster Family Homes for Children](#)
2. IC 31-27-2-4 Rules; Establishment of Standards
3. IC 31-27-2-5 Monitoring of Licensed Entities

PROCEDURE

Foster family homes will complete the [Foster/Adoption Family Inventory \(SF54607\)](#) as part of the licensure/re-licensure process. The financial information section will include:

1. Source and amount of any monthly household income; and
2. Source and amount of any monthly expenses and outstanding debts.

The licensing worker¹ will:

1. Evaluate the financial information received on the [Foster/Adoption Family Inventory \(SF54607\)](#) to determine whether the foster family home has adequate income to meet its monthly financial obligations without utilizing foster care payment as income; and
2. Discuss with the foster family home the importance of utilizing foster care payments for the benefit and care of the child while in foster care.

¹ The licensing worker refers to the DCS Regional Foster Care Specialist (RFCS) or the Licensed Child Placing Agency worker

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

Evaluation of Financial Stability

When evaluating the financial stability of a foster family home for licensure purposes, the licensing worker should consider monthly income including, but not limited to:

1. Wages from employment;
2. Rental property income;
3. Investment income;
4. Interest;
5. Monthly trust fund payments; and
6. Child Support Payments

Recurring, but not time limited payments, may also be considered as monthly income. This includes, but is not limited to:

1. Social Security (RSDI) payments;
2. Title IV-E Adoption Assistance (AAP);
3. Supplemental Security Income (SSI); and
4. Veteran Benefits

Food stamps, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and time-limited income such as unemployment benefits would not be considered as monthly income for the purposes of foster family home licensure. However, receipt of these funds does not automatically disqualify an applicant from becoming a foster parent.

Utilizing Foster Care Payment

Foster parents should utilize per diem to cover reasonable costs of caring for the child including, but not limited to:

1. Food for the child (including infant formula);
2. Clothing (replacement clothing, repairs, mending, alterations, etc.);
3. Shelter (summer camp, or hotel accommodations during school trips, etc.);
4. Supervision that substitutes for daily supervision (day care/babysitter);
5. School supplies (paper, pens, calculator, etc.); and
6. Child's personal incidentals on an ongoing basis (soap, shampoo, toothpaste, diapers, wipes, etc.);

Per-diem is **not** intended and should not be expected or represented to cover costs that would be ordinarily incurred by the foster parent in the absence of a foster care payment. Expenses that should **not** be paid from per diem include, but are not limited to the foster parent's rent, mortgage, insurance payment, car payment, or routine housing maintenance cost.

FORMS AND TOOLS

[Foster/Adoption Family Inventory \(SF54607\)](#)

RELATED INFORMATION

N/A