



STATE OF MICHIGAN
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Memo

Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing

To: Child Placing Agencies and Family Courts

Date: October 13, 2014

From:

Janice Tribble, Child Welfare Licensing Director
Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing

Subject: Child Placing Agency Letter 2014-01

BCAL Analyst Visits to Foster Homes, Unlicensed Relative Homes and Parents of Foster Children

The Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing (BCAL) is responsible to license and monitor child caring organizations such as child caring institutions and child placing agencies and approved governmental units (family courts) that certify foster homes for licensure.

One method of monitoring includes BCAL analyst visits with licensed foster parents, unlicensed relative providers, and birth parents as part of the annual review process for licensed child placing agencies (CPA). The visits occur prior to the onsite licensing inspection of the agency to assess the homes for safety where children reside and to obtain feedback from foster parents, relatives, birth parents and foster children regarding the services being provided by the CPA.

The analyst uses a Contact Sheet to record the details of each visit including name(s), date, location, and children in the placement. The analyst uses that same form to document any issues or concerns identified during the visit. All BCAL analysts are expected to mitigate any safety risks identified in the home before departing. In the event identified safety risks cannot be resolved, the analyst will contact their manager to decide the best course of action to ensure the safety of the child(ren), including but not limited to contact with agency personnel and/or Children's Protective Services if abuse or neglect is suspected. BCAL analysts will forward a narrative of the visit to the assigned BCAL licensing consultant for discussion with the agency and inclusion in the agency's final licensing study report.

Corrective action plans required as a result of the licensing study report must address and provide verification that all concerns documented from the visits and annual licensing inspection that relate to child safety, licensing rules, contract requirements, the Modified Settlement Agreement, or DHS policy are resolved.

Visit Selection Process

The selection of licensed foster homes to be visited as a part of this process is centralized at BCAL to ensure consistency. BCAL generates a list of active, licensed foster homes approximately 4 months prior to the due date of the CPA's annual licensing inspection. Generally, after verifying that there are children placed in the foster home for whom the agency has case management responsibilities, the foster homes will be selected using an electronic randomizer. There may be instances when a specific home is selected due to complaints or other concerns that have been raised regarding that specific home. Agencies that have less than 50 licensed foster homes must have at least three homes selected and agencies with more than 50 licensed foster homes must have at least five percent of the licensed homes selected. Additional homes will be identified to ensure a 50 percent oversample for use when necessary.

The selection of unlicensed relative foster homes to be visited and additional coordination activities involve an agency-identified contact person at the CPA. The contact person will be asked to perform the following activities to assist in the coordination of all visits:

- Provide a list of unlicensed relative homes where the agency has case management responsibility for a child in that home. The number of unlicensed relatives selected for visits will be 5 percent of the total number of unlicensed relative homes caring with foster children being supervised by the agency, up to a maximum of 8 homes with the addition of a 50 percent oversample for use when necessary.
- Verify that there is at least one child placed in the selected foster homes for which the agency has case management responsibility.
- Notify all chosen licensed and unlicensed relative foster homes that they will be contacted by the assigned BCAL analyst to schedule an appointment.

For assistance or additional information contact Janice Tribble, CWL Licensing Director, 517 284-9741, TribbleJ@michigan.gov.