

Safety Audit Requirements for Foster & Adoptive Homes

SUMMIT COUNTY CHILDREN SERVICES

<p>ORC: N/A</p> <p>OAC: 5101:2-5-24; 5101:2-7-5; 501:2-7-10; 5101:2-7-12</p> <p>USC: N/A</p> <p>CFR: N/A</p>	<p>ORIGINAL: 01/06</p> <p>REVISIONS: 01/07; 03/09; 12/11; 06/16</p> <p>RELATED FORM(S): N/A</p> <p>RELATED PROCEDURE/POLICY(IES): N/A</p>
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative
<input type="checkbox"/> Fiscal
<input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources
<input type="checkbox"/> Information Technology | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal
<input type="checkbox"/> Safety & Security
<input type="checkbox"/> Social Services - All Departments
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social Services - Foster & Adoption |
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All Staff Bargaining Unit Non-Bargaining Management

POLICY:

Summit County Children Services (SCCS) conducts safety audits on all caregiver homes per Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) rules to verify that the home environment is free of dangers to children in the custody of SCCS.

PROCEDURE:

Safety Audits:

Foster Care:

SCCS documents each foster and adoptive (caregiver) home safety audit on the "Safety Audit of a Foster Home" form (JFS 01348). The caseworker assigned to the foster or adoptive home is responsible for conducting the safety audit with the caregiver.

A safety audit is required prior to initial licensure of a foster home, prior to each recertification and within ten (10) working days of any relocation of the foster caregiver. Safety audits must also be completed at least semi-annually for any foster home with placement of foster children. If no children are placed in the foster home only an annual safety audit is required. Any deficiencies noted on the JFS 01348 shall result in a rule violation and corrective action plan for the caregiver.

The annual safety audit shall include the following:

1. A review of and signature on the Caregiver Agreement and Discipline Policy.

2. A well water test (if applicable) or verification of a continuous supply of safe drinking water.
3. Child Characteristic Checklist.
4. Local background check.
5. Verification of valid driver's license.

Safety Requirements for Caregiver Homes:

The caregiver shall maintain the home and all structures associated with the home in a clean, safe, and sanitary condition and in a reasonable state of repair.

All outdoor areas and recreation equipment on the grounds of the caregiver home must be maintained in a reasonable state of repair and be reasonably safeguarded, considering the age and functioning level of the children in the custody of SCCS. Such areas include, but are not limited to:

1. Water areas, including lakes, ponds, rivers, quarries and swimming pools.
2. Open pits and wells.
3. Cliffs and caves.
4. High speed or heavily traveled roads.

A safe caregiver home must include, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Adequate heat, light and ventilation.
2. Safe storage of the following:
 - a. Bleach
 - b. Cleaning materials
 - c. Poisonous or corrosive household chemicals
 - d. Flammable and combustible materials
 - e. Potentially dangerous tools or utensils
 - f. Electrical equipment or machinery in or on the grounds of a home.
3. The following weapons kept on the grounds of or in a caregiver home shall be stored in an inoperative condition in a locked area inaccessible to children:
 - a. Firearms
 - b. Air rifles
 - c. Hunting slingshots
 - d. Any other projective weapon
 - e. All ammunition
 - f. Bows and arrows
 - g. Explosive materials or projectiles.

SCCS caregivers are prohibited from carrying a concealed weapon at any time a child in SCCS custody is present. Any caregiver who is a law enforcement official and can document that their jurisdiction requires them to have ready and immediate access to their weapon shall be exempt from these requirements.

4. A working telephone or be able to demonstrate reasonable access to a working telephone for emergency situations.
5. Appropriate emergency telephone numbers shall be posted in a prominent place in the caregiver home, including:

- a. Fire.
 - b. Police.
 - c. Ambulance.
 - d. Poison Control.
 - e. SCCS Main Telephone Number.
 - f. SCCS Hotline/After hours emergency number.
 - g. Foster Home Coordinator.
 - h. Foster Home Support Supervisor.
 - i. The recommending agency.
 - j. Each agency with a foster child placed in the home.
6. A locked cabinet or storage area for medication and supplies unless the medical condition requires an inhaler or other medication to be immediately available.
 - a. Caregivers must administer prescription drugs only to the child for whom the medication was prescribed in accordance with the physician's instructions.
 - b. Children, including teenagers, may not take medication without adult supervision.
 - c. Medication must be labeled with the child's name, correct dosage and instructions for giving the medication to the child.
 - d. Over-the-counter medication must be in the original packaging.
 7. At least one door to any room or storage area inside the home or buildings outside the home in which a person could become confined, and from which the only other means of exit requires the use of a key, must be able to be unlocked from either side. Locking outside doors is permitted. Fencing around a yard or outside play area is permitted.
 8. A continuous supply of safe drinking water. Well water used for drinking and cooking shall be tested and approved by the health department prior to initial certification and annually thereafter.
 9. A working bathroom and toilet facilities must be located within the home and connected to an indoor plumbing system.
 10. Garbage must be disposed of on a regular basis. Garbage stored outside must be in covered containers or closed bags.
 11. Household heating equipment must be equipped with appropriate safeguards in accordance with the age and functioning level of children in the custody of SCCS in the home. Un-vented heaters that burn kerosene or oil are prohibited. All heaters must be approved by "Underwriter's Laboratory" and not be prohibited by any local zoning ordinances.
 12. Pets or domestic animals in or on the premises must be kept in a safe and sanitary manner in accordance with state and local laws. Children in the custody of SCCS are not placed in homes with pets or domestic animals that have a history of biting. In the event that a caregiver's pet or domestic animal bites any individual, the pet or domestic animal must be removed from the home in order to maintain or receive future placements through SCCS. Children in the custody of SCCS must be protected from potentially dangerous animals.
 13. Interior and exterior stairways accessible to children must be protected by child safety gates or doors according to the child's age and functioning level.
 14. All escape routes must be kept free of clutter and other obstructions.

15. An "Underwriters Laboratory" approved readable portable fire extinguisher in working order in or near the cooking area of the home.
16. A working smoke alarm approved by "Underwriter's Laboratory" on each level of occupancy of the home.
 - a. The cost related to purchase and maintenance of smoke alarms and fire extinguishers are the responsibility of the applicant
17. A written evacuation plan for evacuating the home or seeking shelter in the event of fire, tornado or other disaster. This evacuation plan shall contain a primary and alternate escape route for each floor. A caregiver shall provide initial orientation and ongoing instruction on the contents of this plan to each foster child in accordance with the child's age and functioning level.
18. A smoke-free environment for children in the custody of SCCS.
 - a. No smoking shall be permitted in the living area of a foster home or in a vehicle used to transport a foster child when a foster child is present.