

Job Aid Licensing Relatives

1. CPS to identify relatives within 30 days of removal.
2. CPS completes Relative notification letter (DHS 990)
3. CPS completes Relative Response form (DHS 989)
4. CPS completes Relative Search form (DHS 988)
5. CPS completes Relative Documentation form (DHS 987)
6. CPS forwards (DHS 990, 989, 988, 987) to Foster care.
7. Foster care continues to pursue identification and notification of relatives and documents on DHS 987.

Initial considerations for Relative Placement:

- Complete Initial Safety Screen (DHS 588)
- Meets needs of child (ren)
- Keeps siblings together
- Close proximity unless not in best interest

Prior to the initiation of a placement with a relative, the worker must discuss the following with the potential relative placement:

- The service plan for the child and parent(s).
- The long-term goal and the needs of the child that must be met if placed in their home. (This discussion will determine if the relative is willing and able to meet the needs of the child.)
- Licensure.

Basic Assessment Process for Relative Placement consists of the following requirements:

Prior to placement of a child with an unlicensed relative, a basic safety assessment must be completed utilizing the Initial Safety Screen, DHS-588. The basic assessment consists of:

- A home visit.
- A statewide criminal history clearance on all members of the household including adolescents and children.
- Central registry clearance on all members in the household 18 years of age and older.
- Discussion regarding licensure.

- Upon placement, the relative must be provided with a copy of Relative Caregiver Resources & Responsibilities, DHS-Pub-457.

Completion of Foster Home Licensing Requirements for Relative Caregivers:

- Within **5 days** of a child (ren) placement in a relative's home, FC worker must discuss licensure with the relative caregiver.
- Complete Foster home licensing requirements for Relative Caregiver, DHS 972.
- Must sign DHS 972 indicating interest in licensure or indicate the wish to waive licensure.
 - If the relative wishes to waive licensure, the relative must sign the DHS-875 and the foster care worker must submit for approval.

Note: Relative licensing is optional for children who are American Indian as defined by the Indian Child Welfare Act. See NAA 200 and NAA 215.

Certification Referral for Relative Licensure:

- Within 10 days of child (ren)'s placement, interested relatives are referred to a certification worker (DHS or Private Agency)
- Referral packets must include:
 1. Initial Relative Safety Screen DHS 588
 2. Foster Home Licensing Requirements for Relative Caregivers, DHS 972
- Certification worker must complete home study using DHS 197 within 30 calendar days of the child (ren) placement into relative home. FC worker must ensure the home study is completed.
- If relative home cannot be licensed, case conference with Supervisor to assess the child(ren)'s continued placement in the home.

Waivers

If one of the eight exceptional circumstances listed below exists, the foster care worker may request approval of a waiver. Following the local DHS supervisory approval, waivers must be approved by the County Child Welfare Director for the Designated Urban Counties or the Children's Services Field Operations Director, within the DHS Central Office, for the other 77 counties. If the waiver to forgo licensure is not approved, the relative caregiver must become licensed or the child (ren) must be replaced within 30 days.

Exceptional Circumstances:

1. Reunification is imminent.
2. The child is a permanent ward and the relative caregiver is pursuing adoption.
3. The relative caregiver will become the child's juvenile guardian without guardianship assistance payments and it is anticipated that the unsubsidized juvenile guardianship will be granted timely.
4. The child is an Indian child as defined by the Indian Child Welfare Act.
5. The case meets the requirements of ICPC Regulation 7-Priority Placement. (FOM 932.2)
6. The court orders placement against DHS recommendation.
7. The Foster Care Review Board (FCRB) recommends the child(ren) maintain placement with the relative caregiver against DHS recommendation.
8. The relative caregiver has been fully informed of licensing benefits and does not agree to pursue licensure or is unable to become licensed. The assigned caseworker has completed a 30 day home assessment utilizing the Home Study Outline (DHS-197), the DHS supervisor approved the 30 day home assessment, the home is considered safe for the child as indicated by the Central Registry clearance, criminal history checks, and approved 30 day home assessment, and the placement with the relative is in the child's best interest and will facilitate permanency.

Waiver Process for DHS:

1. The foster care worker or certification worker must discuss the benefits of licensure with the relative caregiver utilizing the Foster Home Licensing Requirements for Relative Caregivers, DHS 972. The relative caregiver must sign the DHS 972.
2. If the relative caregiver wishes to forgo licensure, the assigned foster care worker and relative complete the Relative Caregiver Waiver of Licensure, DHS 875.
3. The foster care worker forwards the signed DHS 972, a completed Home Study Outline DHS 197, and the DHS 875 to the foster care supervisor for approval and signature.
4. If approved, the foster care supervisor must forward DHS 875 and DHS 197 to the County Child Welfare Director for the Designated Urban Counties or the Children's Services Field Operations Director, within the DHS Central Office, for the other 77 counties for final approval.
5. The approved waiver will be kept in the child's case record and signed by the relative caregiver annually.

Waiver Process for Placement Agency Foster Care (PAFC) Provider:

1. The foster care worker must discuss the benefits of licensure with the relative caregiver utilizing the Foster Home Licensing Requirements for Relative Caregivers DHS 972. The relative caregiver must sign the DHS 972.
2. If the relative caregiver wishes to forgo licensure, the foster care worker and relative complete the Relative Caregiver Waiver of Licensure, DHS 875.
3. The foster care worker forwards the signed DHS 972, Home Study Outline DHS 197, and the DHS-875 to the PAFC provider supervisor for signature.
4. The PAFC provider supervisor forwards the DHS 875 and DHS 197 to the assigned DHS monitor for review.
5. The DHS monitor provides a copy of the DHS 875 and DHS 197 to the assigned DHS supervisor and the DHS supervisor forwards the request to the County Child Welfare Director for the Designated Urban Counties or the Children's Services Field Operations Director, within the DHS Central Office, for the other 77 counties for approval.
6. The DHS monitor provides a copy of the approved waiver to the PAFC provider.
6. The approved waiver will be kept in the child's case record and signed by the relative caregiver annually.

If the waiver is approved, the approved waivers (DHS 875 and DHS 972) are filed in the child's case file.

If the waiver is not approved, the relative caregiver must become a licensed foster home, or the child must be moved within 30 days to a relative willing and able to become licensed or to an unrelated licensed foster home.

Process for Replacement:

If one of the exceptional circumstances listed above does not exist, or if a waiver of the licensure requirement is not approved, the child must be replaced within 30 days of the decision not to request or approve the waiver.

1. The decision to move a child must be reviewed by the assigned DHS supervisor and the County Administrator/County Program Manager.
2. If the decision to move the child is approved, the assigned foster care worker shall locate another placement for the child.
3. The assigned foster care worker shall notify the appropriate persons with the Foster Parent Notification of Move (DHS-30) and Foster Care Placement Decision Notice (DHS-31).
4. The assigned foster care worker shall request a Permanency Planning Conference (PPC) to explore alternate placement options.
5. The assigned foster care worker shall follow the policies in the Children's Foster Care Manual, Item FOM 722-3, for replacement.

6. After replacement, the assigned foster care worker shall have at least 2 home visits with the child within the first 30 days to assess the child's adjustment in the new home.

Relative Licensing For Permanent Wards with a Goal of Adoption

If all of the children placed in a relative's home meet the following criteria, do not refer the case to a private child placing agency for licensure:

- All parental rights to the children have been terminated.
- The relative is planning to adoption the child (ren).

DHS shall pursue a waiver for the relative to forgo licensure as outlined above in the section titled, Waiver Process for DHS.

Completion of the Initial Foster Home/Adoption Evaluation, BCAL3130 is a service unit included in the adoption contract and covered under the unit definitions and payments. When an unlicensed relative home is being evaluated for adoption using the BCAL 3130, the agency is not required to send the completed evaluation to BCAL and the payment of \$2300 for licensing a foster home will not be made. Only local office and MCI approval of the evaluation are required for adoption.

If one child placed in a relative's home does not meet the criteria listed above but the cases of other relative children in the home have been referred for adoption services, refer the licensing matter to the same agency that is providing the adoption services. County offices must coordinate the referral process for adoption and licensing to ensure there is not a duplication of services.

If the child's permanency goal changes from adoption after the BCAL 3130 has been completed, the evaluation should be sent to BCAL for foster home license approval, and the private agency shall be reimbursed for completing the licensing process.

