

Practice Guide for Licensing Workers

Teaming

MITEAM COMPETENCY

Licensing is the process of collecting and assessing information to determine if a home is suitable for a foster care placement. The assessment process involves the licensing staff engaging with potential caregivers to acquire the information needed to assess compliance, along with the caregiver's capacity and commitment to serve the characteristics of the children in care. Licensing staff utilize opportunities for engagement to assess the needs of caregivers in an effort to provide support and aid in recruitment and retention strategies.

Teaming is a collective effort that necessitates a team approach. Caseworkers will form a team comprised of the important people in the child and family's life that meets, talks and plans together. Caseworkers will ensure team functioning by making sure the team has the ability and cultural competence to design effective services and supports, adjust as may be needed and use collaborative problem solving.

FIDELITY MEASURES

Observation:

- Helps the individual(s) identify people who are supportive.
- Addresses reasons for reluctance to including specific team members.

Documentation:

- A team that provides support to the child(ren)/youth and family has been formed.
- The worker prepares the family team members for participation on the team.
- The family's suggestions and comments are documented in the case file.
- The team member's suggestions and comments are documented in the case file.
- Documentation indicates the worker maintained contact with the family and support persons.
- The family's team meets within the required timeframes (FOM 722-6B).
- There is evidence in the documentation that the team implements specific safety activities to address safety concerns of the child(ren)/youth.
- There is evidence in the documentation that the team addresses specific permanency plans.
- There is evidence in the documentation that the team addresses specific issues of well-being for the child(ren)/youth.

Interview:

- The individual(s) was able to identify helpful activities of the worker.
- The individual(s) reports the worker acknowledged religious and/or cultural beliefs.
- The individual(s) described specific examples where his/her input was utilized in decision-making.

In Supervision:

- Identify how the parent participates in the process of change.
- Identify positive supports for the individual(s).

LICENSING ACTIVITY

Building working relationships with other programs/agencies to positively impact the continuum of care.

- Educate other programs on the licensing process so they are better informed when working with families.
- Attend family team meetings (FTM) as often as you can to assist in the placement process.
- Share information that is both accurate and timely
- Facilitate open communication between MDHHS/Agency and caregivers
- Empower kinship units, staff and private providers to develop partnerships with other community providers that can help meet the needs of children living with relatives
- Develop kinship-specific provisions in contracts to ensure that private providers understand kinship policy and preferences and employ staff skilled at working with kinship families.
- Partner with community-based organizations that serve caregivers, to ensure that foster families can access needed community supports.
- Identify or develop community support groups for kinship caregivers.