

Procedure: Home Study Approval for Foster Home to Adopt a Child Who Has Resided in the Home at Least Six (6) Months

Procedure No.:

Purpose of the procedure:

Ohio Administrative Code Rule (OAC) 5101:2-48-11.1 allows for an expedited home study process for foster parents interested in adopting a child who has resided in their home at least six (6) consecutive months.

Statement of procedure:

The decision for a child to be adopted by a current caregiver will be made in a pre-adoptive staffing and/or an adoptive match conference. If a decision is made to pursue an adoptive placement for the child in the current foster home and the caregiver does not have an approved home study, a short home study may be completed if the child is and has resided in the home for at least six (6) consecutive months. In that event, the adoption home study should be completed utilizing the Application for Adoption of a Foster Child (JFS 01692), and the Multiple Children/Large Family Assessment (JFS 01530), if applicable. The home study will be assigned to an adoption assessor in the foster care and adoption home study assessment unit. If the home study is unable to be completed within the unit, with approval from the Director of Placement and Permanency Planning, it will be assigned to the foster home coordinator. The following steps should be completed by the assigned adoption assessor within 45 days and all contacts documented in SACWIS.

- Provide the applicant an application packet (including cover letter identifying the assigned adoption assessor and information regarding the fingerprinting process, the JFS 01692, and adoption subsidy pamphlets).
- Review the child's history documented in SACWIS.
- Prior to recommending an ~~an foster home for certification or~~^[A1] adoptive home for approval, SCCS will conduct a search of SACWIS (upon SACWIS availability) for each applicant and each adult household member of the applicant's home to determine the suitability of the applicant to provide ~~foster~~^[A2] ~~care or~~ adoption services. ~~SCCS will also conduct a central registry search of any other state in which the applicant or other adult household member has resided in the five years immediately prior to application. If SCCS cannot access and conduct a SACWIS search in the SACWIS system, SCCS will request ODJFS to conduct a search of the central registry.~~ The search will result in a summary report to be placed in the

applicant's file. Prior to the placement of each child in the caregiver's home, the summary report will be considered as a tool to help determine the appropriateness of the placement. The report will include a chronological list of abuse and neglect determinations or allegations in which the person was involved where a PCSA has done one of the following:

- Determined that abuse or neglect occurred;
 - Initiated an investigation, and the investigation is ongoing;
 - Initiated an investigation, and the agency was unable to determine whether abuse or neglect occurred.
- Contact the child's social worker regarding the child's history, characteristics, treatment needs, adjustment to the foster home, etc., and the social worker's opinion regarding the applicant's ability to meet the child's needs on a permanent basis and the child's understanding and feelings towards the adoptive placement. Review ~~case record~~ SACWIS documentation of visits to the foster home.
 - Contact the foster home coordinator (when the study is being completed by a party other than the coordinator assigned to the home) to obtain information on the family's history of training compliance, violations of OAC rules, and strengths. Obtain the coordinator's opinion regarding the applicant's ability to meet the child's needs on a permanent basis.
 - ~~Contact other staff with significant contact and/or feedback regarding the child and foster family.~~
 - Review the foster home record including most recent home study, updates and training record.
 - ~~Review the most recent home study and all updates (JFS 1349 or JFS 01673, and JFS 1385).~~
 - ~~Review the foster home training record. The foster parents must have completed training as outlined in OAC 5101:2-48-09 (classes 7, 10, 11 and 12).~~
 - Complete the JFS 01692 with the applicant. In areas where there is no change, indicate "no change". If there are any attachments to the application, have the applicant sign and date the attachments. Have the JFS 01692 typed and signed by the applicant. The application may be mailed to the applicant for signature. ~~The JFS 01691 is not required.~~
 - If there is any indication that the homestudy has been falsified, the worker will proceed as directed in the See Falsification of Application or Home Study procedure, if applicable. JFS 01691.
 - If the family has a total of five (5) or more children who will reside in the home upon the adoptive placement of a child, SCCS will complete the Multiple Children/Large Family Assessment (JFS 01530).
 - Review the Medical Statement for Foster Care/Adoptive Applicant and All Household Members (JFS 01653). New medical statement required for adult household members.
 - ~~Inform the applicant that a BCH and FBI criminal record check must be completed prior to finalization but is not required prior to approval of the home study. Encourage the applicant to complete the BCH and FBI check immediately to expedite the process.~~
 - Probate Court has requested that all references be current within one year at the

time of finalization.

- If there are new medical, psychological or financial concerns that may inhibit the applicant's ability to parent the child, have the applicant complete any necessary release of information forms and contact any pertinent providers for information and/or records.
- Applicants must submit a new JFS 1681 Applicant Financial Statement for the purposes of subsidy.
- ~~Notify/Provide~~ the applicant with information about the requirements for adoption training and information about the application process and eligibility requirements of Title IV-E adoption assistance, state adoption maintenance, PASS, and non-recurring adoption expenses of the availability and application process for adoption subsidies^[A3]. The subsidy packet does not need to be completed prior to the approval of the JFS 01692.
- Document contact to the applicant every two (2) weeks until all required documentation and/or references have been received.
- ~~After completion of the JFS 01692, one family visit, and three (3) additional references, approve or deny the home study within 45 days of assignment. Document any reason for failure to comply timely. See OAC 5101:2-48-12 (G-I) for procedures to approve or deny a home study~~^[A4].
- Upon approval or denial of the application, the assessor will send a letter^[A5] within 10 days to the applicant with a copy to the adoption supervisor, the child's social worker, and the foster home coordinator (if different than the assigned assessor).
 - If the decision is to approve the applicant as an adoptive parent, written notification shall include the child for whom the applicant is approved to adopt, the date of approval of the JFS 01692 and the date it will expire.
 - If the decision is to deny the applicant as an adoptive parent, written notification shall include a detailed explanation of the reasons for denial, and a copy of the agency's grievance appeal procedure.
- The JFS 01692 shall only be used as an approval for the adoptive placement of the child(ren) for whom the home study was conducted.

Related laws and standards:

Ohio Revised Code (ORC): 3107.012

Ohio Administrative Code (OAC): 5101:2-48-11.1, OAC 5101:2-48-12

United States Code (USC): not applicable

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR): not applicable

Council on Accreditation Standards (COA): not applicable

Who is affected by the procedure?

Foster caregivers, children in permanent custody, and SCCS foster care and adoption staff that may complete home studies.

Approval action/date and effective date:

March 1, 2005/September 15, 2005/September 2008/August 2009/April 1, 2011/February 29, 2012/[June 26, 2014](#)

Replaces/amends prior procedure dated/effective (if applicable):

5/1/02, 2/22/06 and amendment effective 6/2/06

History:

Key words:

Foster to Adopt Home Study, Short Home Study, Foster Care Adoption.

Associated policy (if applicable):

Foster care policy, adoption home study procedure

Also documented in:

| Placement and Permanency Planning Policies and Procedures Manual