

DJS PLACEMENT UNIT

FOSTER CARE



FOSTER FAMILY HOME STANDARDS

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FOSTER FAMILY HOME STANDARDS

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FOSTER FAMILY HOME STANDARDS

PURPOSE

These standards are the Department of Juvenile Services' (DJS or Department) requirements for approval of family foster homes. Failure to meet any of these requirements may result in the denial, suspension or revocation of family foster care home approval.

The primary purposes of these standards are to:

1. Protect youth from the special risk associated with living outside their own homes by maintaining high quality foster care homes that will provide supportive, short-term care for youth and promote the emotional and physical well-being and safety of youth who are placed in foster care homes by the Department of Juvenile Services;
2. Provide time-limited services to a youth and to their parent(s), legal guardian or custodian to promote the safety, permanency, and well-being of the foster youth;
3. Develop and implement a plan in the best interest of a youth who cannot be reunified with a parent or parents, legal guardian or custodian for another permanency plan, including another planned permanent living arrangement (APPLA);
4. Whenever possible place a youth with kin or a friend of the family who has a bond or relationship with the youth;
5. Determine and provide the services needed to assist eligible youth, age 14 or older, to make the transition from placement to independent living; and
6. Determine and provide necessary services to assist teenage parents, their parent(s), legal guardian or custodian and foster care parent(s).

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DEFINITIONS

1. *Foster Care Coordinator (FCC)*: DJS employee responsible for the recruitment, home study process and monitoring of DJS foster homes.
2. *Foster Care Review Team (FCRT)*: Committee comprised of various regional staff to review foster parent applications, includes but is not limited to, Case Management Specialists, Case Management Specialist Supervisor, Resource Staff, Investigator, and Assistant Attorney General.
3. *Foster Homes*: A foster home is a family environment, which meets basic standards of safety and parenting and provides continuing full-time care, supervision and supportive services to youth in an approved home. Foster youth are usually not related by blood, marriage, guardianship or adoption and need care outside of their home of origin.
4. *Household member*: An individual who lives in or is regularly present in the home.
5. *Kinship Care*: A foster family home approved for individuals who are related by blood or marriage within the fifth degree of consanguinity or affinity. This includes great-great-great grandparents, great-great aunt or uncle, great-great niece/nephew and a second cousin. This also may include fictive kin, such as, godparents, friends of the family and other adults who have a strong kinship bond with the youth.
6. *Restricted Foster Care Homes*: A family foster home approved to serve only a specific youth, e.g. homes approved for friends of the family or relatives are normally approved as restricted foster homes.

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APPLICANT REQUIREMENTS

1. Each applicant must:
 - A. Be Maryland resident; primary residence must be in the state of Maryland;
 - B. Be a U.S. citizen or legal resident; must be a natural born citizen or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence under the Immigration and Nationality Act;
 - C. Be 25 years or older; proof of date of birth required (e.g., driver's license, birth certificate, baptismal record, passport, etc.); and
 - D. Own or rent their home; must provide a copy of land/tax records or lease.
2. Each applicant must complete the following (if not completed within the past 12 months to DJS' satisfaction):
 - A. The DJS Foster Parent Application Packet (*Appendix 1*).
 - B. The Structured Analysis Family Evaluation (*Appendix 2*).
 - C. Complete an application interview conducted by DJS which shall include a discussion of the following:
 - 1) Definition and goals of foster care;
 - 2) Difference between foster parenting and parenting one's own child;
 - 3) Reasons youth need DJS foster care services;
 - 4) Potential impact of foster care responsibilities on the applicant(s);
 - 5) Requirements for foster care certification;
 - 6) Department's policies on discipline and child abuse or neglect;
 - 7) Number and characteristics of foster youth for whom the applicant is best suited;
 - 8) Financial requirements of foster parents; and
 - 9) Financial obligations of DJS to foster parents and foster children.
 - D. Submit references for each applicant.
 - E. Complete the technical requirements listed below.

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TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

MEDICAL CERTIFICATION

1. All household members of the individual or couple seeking foster parent approval or recertification shall have:
 - A. An initial medical examination by a qualified physician at the time of the application for foster parent approval that includes:
 - 1) An analysis of a tuberculosis test or x-ray, and
 - 2) Testing for any other communicable disease; and
 - B. Reexamination by a qualified physician at least every 2 years after the initial examination.
2. If any household member has symptoms or a history of health or mental health problems which might impair the foster parent's proper care of the foster child or which might be communicable or injurious to the foster child, the agency shall require the individual to:
 - A. Have a medical or psychological examination for the problem; and
 - B. Provide a signed, written statement by the examining physician or licensed mental health professional that the condition poses no threat to the foster child.
3. If a foster parent is 60 years old or older, the Department shall observe and document that the foster parent's strength is adequate to meet the needs of youth in care.
4. Failure to provide medical documentation is reason for denial, suspension or revocation of foster home approval.

CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK

1. Each adult household member is subject to a criminal background check. This will involve being fingerprinted and submitted to CJIS and the FBI.
2. Each youth household member is subject to a review of their juvenile record. The juvenile record of any youth household member shall be considered as a factor in determining final approval of the foster home.

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ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND CHECKS

The DJS Office of Inspector General (OIG) staff shall conduct the following background checks on each household member where appropriate. Upon completion of these checks the OIG shall submit their finding and recommendation to staff for inclusion in the foster/kinship home study. The investigator's findings and recommendation will be a major factor in determining final approval. Each case will be considered individually.

1. Child Protective Services – Review of the Department of Human Resources database to ensure that no household member who is age 14 or older has an indicated finding of child abuse or neglect.
2. Armed Services - Review of service records for household members who are age 18 years or older.

Additionally, the Foster Care Coordinator shall conduct the following background checks on each foster parent applicant or household member as applicable.

1. Financial Records - The applicant(s) shall submit documentation to verify the applicant's employment and income (with copies of recent pay stubs, W-2 or income tax forms) that supports their ability to financially support their household.
2. Motor Vehicle Driving Records – All household members who are licensed to drive shall be subject to review of their driving records.
3. Child Support Clearance – All applicants are subject to review of their child support records. No applicant may be in arrears in child support payments.

REFERENCES

1. Single applicants shall submit a total of 3 references. These may be a combination of personal, co-workers and neighbors, 1 of which may be a relative. Joint applicants must provide a total of 6 references between the two of them, 1 of which may be a relative.
2. If applicant(s) currently have a child in the household attending school (Kindergarten through grade 12) one reference must be a school administrator, counselor or teacher employed by the school attended by the child.

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FINANCIAL STABILITY

1. An applicant shall document possession of sufficient income and financial stability to provide reasonable living conditions without depending on the Department's stipend for foster care services. Acceptable income documentation includes:
 - A. Copies of two recent paystubs;
 - B. Copy of previous year's tax returns;
 - C. Copy of Retirement/Benefits Award Letter; or
 - D. Copy of Social Security benefits.
2. The applicant shall complete the DJS Budget Guideline form to verify the household budget. If the applicant has a financial problem, and is otherwise qualified to provide foster care, the Department shall review each applicant on a case-by-case basis.

TRANSPORTATION

1. The foster family must be able to provide:
 - A. Transportation either through a privately owned vehicle(s) or by utilizing public transportation;
 - B. A copy of each applicant's driver's license; and
 - C. Verification of insurance and vehicle registration for each car owned by each applicant.
2. Foster Family parent(s) shall maintain all vehicles used to transport youth in a safe condition and in compliance with applicable Maryland motor vehicle laws.
3. Foster Family parent(s) shall allow foster youth to be transported only by person(s) possessing a valid driver's license, acceptable driving record, appropriate insurance, and acceptable criminal background check.
4. The Foster Family may allow the foster youth to drive the foster family automobile only upon approval by the Foster Care Coordinator and with proof that the youth has been added to the household's automobile insurance policy.

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HOME INSPECTION

FIRE INSPECTION

1. A Foster Family Home is subject to a Fire Inspection conducted by the Fire Marshall's Office and also shall be subject to subsequent inspections as required by the Department. The Department shall be responsible for payment of the inspection fee. Foster Family Home applicant(s) will agree to abide by requirements in the Fire Inspection Report.
2. The Foster Family Home must provide at least one working smoke detector and one working carbon monoxide detector in each sleeping area of the home, and if the home has more than one floor, at least one working smoke detector on each floor. In homes built after 1975, the smoke detectors shall be hardwired into the electrical system and may not be battery-operated.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH INSPECTION

The applicant(s) home shall pass an environmental inspection by the local health authority and shall be subject to inspections as required by the Department. The Department shall provide the local health authority with guidelines for health inspection and shall be responsible for payment of the inspection. Foster Family Home applicant(s) shall agree to abide by requirements in the Environmental Health Inspection Report to ensure the physical well-being, safety, and health of the foster youth and other residents in the foster home.

HOME INTERIOR INSPECTION

The house and premises shall be reasonably clean and free from hazards that jeopardize health and safety.

1. Kitchen
 - A. The home shall have the necessary equipment for the safe preparation, storage, serving, and clean-up of meals.
 - B. Food and cooking utensils shall be stored to protect from dust, vermin and other contamination.

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- C. Appliances regularly used in the storage and preparation of food shall be safe and in good working order.
 - D. The use of home canned fruits and vegetables is permitted.
 - E. Food needing refrigeration shall be stored at a temperature that will prevent spoilage and bacterial growth.
2. Dining Area
- The home shall have a comfortable dining area furnished with sufficient table and chairs so that all household members can eat together.
3. Living Room
- The home shall have sufficient living and/or family room space and comfortable furnishings such that all members of the household can congregate in the room(s) together.
4. Foster Youth Bedroom
- A. The home shall have sufficient bedroom space for occupants.
 - B. Bedrooms above the second floor shall meet standard health and fire safety regulations.
 - C. All bedrooms shall have direct exit to the outside via either window or door. Windows must be large enough for exit by an average size adult.
 - D. The following sleeping arrangements are prohibited:
 - 1) Foster youth age of six(6) and older shall not share a room with another youth of a different gender; and
 - 2) Foster youth shall not share a room with an adult.
 - E. Each foster youth shall have an adequate bureau and/or chest of drawers for storage of personal belongings and adequate closet space in or near the room for hanging clothes.
 - F. Each foster youth shall be provided their own bed and adequate bedding. The bed may not be a cot, sofa, or any type of portable bed.
 - G. The foster youth's sleeping and living quarters shall provide for privacy, study at home, and storage of personal items.

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5. Bathrooms

The home shall supply adequate bathroom space to accommodate the residents in the home. The bathroom is to be equipped with toilet paper, towels and hygiene products.

6. Mother-Infant Foster Care Requirements

A. The foster parent shall provide

1) The new mother with:

- a) Sanitary space, table, and plumbing necessary to change diapers,
- b) Competent instruction in the care and nurturing of her infant,
- c) Limits on her social activities to assure that she is responsible for her infant,
- d) Opportunity, encouragement, and structure for the completion of her education,
- e) Encouragement to develop her capacity for and understanding of her independence,
- f) Access to health care for herself,
- g) Reasonable flexibility in providing alternate care for her infant,
- h) Guidance in human sexuality, and
- i) A bed in a room separate from where the infant sleeps, after the infant is 6 months old; and

2) The infant with:

- a) Protection from physical harm,
- b) Removal from emotional pain,
- c) Access to health care,
- d) Proper food and nutrition,
- e) Physical warmth and nurture,
- f) Protection from disease,
- g) Physical comfort,
- h) A proper sleeping environment in an appropriate crib,
- i) An appropriate feeding schedule,
- j) Regularly changed diapers in a sanitary environment, and

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- k) When the infant is 6 months old, a crib or appropriate bed in a room separate from where the mother sleeps.
- B. The individual certified as a mother-infant foster parent shall:
 - 1) Before the certified foster parent provides mother-infant foster care, receive:
 - a) 20 hours of general training, and
 - b) An additional 4 hours of training addressing foster care services provided to a mother who is a foster child; and
 - 2) Annually receive:
 - a) 2 hours of training which deals specifically with mother-infant foster care, and
 - b) 6 hours of continuing training as required by COMAR 07.05.02.12; and
 - 3) Provide the young mother with structure and guidance, including help in obtaining medical and financial assistance (Medical Assistance, WIC, TCA, and Child Support).

HOME EXTERIOR INSPECTION

- 1. The exterior premises shall be reasonably clean and free from hazards that jeopardize health and safety.
- 2. The home shall have a safe outdoor recreational area as part of the property, within reasonable walking distance or within a reasonable commute.
- 3. Swimming Pools and Hot Tubs
 - A. An approved foster parent shall provide pool safety supervision that is commensurate with a child's age and ability.
 - B. A swimming pool or hot tub at the home of a foster parent shall:
 - 1) Be maintained in a safe and sanitary condition; and
 - 2) Comply with all county or city zoning, building, and health codes or ordinances.

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- C. In-ground Pools- If a child younger than 8 years old is placed in a home with an in-ground pool:
- 1) The pool shall be enclosed by a fence:
 - a) At least 4 feet high;
 - b) Constructed of wood, concrete, brick, or chain metal, and
 - c) Equipped with a locked gate to be used when the pool is not in use;
or
 - d) When not in use, the pool shall be completely covered in a manner to prevent access by the child.
 - 2) Above-Ground Swimming Pools, Hot Tubs, and Spas.
 - a) When not in use, retractable or removable ladders shall be locked or stored away from a pool.
 - b) The pool shall be 4 feet above ground at all points.
 - c) Doors and gates that access the pool shall have locks.
 - d) If a pool has a deck area with a door, the door shall be locked when the pool is not in use.
 - e) If the pool entrance has permanent steps, access to the steps shall be limited by a locked gate.
 - f) A pool may not have climbable objects on the exterior of the pool.
 - g) When not in use, hot tubs and spas shall have secured covers which prevent access to the tub or spa by children.

DANGEROUS HOUSEHOLD ITEMS

1. Firearms. A foster parent who maintains firearms in the home shall:
 - A. Follow all federal, state, and local laws pertaining to registration, permits and maintenance of firearms;
 - B. Keep all firearms and ammunition maintained in the home in a locked room or container that is inaccessible to children;

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- C. Take all safety precautions to assure that firearms are not accidentally used to injure a child in care;
 - D. Prohibit children in care from utilizing firearms for any reason, including sport and recreational use;
 - E. Ensure that loaded firearms are not kept in the home unless a household member is a state, federal or local law enforcement officer or member of the military and maintains and stores the firearms in accordance with state, federal and local safety procedures.
2. Prescription and non-prescription drugs, dangerous household supplies, tools and any other household items which are potentially life-threatening or injurious to youth shall be kept in a safe location inaccessible to youth.

PETS

1. A foster parent who maintains a pet in the home shall ensure that:
- A. The foster youth is educated regarding the care and grooming of the pet(s);
 - B. A responsible adult is always present when infants are near a pet that may be potentially dangerous to the infant; and
 - C. As required by state law or local ordinance, the pet is:
 - 1) Licensed or registered,
 - 2) Vaccinated, and
 - 3) Leashed.
2. DJS shall not place a youth allergic to the pet in the foster home.

FOSTER FAMILY HOME STUDY

The DJS Foster Care Coordinator (FCC) shall conduct a home study to review information in the application and any training records; and evaluate the prospective foster parent's qualifications and ability to provide a safe, healthy, nurturing environment for a DJS foster youth.

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1. The home study shall include a minimum of three home visits with applicants and shall be conducted in accordance with the following schedule:
 - A. The first home visit shall include an inspection of the house and interview with all members of the household, to include:
 - 1) Visually inspecting the home to ensure it is without obvious hazardous conditions such as exposed wiring, malfunctioning heating or plumbing, etc.; and
 - 2) Meeting with all of the household members to discuss their attitudes toward foster care and its impact on the family unit; and
 - B. The second and third home visit may include only the applicant(s) and shall include exploring the following areas with the applicant(s):
 - 1) Attitudes toward and understanding of foster care, including:
 - a) Motivation to provide foster care;
 - b) Expectations of youth;
 - c) Dealing with a youth regarding behavior and circumstances that may have prompted foster care placement;
 - d) Impact of court involvement relating to foster care;
 - e) Role and responsibilities of the Department regarding supervision, monitoring, participation in meetings, working with case managers, etc.;
 - f) Delinquency relating to home and public safety;
 - g) Dealing with parents and relatives of foster youth; and
 - h) Number and characteristics of the youth for whom the applicant is best suited to be a foster parent, including age range, special needs and medical requirements; and
 - 2) Applicants' background, including: childhood experiences, education, life-changing experiences, relationship with relatives and friends, marital relationships, relationship with children, child-support obligations, special interest and activities, employment obligations, attitudes toward religion

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or life philosophy, attitudes toward discipline, and any involvement with DSS, DJS or the foster care or criminal justice system;

- 3) The type of child the applicant would be willing and/or capable of fostering including a child's age, gender, special needs, medical requirements and offense history; and
- 4) Evaluation of the home and community, including the physical environment of the home, childcare plans if necessary, and the attitudes of relatives and friends regarding fostering a DJS youth.

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2. During the home study, the agency worker shall:
 - A. Discuss the following areas with applicant and joint applicant:
 - 1) Definition and goals of foster care;
 - 2) Differences between foster parenting and parenting one's own child or adopting a youth;
 - 3) Reasons youth receive foster care services;
 - 4) Characteristics of biological parents, their problems, needs, rights and responsibilities;
 - 5) Expectations of youth;
 - 6) Dealing with a difficult child;
 - 7) Dealing with birth parents of foster child; and
 - 8) Potential impact of foster care responsibilities of the applicant.
 - B. Discuss the agency's policy on discipline and child abuse or neglect
 - C. Obtain and document verification of the applicant's employment and income;
 - D. Obtain and document existence of the applicant's marriage and/or divorce certificates, if appropriate;
 - E. Request a health and safety inspection of the applicant's home by the health department or a state-licensed sanitarian;
 - F. Request a fire-safety inspection for the applicant's home;
 - G. Obtain all required medical documentation from foster household members;
 - H. For all adults living in the applicant's home, obtain:
 - 1) State and federal criminal background checks;
 - 2) Appropriate local department of social services child abuse and neglect clearances; and
 - 3) If the household member has a vehicle operator's license, obtain a copy of the member's driving record from the Motor Vehicle Administration.

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- I. Request the child abuse and neglect clearances from another state in which any household member has lived within the past 5 years;
- J. Obtain necessary individual references as required in the foster parent application; and
- K. Implement the youth's Treatment Service Plans.

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

- 1. Applicant shall complete 27 hours of training before the Department shall place a youth in a foster home. The DJS FCC shall assist the parent in obtaining the necessary training.
- 2. DJS shall document the applicant's attendance and understanding of the material.
- 3. The training shall include the following but is not limited to:
 - A. Role and relationships in foster care between DJS, foster parent, biological family and the youth;
 - B. DJS Confidentiality Policy;
 - C. Understanding the juvenile justice/court system;
 - D. DJS Reporting and Investigation Child Abuse Policy;
 - E. DJS Suicide Prevention Policy;
 - F. Cultural and religious awareness;
 - G. Behavior management and discipline techniques;
 - H. Cardio-pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and First Aid;
 - I. The legal, technical, procedural, financial, medical, liability and educational aspects of child placement;
 - J. The nature and purpose of agency documents; and
 - K. Any and all in-service training as deemed appropriate.
- 4. Continuing Training/Education.
 - A. All foster parents shall complete a minimum of 6 hours of continuing training per year. Training topics shall concentrate on topics that are relevant to foster parenting and/or adolescent development and/or needs.

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- B. All foster parents shall maintain current certification of CPR and First Aid as dictated by the agency providing the certification (such as the American Red Cross).

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5. Training requirements for Mother-Infant Foster Care:
An additional 4 hours of training addressing foster care services provided to a mother who is a foster child as determined by the Department.
 - A. Services available through the Department of Social Services for the mother and infant such as Temporary Cash Assistance, Child Support and Medical Assistance.
 - B. Services available in the community that will assist the mother in parenting, such as, but not limited to, parenting classes and educational opportunities for teen parents.

RECOMMENDATION FOR APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL

1. Upon completion of the investigation, the FCC or Resource Staff shall complete a formal home study investigation report for review.
2. The Foster Care Review Team (FCRT) will convene and review the home study report. The FCRT will review the report for the following:
 - A. Review charges, investigations, convictions, or findings related to a crime of any household member to determine the;
 - 1) Possible effect on the applicant's ability to execute the responsibilities of a foster parent; and
 - 2) Applicant's ability to provide a safe and appropriate environment for and quality service to a youth in foster care.
 - B. Deny approval if an applicant:
 - 1) Refuses to consent to the child protective service clearance or the criminal background check;
 - 2) Has an indicated child abuse finding;
 - 3) Has a felony conviction for child abuse or neglect, spousal abuse, a crime against children, rape, sexual assault or homicide;

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- 4) In the 5 years before the date of application for foster parent certification, has a felony conviction for physical assault, battery, or a drug-related offense; or
- 5) Refuses to consent to the Motor Vehicle Administration clearance.
- C. If a child abuse or neglect investigation is in process, postpone the decision on certification;
- D. Review the local department of social services' child support records to determine whether an applicant is in arrears on child support payments and, if in arrears, whether the arrearage:
 - 1) May be corrected; or
 - 2) Impacts on the applicant's ability to provide foster care.
- E. FCRT members will decide if the applicant(s) application and home study is approved, denied or continued for further information.
- F. Notify the applicant in writing of the decision within 120 days after the date on the signed application unless circumstances beyond DJS's control prevent this timeline from being met such as, but not limited to:
 - 1) Failure to receive the necessary reports/findings from CJIS and/or the FBI for background investigations;
 - 2) Failure to obtain any and all of the other clearances that are provided by an agency other than DJS.
- G. If denied, notify the applicant of their appeal rights.

FOSTER FAMILY HOME AGREEMENTS

- 1. The Department's designee shall place the documentation of the foster parent's home study, pre-service training and evaluation in the foster family home record.
- 2. Once the foster family home application has been approved, the Foster Care Manager will prepare the Foster Care Agreement which shall contain:
 - A. The names of foster parent, foster home address, email address, telephone numbers, vendor number;

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- B. Notification of the six month mandatory probation period for new foster parents;
 - C. Any special conditions that must be satisfied within a period specified by the Department;
 - D. Any licensing restrictions established by the Department;
 - E. Training requirements;
 - F. Department's foster care rate; and
 - G. Other requirements or information deemed necessary and appropriate by the Department.
3. Once the Foster Care Agreement has been certified by the Executive Director of Community Services, the Foster Care Coordinator shall send the Foster Care Agreement to the foster parent(s) and local staff.
4. The Foster Care Coordinator or the local designee shall meet with the foster parent(s) to:
- A. Review the six month mandatory probation period for new foster parent(s);
 - B. Discuss any special conditions;
 - C. Discuss any areas of concern;
 - D. Provide all foster parent(s) with a copy of the Foster Parent Guidebook and obtain a signed acknowledgment form; and
 - E. Review contents of Foster Care Agreement.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF FOSTER PARENTS

All certified foster parent(s) shall comply with the guidelines established in the *Foster Parent Guidebook* or risk suspension or revocation of the foster family home certification.

MONITORING, RECERTIFICATION & REVOCATION

MONITORING

1. The Department shall monitor all certified foster family homes for compliance with these standards and inform the foster parent, in writing, of the findings, anticipated departmental actions, and if appropriate, the appeal and grievance rights of the foster

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parent.

2. The foster parent(s) must report all changes in address and household composition within 5 business days to the Department.
 - A. If the certified foster parent changes address, the foster parent shall obtain a copy of a fire and sanitary inspection for the new address and forward the results to the Department within 30 days of the change of address;
 - B. If new individuals join the household, the foster parent shall report the change within 5 business days of the change; and
 - C. The Foster Care Coordinator or designee shall visit the new home to determine ongoing compliance with these standards within 5 business days of notification.

RECERTIFICATION

1. The Department shall conduct recertification of certified foster parents every 2 years to determine continuing compliance with state regulations/requirements and departmental policy.
2. The Foster Care Coordinator or designee shall complete and document at least one home visit specifically to recertify the foster parent.
 - A. At least 60 days prior to the expiration of the certification, the Foster Care Coordinator or designee shall determine if the foster parent wishes to continue as a certified foster parent and, if indicated, begin the recertification process.
 - B. The Department shall complete a review and either recertify or deny recertification before the current certification expires to prevent interruption of care.
3. The foster parent shall be required to complete all necessary checks and inspections as required by the Department.
 - A. If the department determines that the physical condition of the certified foster parent's home warrants further investigation, the foster parent may be required to obtain additional fire and health inspections.
 - B. If a member of the foster parent's household becomes 18 years old during the year before recertification, or a new individual has joined the household, the foster

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parent shall ensure that the new individual completes a federal and state criminal background check and a Motor Vehicle Administration and child abuse clearance prior to recertification.

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REVOCATION

1. The Department may suspend the foster parent certification for not more than 60 calendar days for any violation of the Foster Family Home Standards.
2. If after 60 calendar days, the foster parent has not addressed, to the satisfaction of the Department, the reasons for a suspension, the Department shall revoke the certification and terminate the services of the foster parent(s).
3. The Department shall remove all foster care youth placed in the Foster Family Home and shall not place any youth in the home while its certification is suspended or terminated.

APPEAL PROCESS FOR DENIAL, SUSPENSION OR TERMINATION

1. If the applicant is denied certification or the Foster Family Home certification is suspended or terminated by the Department, the Department shall inform the applicant or Foster Parent(s) of the Department's decision in writing.
2. An applicant or foster parent aggrieved by a decision of DJS to deny, suspend, revoke or terminate foster family home approval has the right to appeal in accordance with COMAR 16.02.
3. An applicant or foster parent aggrieved by a decision of DJS to deny, suspend, revoke, or terminate foster family home approval which is based in whole or in part on a child protective services finding that an individual has been found responsible for "indicated" child abuse or neglect shall be referred to the Local Department of Social Services (LDSS) for information concerning any hearing rights for which the individual may be eligible in accordance with COMAR 07.02.26. A decision reached in accordance with COMAR 07.02.26 is binding on any proceedings under this section. If time for appealing under COMAR 07.02.26 has passed, the decision of the LDSS is binding on any proceedings under this regulation.
4. An applicant or foster parent aggrieved by a decision of DJS to deny, suspend, revoke, or terminate foster family home approval which is **not based** in whole or in part on a child protective services finding that an individual has been found responsible for "indicated" child abuse or neglect, may request a review by the Secretary or designee.
5. A fair hearing need not be held on any decision which has been, or may only be,

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determined by a court.

APPENDICES

1. DJS Foster Parent Application Packet
2. Structured Analysis Family Evaluation
3. Foster Parent Guidebook