

Handouts for the Webinar

Foster Home Licensing

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Presented by

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NOTES FROM BOB HENSLEY'S DECEMBER PRESENTATIONS

DECEMBER 2, 2010 RECRUITER'S NETWORK DECEMBER 3, 2010 TREATMENT FOSTER FAMILY ASSOCIATION

The Black Mountain office receives on an average 40 new licensing transactions per day. This is 200 a week or about 800 to 900 per month. The transactions are date stamped and logged into various excel programs for tracking. New applications county dss, new therapeutic applications, new private agency family foster care. Relicenses, Changes, Transfers and Terminations by public, private agencies are also categories. This takes one or two days. The licensing action is then assigned to Rhoda or Nicole. Transactions are prioritized in this order: Interstate Cases, Relicenses, Returns for New Licenses, New Licenses, Changes, Transfers, Terminations.

After the licensing action is reviewed and if it is correct it is given to a processing assistant who enters the information into the Foster Care Licensing System. This generates a license and insures the foster home is in the payment system. The licenses are generated on the DHHS Dix campus. They are mailed to the Black Mtn. office from the Dix Campus and these are mailed to the various agencies (100 county departments of social services and 125 private child-placing agencies). The time frame for this procedure has remained very constant for about a year. We typically receive the new licenses by Tuesday or Wednesday the week after they are keyed into FCLS. The licenses are mailed to the agencies within one or two days after we receive them. For example for everything entered into FCLS this week we will receive the new licenses next Tuesday or Wednesday. If we receive the licenses on Tuesday they will be mailed to agencies on Wednesday or Thursday, if we receive the licenses on Wednesday they will be mailed to agencies on Thursday or Friday. Holidays do affect this.

Agency errors and cps substantiations continue to slow down the licensing process.

TIMEFRAMES

- For a new application that is thorough, accurate and complete it takes about 15 minutes to review and approve.
- For a new application that is not through, accurate and complete it takes about 25 minutes to review and write it up for return.
- For a new application that is not thorough, accurate and complete it is not feasible to do corrections over the phone. Most of the time we get voice mail with no indication of when the call will be returned. The voice mail does not indicate when the worker will be available. This takes much longer than 25 minutes and is not efficient. We have left voice mails for licensing workers and later learned they are no longer employed with the agency. However Rhoda and Nicole have permission to make phone calls if it is more efficient for them. I encourage them to mail the packets back to the agency. Rhoda and Nicole may end up wasting several hours trying to connect with someone by phone.
- For minor relicensing errors Rhoda and Nicole do make phone calls and send e-mails in order to prevent a lapse in the license.

- Black Mountain staff averaged two hours a day doing status checks. This caused a delay in processing licensing transactions and entering the data into FCLS. We will do a status check if agencies have not heard from us for 50 work days.

AGENCY ERRORS

- I have reviewed all new therapeutic foster parent applications through November 22, 2010. This involved 96 applications—35 were approved and 61 were returned to agencies due to errors.
- I have reviewed all new private agency family foster parent applications through November 8, 2010. This involved 30 applications—13 were approved and 17 were returned due to errors.
- Licensing transactions are being completed within 30 to 35 days unless some criminal activity or child protective services issues come to our attention.

ABUSE/NEGLECT SUBSTANTIATIONS (REVOICATIONS)

- Revocations
 - For the time frame January 1, 2010 to date 29 revocation letters have been sent to foster parents. Ten pertained to county departments of social services and 19 pertained to private child-placing agencies.
 - Reason for Revocations:
 - County departments of Social Services: Neglect—6; A/N—1; Sexual Abuse—1; Rule Violations—2.
 - Private agencies: Neglect—11; Abuse—2; A/N—2; Sexual Abuse—3; Rule Violations—1.
- Pending Revocations
 - For the time frame January 1, 2010 to date there are 22 pending revocations. Eight pertain to county departments of social services and 14 pertain to private agencies.
 - County departments of social services: Neglect—5; A/N—1; Rule Violations—2.
 - Private agencies: Neglect—9; Sexual Abuse—3; SA/N—1; Rule Violations—1.

The primary reason for substantiations of neglect relate to improper discipline—the use of corporal punishment. The factors precipitating this are the foster parents grew up in households where corporal punishment was the primary means of punishment and stress due to loss of employment. These factors should inform our practice.

TYPICAL LICENSING ISSUES/ERRORS:

- 5015 not submitted or all fields not completed. A 5015 needs to be submitted for every licensure request.
- Applicants who are 21-25 typically should be licensed for children birth to 12. Young adults should not be licensed for teens. We are aware of too many instances of sexual activity between teen-age foster children and young adult foster parents.
- Applicants who are unemployed and are receiving unemployment benefits will have to wait until they are employed before we will process the application. We will not terminate a license of a current foster parent if the applicant/applicants lose their jobs. However the supervising agency has to be diligent in monitoring the family to make sure the stress levels do not result in

abuse or neglect of a child. We also ask that if a foster parent has become unemployed and a foster child is removed from the home that another child not be placed in the home until the foster parent becomes employed.

- Homes with 4 or 5 dogs in the house as well as large number of dogs outside the house, must carefully be assessed. Are dogs aggressive? How do dogs react to child pulling their tail, reaching for their food bowl?
- Applicants who have been sexually abused—no treatment. Serious discussions should be held with these individuals concerning their parenting of sexually abused/reactive children. Are there unresolved issues, PTSD, etc.? Will foster parent support therapy for sexually abused foster child?
- Areas on the 5016 (Application) not checked, left blank. The 5016 is interactive we do not want attachments, we want explanations in the areas provided on the form.
- Except for medicals all documents, findings, clerk of court, department of corrections, etc. have to be current within 180 days. This means current within 180 days that it is date stamped at the Black Mountain office.
- On the local background check some folks still state minor traffic violations, nothing serious – we need to know the specific violations and the dates.
- Family assessment and 12 skills not thorough. The individual who did the training on the 12 skills needs to be the one to write those. We have received some applications where it is obvious the foster parents wrote these—not allowed. We have also received applications where the 12 skills are cut and pasted from other foster parent applications. (The workers forgot to change the name of the foster parent.) Recent changes in family circumstances need to be thoroughly discussed—death, divorce, birth of child, pregnancy, etc.
- 5016 not signed by foster parent applicants, social worker, agency director/designee.
- 1515 (Fire Inspection) not complete (areas left blank). If Fire Inspector makes a comment on the form about a concern, it needs to be corrected before sending the form to BM. Foster parents need to be trained about the form so they can review it with the Fire Inspector before he/she leaves their home. If there are areas not checked or checked that shouldn't be the foster parent needs to discuss with the Fire Inspector. Please note that under the Foster Parent's signature there is a statement that says if any area checked NO on the form, it will result in non-approval of the home until the items in question are brought into compliance.
- 5150 (Environmental Conditions Checklist) items left blank, no signatures.
- 5017 if the foster parent checks yes to any of the conditions on the form, he/she needs to elaborate.
- 5156 MD needs to fill out form in entirety, again train foster parents that before they leave the MD's office he/she has filled out the form in its entirety.
- The information the applicant puts on the 5017 and the information the MD puts on the 5156 should be the same information.
- If the applicant or the MD indicates health issues (physical or mental) the agency needs to explain these on the 5016, Item X under the Grid where you check YES/NO for Good Physical Health, Good Mental Health. If an applicant lists their state of health as fair or poor on the 5017 this needs to be explained. If there is a MH diagnosis need full explanation. For example someone lists depression. What does this mean? Does condition affect activities of daily living?

How does the condition manifest? What happens when applicant becomes depressed? How is it treated? ETC.

- We are getting the impression that licensing workers are not reviewing the fire inspection form, medical forms, etc.
- RIL document (5268) not attached. The 5268 first has to be sent to the Raleigh office and then the results sent with the licensure request to the BM office.
- Fingerprint clearance letters not attached.
- For relicenses you really need to get the 5157 to us at least two months before the license expires. Again changes in family circumstances since initial or last relicensure need to be thoroughly discussed—death, divorce, birth of child, pregnancy, etc.
- Agencies have asked us to increase capacity in family foster care and therapeutic foster care for “false” sibling groups. For example, a Therapeutic foster home is licensed for two children, there is one child there now. The agency wants the capacity increased to three in order to place two siblings in the home. This request is denied. The two siblings are not related to the other foster child all ready in the home. This also applies to family foster care. A FFC home is licensed for three. There are three foster children in the home. They have one child of their own. The home is licensed for three and the agency requests an increase in capacity to place two siblings in the home. This is denied. The two siblings are not related to the other foster children already in the home. Our rule refers to increasing capacity to keep siblings together this means all the foster children in the home are siblings.

An applicant has been selected to replace Julie Smith. Sandy Craig will be joining our staff on Monday, December 6, 2010.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES/ACTIVITIES DESIGNED TO REDUCE ERRORS

- Contracting with Harry Maney to update the Foster Care Licensing Manual.
- Contracting with UNC-CH (Jordan Institute) to develop an online training course for licensing workers.
- December 15 home-based staff members are coming to Black Mtn. and it is our plan that all licensing transactions in the BM office will be processed on that day. It will take more time to enter the information into FCLS or send packets back to agencies.
- Foster Home Licensing training webinar is scheduled for January 25, 2011.

RESOURCES

- http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dss/licensing/foster_care_rules.htm
- Supplemental Guide to Foster Home Licensing
- The Perfect New License Packet
- The Perfect Relicensure Packet
- The Perfect Change Packet
- The Perfect Transfer Packet
- The Perfect Termination and Revocation Packet
- Documents from the June 15, 2010 webinar (Power point presentation, handouts questions and answers)

MISCELLANEOUS

We still are seeing a large number of transfers of foster parents from one agency to another. You can't convince me that if a large number from one agency transfers to another -- there has been some recruiting going on and promises of a higher rate. This is not illegal but it certainly is unethical. It makes us suspicious of the entire business practices of the agency.

Our child welfare attorney has advised that agencies can recoup training fees from foster parents who transfer from one agency to another. However the contract has to be very specific and cannot be valid in perpetuity. An agency will have to determine a fair amount that it costs to train foster parents. For example, if foster parents transfer after six months recoup 75% of the costs, one year 50%, two years 25%.

We send licensing information, memos, Dear Director/Agency letters to the dss/executive directors. We hear from licensing workers that this information does not get to them on a timely basis.

Federal Title IV-E review will be conducted in NC in July 2011. The PUR is October 1, 2010 through March 31, 2011. Foster care cases of children and foster home licensing records will be pulled for this review and if NC fails the IV-E audit there can be a significant loss of IV-E dollars for the state.

Bob Hensley, ACSW
Team Leader
Regulatory and Licensing Services
December 2nd and 3rd, 2010.

Tips for Using the DSS-5016

This form was updated on 2/10. It is an interactive form that must be typed. Do not submit a handwritten form. If your agency needs the word format of the document send an e-mail request to one of the Program Consultants at the Licensing Office.

I. Name, Criminal History & Background Check information

A. Provide middle names and all married names of applicants. Please note that you do not need to request waivers for applicants who do not have a high school diploma or a GED. If applicants do not have a high school diploma or GED they must have the ability to read and write as evidenced by administering medications as prescribed by a licensed medical provider, maintain medication administration logs and maintain progress notes.

C. You must list all of the court findings. The findings must be listed as they appear in the court documents. This means that specific traffic findings with specific charges and dates have to be listed. You cannot state minor traffic offenses, nothing serious, etc. In the explanation of findings section provide documentation as to why the applicant has criminal charges and what has changed to prevent the reoccurrence of these criminal charges. Background checks need to be dated within 180 days of receiving the packet at the Licensing Office.

E. Supervising agencies are required to check any child abuse and neglect registry in each State the prospective foster parent(s) and any other adult(s) living in the home have resided in the preceding five years. These clearance letters/documents are to be sent to the Licensing Office and placed after the signature page of Form 5016. This is a federal requirement and there are no exceptions. If a state agency refuses to provide a clearance letter the foster home cannot be licensed.

F. If the family has been previously licensed as foster parents contact the previous supervising agency for a report on the family and the agency's recommendations concerning the family's ability to provide foster care services. Write a brief summary of what was learned from the previous agency.

G. Any applicant babysitting in their home on a regular basis meets the definition of an in-home day care for licensing purposes.

II. Foster Home Qualifications

D. List the full names of all children the applicants have parented and their relationship to these children (some may be adults now).

III. Standards for Licensure

Read all the questions and check the boxes accordingly. Frequently we receive 5016's where the licensing worker has checked YES to all the questions. Please note that some answers should be NO or NA. For example, if the agency does not utilize Physical Restraints (Item C) the answer should be NA.

D. Physical Restraints

Pay particular attention to this item. This question has to be answered for every application whether the agency does or does not utilize physical restraints. The answer should always be YES. Foster parents must agree to not use drugs to restrain children.

IV. Conflict of Interest

This is another instance where some licensing workers automatically check YES and the answers probably should be NO. If the answer is YES you will need to request a waiver.

V. Day Care Center Operation

If the applicants do not operate a day care center or do not plan to operate a day care center check NO and NA for B 1, 2, 3. If the applicants operate a day care center or plan to operate a day care center check YES. If the applicants operate a day care center or plan to operate a day care center the answers to the three questions at B. 1, 2, 3 should be YES.

VII. Physical & Environmental Safety

A. Errors on the fire inspection form (DSS-1515) cause the most delays in completing the licensing and relicensing process.

D. Exterior Setting and Safety

2. If there is a pool it has to be fenced. If there is a body of water such as a pond or stream, describe distance away from the home, if it is visible from the applicant's home and are there any barriers in between the home and the water.

Supervision alone is not enough to meet safety requirements. You must consider more than the chronological age of a child when assessing safety factors. What is the maturity level of the child? Are there developmental delays?

E. Room Arrangements and Environment

1. A description of the home and the setting in which the home is located have to be completed.

3. Sleeping Arrangements Chart

Need to show enough space and beds for the number of foster children requested in the capacity. Each foster child must have his/her own bed. Futons and day beds cannot be used. Bedrooms cannot be used for dual purposes.

List the names of all household members, except prospective foster children, in the bedroom and type of bed where they sleep. For foster children use the initials FC immediately before the type of bed (*i.e. FC/twin, FC/crib, FC/queen*) in the appropriate bedroom (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) to designate the bedroom and type of bed where the prospective foster child will sleep.

VIII. Training Requirements

A. Put the date the pre-service training was completed. If it has been more than two years since the applicants completed pre-service training they must repeat the training or the supervising agency must review the pre-service requirements and provide documentation that they continue to understand and are able to operationalize the requirements. The requirements are: (a) General Orientation to Foster Care and Adoption Process; (b) Communication Skills; (c) Understanding the Dynamics of Foster Care and Adoption Process; (d) Separation and Loss; (e) Attachment and Trust; (f) Child and Adolescent Development; (g) Behavior Management; (h) Working with Birth Families and Maintaining Connections; (i) Lifebook Preparation; (j) Planned Moves and the Impact of Disruptions; (k) The Impact of Placement on Foster and Adoptive Families; (l) Teamwork to Achieve Permanence; (m) Cultural Sensitivity; (n) Confidentiality; and (o) Health and Safety.

X. Criteria for the Foster Family & Mutual Home Assessment

A. Review Forms 5017 and 5156. If a family member or the medical professional completing Form 5017 or Form 5156 indicates that there are medical or mental health issues discuss this in the gray block below the chart. Please note that if you check YES to good physical and good mental health you need to explain why the answer is YES after the family member or the medical professional has indicated an issue/concern. This explanation is to be documented in the gray block below the chart.

B. Mutual Home Assessment

I. Family History

A thorough explanation is needed for the 13 items listed under Family History in the appropriate blocks on form 5016 (Information about parents and siblings to Day Care Plans). In the Marriages and other significant relationships section, provide more information than just previously married. Include significant relationships especially when children are born from these relationships. In the Parenting Experiences section, provide more information about who and how they parented. If they are not parents, describe any important relationships with relative children or other children in youth groups (Big Brother & Big Sister) or church involvement.

If you substitute a preplacement assessment for the Family History the preplacement assessment must meet all the rule requirements in 10A NCAC 70H .0405 found at this web site: (<http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dss/licensing/docs/70H%20June12010.pdf>). There are 28 items that must be addressed in the preplacement assessment: (1) the applicants' reasons for wanting to adopt; (2) the strengths and needs of each member of the household; (3) the attitudes and feelings of the family, extended family, and other individuals involved with the family toward accepting adoptive children, and parenting children not born to them; (4) the attitudes of the applicants toward the birth parents and in regard to the reasons the child is in need of adoption; (5) the applicants' attitudes toward child behavior and discipline; (6) the applicants' plan for discussing adoption with the child; (7) the emotional stability and maturity of applicants; (8) the applicants' ability to cope with problems, stress, frustrations, crises, and loss; (9) the applicants' ability to give and receive affection; (10) the applicants' child-caring skills and willingness to acquire additional skills needed for the child's development; (11) the applicants' ability to provide for the child's physical and emotional needs; (12) whether the applicant has ever been convicted of a crime other than a minor traffic violation; (13) the strengths and needs of birth children or previously adopted children; (14) the applicant's physical and mental health, including any addiction to alcohol or drugs; (15) financial information provided by the applicant, including property and income; (16) the applicants' personal character references; (17) the applicant's religious orientation, if any; (18) the location and physical environment of the home; (19) the plan for child care if parents work; (20) recommendations for adoption in regard to the number, age, sex, characteristics, and special needs of children who could be best served by the family; (21) any previous request for an assessment or involvement in an adoptive placement and the outcome of the assessment or placement; (22) whether the individual has ever been a respondent in a domestic violence proceeding or a proceeding concerning a minor who was allegedly abused, neglected, dependent, undisciplined or delinquent, and the outcome of the proceeding or whether the individual has been found to have abused or neglected a child or has been a respondent in a juvenile court proceeding that resulted in the removal of a child or has had child protective services involvement that resulted in the removal of a child; (23) documentation of the results of the search of the Responsible Individual's List as defined in 10A NCAC 70A .0102 for all adult members of the household that indicates they have not had child protective services involvement resulting in a substantiation of child abuse or serious neglect; (24) whether the applicant has located a parent interested in placing a child for adoption with the applicant, and a brief, non identifying description of the parent and the child; (25) the applicants' age, date of birth, nationality, race or ethnicity; (26) the applicant's marital and family status and history, including the presence of any children born to or adopted by the applicant, and any other children in the household; (27) the applicant's educational and employment history and any special skills; and (28) any additional fact or circumstance that may be relevant to a determination of the applicant's suitability to be an adoptive parent, including the quality of the home environment and the level of functioning of any children in the household.

II. 12 Skills

The assessment of 12 skills must include specific behavioral language:

- Example - Helping children placed in the home maintain and develop relationships that will keep them connected to their pasts - Strength: "Mrs. Smith expresses an

understanding of the importance of maintaining attachments and family and cultural identity”) followed by specific examples to support that conclusion (Example - “Mrs. Smith supports her sister’s efforts to keep her adopted niece and nephew connected to their culture of origin by celebrating Vietnamese new year with them and by preparing Vietnamese food”) (Need – Mrs. Smith will research traditions and cultural values of the foster children as they enter her care.

- Example - Strength: “Mrs. Smith communicates effectively and develops successful partnerships.” followed by specific examples - “Mrs. Smith is a deacon in her church and teaches Sunday school.” “Mrs. Smith is a store manager who leads team meetings and supervises five employees.” “Mrs. Smith was an active member of the pre-service group who asked appropriate questions at the right time and listened to others.” Need – Mrs. Smith wants to be a better listener and will seek out training to develop this skill.
- Avoid affective/cognitive language such as “understands,” “knows,” “feels,” and “appreciates” in the examples you give to support your conclusions
- Instead, support your conclusions by describing the applicant’s specific behaviors or the words that she used. “Mrs. Smith, who lost her grandmother five years ago, says she recovered from the loss through prayer, increased involvement in her church, and by spending additional time in her garden.”
- Remember that applicants can demonstrate the 12 skills in ways that don’t involve children, such as in their job, volunteer work, or hobbies.
- For further guidance concerning the 12 skills refer to pages 19-24 in the document “A Supplemental Guide to Foster Home Licensing” at the following web site: <http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dss/licensing/docs/Guide-chp3.pdf>

III. Assessment of Shared Parenting

Provide more information than they understand and are willing to participate. For further guidance see page 26 in the document “A Supplemental Guide to Foster Home Licensing” at the following web site: <http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dss/licensing/docs/Guide-chp3.pdf>

IV. Financial Ability

Give the TOTAL monthly income of applicants and the anticipated TOTAL monthly expenses. You do not have to itemize the income or expenses, just give a grand total. We ask agencies to pay close attention to the suitability of applicants who are in arrears for child support payments. The income needs to be more than the expenses. Applicants need to be able to absorb the extra financial strain that can come from providing foster care.

V. Dates and Locations of visits

Please note that Rule 10A NCAC 70E .0802 requires the applicant(s) to be interviewed by the licensing social worker in the family’s home and in the supervising agency’s office. For two-parent homes, separate as well as joint discussions with both parents shall be arranged. For foster homes with more than two parents, separate as well as joint discussions with all parents shall be arranged. Interviews should also be scheduled with the children of the prospective foster parents to determine their feelings and response to foster children being placed in the home.

Training, phone, e-mail contacts do not count.

XI. Recommendations

Unless your agency is recommending the applicant you should not send an application to the Licensing office.

Signature Page

Make sure Applicant(s), Social Worker and Director or Designee have signed and dated the application.

FOSTER HOME LICENSE APPLICATION

Required Applicants (10A NCAC 70E .1104 (d)). Foster parent applicants who are married are presumed to be co-parents in the same household and both shall complete all licensing requirements. Adults 21 years of age or older, living in currently licensed or newly licensed foster homes who have responsibility for the care, supervision, or discipline of the foster child shall complete all licensing requirements. The supervising agency shall assess each adult's responsibility for the care, supervision, or discipline of the foster child.

I. NAME, CRIMINAL HISTORY & BACKGROUND CHECK INFORMATION (10A NCAC 70E .1114 & .1116)

A. Name & Education Level

Applicant's Full Name (First, Middle., Last)	Maiden Name	Previous Married Name	*Education Level

*Education Level (Indicate HS, GED, BA, BS, MS, PhD)

Applicants without a High School Diploma or GED have the ability to read and write as evidenced by their ability to administer medications as prescribed by a licensed medical provider, maintain medication administration logs and maintain progress notes. YES NO

B. Mailing address, if different than home address: _____

C. North Carolina Criminal History & Background Check Information

Type of Background Check Findings:	Check Conducted	Date Conducted
Local Court Record Checked by Agency Staff	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Date :
Findings: Explanation of Findings:		
NC Dept. of Corrections Offender Information http://www.doc.state.nc.us/offenders/	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Date:
Findings: Explanation of Findings:		
NC Sex Offender and Public Protection Registry http://sexoffender.ncdoj.gov/	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Date:
Findings: Explanation of Findings:		
Health Care Personnel Registry https://www.ncnar.org/nchcpr.html	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Date:
Findings: Explanation of Findings:		

D. North Carolina Child Abuse Neglect History

Child Abuse or Neglect Reported:	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Substantiation: <input type="checkbox"/> YES, Date of Substantiation: <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		
Explanation of Findings:		

E. Complete Section E if applicant has NOT resided in NC for the past five years.

Previous Address(es)	Dates of Residency

Child Central Registry Check from above State(s) of residence regarding applicant as a perpetrator of abuse or neglect if he/she DID NOT reside in NC for the past five years.	Date Conducted:
Place child abuse/neglect clearance letters from other state(s) after the signature page. Any findings of child abuse/neglect, criminal history or background check offenses will require a letter of explanation and support from the agency director.	

F. Have any of the applicants been previously licensed as foster parents? YES NO

If Yes, Document information provided by the previous agency regarding the foster parenting experiences of the applicant.

G. Does Applicant have an In-Home Day Care? YES NO If 'YES' attach copy of Day Care License (Place this document after the signature page).

II. FOSTER HOME QUALIFICATIONS (10A NCAC 70E .1001)

A. Applicants' Own Children in Home

Name (First, Middle., Last)	DOB	Sex	Education Level

B. Others in Household

Name-include relatives, non-related boarders, day care, babysitting children, etc. (First, Middle, Last)	DOB	Sex	Relationship to Family

C. **Foster Children Presently in Home** Indicate if court ordered placement of relative, non-relative or child in custody of an out-of state agency. Indicate with an asterisk (*) children placed for therapeutic services.

Name (First, Middle., Last)	DOB	Sex	Education Level	Date of Placement

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D. Applicants' Own Children Not in Home including children applicant has parented in the past (step, relative, non-related, etc.) (This does NOT include foster children.)

Name (First, Middle, Last Name prior to marriage)	DOB	Sex	Address (City/State)

ANSWERS TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS SHOULD RELATE TO OWN CHILDREN, RELATIVE AND/OR FOSTER CHILDREN. IF APPLICANT HAS NO PARENTING EXPERIENCE, ANSWERS SHOULD REFLECT RESPONSES DURING DISCUSSION OF THESE TOPICS.

III. STANDARDS FOR LICENSURE (10A NCAC 70E .1100)

A. Clients Rights and Care of Children (10A NCAC 70E .1101)

Applicants agree to ensure that each foster child:

YES

NO

- (1) has clothing to wear that is appropriate to the weather;
- (2) is allowed to have personal property;
- (3) is encouraged to express opinions on issues concerning care;
- (4) is provided care in a manner that recognizes variations in cultural values and traditions;
- (5) is provided the opportunity for spiritual development and is not denied the right to practice religious beliefs;
- (6) is not identified in connection with the supervising agency in any way that would bring the child or the child's family embarrassment;
- (7) is not forced to acknowledge dependency on or gratitude to the foster parents;
- (8) is encouraged to contact and have telephone conversations with family members, when not contraindicated in the child's visitation and contact plan;
- (9) is provided training and discipline that is appropriate for the child's age, intelligence, emotional makeup, and past experience;
- (10) is not subjected to cruel or abusive punishment;
- (11) is not subjected to corporal punishment;
- (12) is not deprived of a meal or contacts with family for punishment or placed in isolation time-out except when isolation time-out means the removal of a child to an unlocked room or area from which the child is not physically prevented from leaving. The foster parent may use isolation time-out as a behavioral control measure when the foster parent provides it within hearing distance of a foster parent. The length of time alone shall be appropriate to the child's age and development;
- (13) is not subjected to verbal abuse, threats, or humiliating remarks about himself/herself or his/her families;
- (14) is provided a daily routine in the home that promotes a positive mental health environment and provides an opportunity for normal activities with time for rest and play;
- (15) is provided training in good health habits, including proper eating, frequent bathing, and good grooming. Each child shall be provided food with nutritional content for normal growth and health. Any diets prescribed by a licensed medical provider shall be provided;
- (16) is provided medical care in accordance with the treatment prescribed for the child;
- (17) of mandatory school age maintains regular school attendance unless the child has been excused by the authorities;
- (18) is encouraged to participate in neighborhood and group activities, have friends visit the home and visit in the homes of friends.

- (19) assumes responsibility for herself/himself and household duties in accordance with her/his age, health, and ability. Household tasks shall not interfere with school, sleep, or study periods;
- (20) is provided opportunities to participate in recreational activities;
- (21) is not permitted to do any task which is in violation of child labor laws or not appropriate for a child of that age;
- (22) is provided supervision in accordance with the child's age, intelligence, emotional makeup, and experience; and
- (23) if less than eight years of age and weighs less than 80 pounds is properly secured in a child passenger restraint system that is approved and installed in a manner authorized by the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles.

B. Medication (10A NCAC 70E .1102)

Foster parents agree to be responsible for the following regarding medication: YES NO

- (1) General requirements:
 - (a) Retain the manufacturer's label with expiration dates visible on non-prescription drug containers not dispensed by a pharmacist;
 - (b) Administer prescription drugs to a child only on the written order of a person authorized by law to prescribe drugs;
 - (c) Allow prescription medications to be self-administered by children only when authorized in writing by the child's licensed medical provider;
 - (d) Allow non-prescription medications to be administered to a child taking prescription medications only when authorized by the child's licensed medical provider; allow non-prescription medications to be administered to a child not taking prescription medication, with the authorization of the parents, guardian, legal custodian, or licensed medical provider;
 - (e) Allow injections to be administered by unlicensed persons who have been trained by a registered nurse, pharmacist, or other person allowed by law to train unlicensed persons to administer injections;
 - (f) Immediately record in a Medication Administration Record (MAR) provided by the supervising agency all drugs administered to each child. The MAR shall include the following: child's name; name, strength, and quantity of the drug; instructions for administering the drug; date and time the drug is administered, discontinued, or returned to the supervising agency or the person legally authorized to remove the child from foster care; name or initials of person administering or returning the drug; child requests for changes or clarifications concerning medications; and child's refusal of any drug; and
 - (g) Follow-up for child requests for changes or clarifications concerning medications with an appointment or consultation with a licensed medical provider.
- (2) Medication disposal:
 - (a) Return prescription medications to the supervising agency or person legally authorized to remove the child from foster care; and
 - (b) Return discontinued prescription medications to a pharmacy or the supervising agency for disposal, in accordance with 10A NCAC 70G .0510(c).
- (3) Medication storage:
 - (a) Store prescription and over-the-counter medications in a locked cabinet in a clean, well-lighted, well-ventilated room other than bathrooms, kitchen, or utility room between 59° F (15 ° C) and 86° F (30° C);
 - (b) Store medications in a refrigerator, if required, between 36° F (2° C) and 46° F (8° C). If the refrigerator is used for food items, medications shall be kept in a separate, locked compartment or container within the refrigerator; and
 - (c) Store prescription medications separately for each child.
- (4) Psychotropic medication review:
 - (a) Arrange for any child receiving psychotropic medications to have their drug regimen reviewed by the child's licensed medical provider at least every six months;
 - (b) Report the findings of the drug regimen review to the supervising agency; and
 - (c) Document the drug review in the MAR along with any prescribed changes.
- (5) Medication errors:
 - (a) Report drug administration errors or adverse drug reactions to a licensed medical provider or pharmacist; and
 - (b) Document the drug administered and the drug reaction in the MAR.

C. Physical Restraints (10A NCAC 70E .1103)

- (1) Foster parents who utilize physical restraint holds agree to not engage in discipline or behavior management, which includes: YES NO N/A
- (a) protective or mechanical restraints;
 - (b) drug used as a restraint, except as outlined in Paragraph (b) of this Rule;
 - (c) seclusion of a child in a locked room; or
 - (d) physical restraint holds except for a child who is at imminent risk of harm to himself/herself or others until the child is calm.
- (2) Foster Parents agree to meet the following regarding training requirements and the use to physical restraints: YES NO N/A
- (a) Before a foster parent shall administer physical restraint holds, each foster parent shall complete training that includes at least 16 hours of initial training in behavior management, including techniques for de-escalating problem behavior, the appropriate use of physical restraint holds, monitoring of vital indicators, and debriefing children and foster parents involved in physical restraint holds.
 - (b) Foster parents authorized to use physical restraint holds shall annually complete at least eight hours of behavior management training including techniques for de-escalating problem behavior.
 - (c) This training shall count toward the training requirements as set forth in 10A NCAC 70E .1117(f)(6).
 - (d) Only foster parents trained in the use of physical restraint holds shall administer physical restraint holds.
- (3) Foster parents agree to the following regarding the administration of physical restraints: YES NO N/A
- (a) foster parents shall use only those physical restraint holds approved by the North Carolina Interventions (NCI) Quality Assurance Committee. Approved physical restraint holds can be found at the following web site:
<http://www.dhhs.state.nc.us/mhddsas/training/rscurricula/reviewedcurriculumbyname.pdf>
 - (b) before employing a physical restraint hold, the foster parent shall take into consideration the child's medical condition and any medications the child may be taking;
 - (c) no child shall be restrained utilizing a protective or mechanical device;
 - (d) no child or group of children shall be allowed to participate in the physical restraint of another child;
 - (e) physical restraint holds shall:
 - (ii) not be used for purposes of discipline or convenience;
 - (ii) be used only when there is imminent risk of harm to the child or others and less restrictive approaches have failed;
 - (iii) be administered in the least restrictive manner possible to protect the child or others from imminent risk of harm; and
 - (iv) end when the child becomes calm.
 - (f) The foster parent shall:
 - (i) ensure that any physical restraint hold utilized on a child is administered by a trained foster parent with a second trained foster parent or with a second trained adult in attendance. Concurrent with the administration of a physical restraint hold and for a minimum of 15 minutes subsequent to the termination of the hold, a foster parent shall monitor the child's breathing, ascertain the child is verbally responsive and motorically in control, and ensure the child remains conscious without any complaints of pain. The supervising agency may seek a waiver from the licensing authority for a foster parent to administer a physical restraint hold without a second trained adult in attendance, based on the following criteria: completion of the waiver request form. The licensing authority shall grant the waiver if it receives approval from the child's parent, guardian, or custodian that the administering of a physical restraint hold without a second trained person present is acceptable, written approval from the supervising agency that the foster parent is authorized to administer a physical restraint hold without a second trained person present, and documentation that there is approval by the child and family team and documented in the person-centered plan or out-of-home family services agreement that it is acceptable for the foster parent to administer a physical restraint hold without a second trained person present;
 - (ii) immediately terminate the physical restraint hold or adjust the position to ensure that the child's breathing and motor control are not restricted, if at any time during the

- administration of a physical restraint hold the child complains of being unable to breathe or loses motor control;
 - (iii) immediately seek medical attention for the child, if at any time the child appears to be in distress; and
 - (iv) conduct an interview with the foster child about the incident following the use of a physical restraint hold.
- (g) The foster parent shall cooperate with and provide information to the supervising agency who shall:
- (i) interview the foster parent administering the physical restraint hold about the incident following the use of a physical restraint hold;
 - (ii) document each incident of a child being subjected to a physical restraint hold on an Incident Report provided by the licensing authority. The incident report shall include (1) the child's name, age, height, and weight; (2) the type of hold utilized; (3) the duration of the hold; (4) the trained foster parent administering the hold; (5) the trained foster parent or trained adult witnessing the hold; (6) the less restrictive alternatives that were attempted prior to utilizing physical restraint; (7) the child's behavior that necessitated the use of physical restraint; and (8) whether the child's condition necessitated medical attention.
- (4) Foster parents agree to annually receive written approval from the executive director or his/her designee of the supervising agency before administering physical restraint holds. The foster parent shall retain a copy of the written approval and a copy shall be placed in the foster home record.

YES NO N/A

D. Physical Restraints (10A NCAC 70E .1103)

Foster parents agree to the following regarding physical restraints and the use of drugs:

YES NO

- (a) Drugs shall not be used for the purpose of restraining a child.
- (b) A drug used as a restraint means a medication used only to control behavior or to restrict a child's freedom of movement, and is not a standard to treat a psychiatric condition.
- (c) A drug shall not be used for the purpose of punishment, foster parent convenience, or substitution for adequate supervision.

IV. CONFLICT OF INTEREST (10A NCAC 70E .1105)

- A.** Applicant supervised by a Public or Private child-placing agency is a member of agency board of directors, governance structure, social services board, county commission or is an agency employee or relative of an agency employee? YES NO
- B.** Applicant to be supervised by a Private child-placing agency and is an owner of that Private child placing agency? YES NO

V. DAY CARE CENTER OPERATION (10A NCAC 70E .1106)

- A.** Do the applicants operate or plan to operate a day care center? YES NO
- B.** If the applicants operate or plan to operate a day care center do they meet the following criteria?
 - (1) the foster home living quarters shall not be part of the day care operation YES NO NA
 - (2) there shall be a separate entrance to the day care operation YES NO NA
 - (3) staff specified in day care center rules shall be available to provide care for the day care children YES NO NA

VI. RELATIONSHIP TO SUPERVISING AGENCY & COMPLIANCE VISITS (10A NCAC 70E .1107 & .1113)

- A.** Applicants agree to work with the supervising agency in the following ways: YES NO
 - (1) Work with the child and the child's parent(s) or guardian(s) in the placement process, reunification process, adoption process, or any change of placement process;
 - (2) Consult with social workers, mental health personnel, licensed medical providers, and other persons authorized by the child's parent(s), guardian(s), or custodian(s) who are involved with the child;
 - (3) Maintain confidentiality regarding children and their parent(s) or guardian(s);
 - (4) Keep records regarding the child's illnesses, behaviors, social needs, educational needs, and family visits and contacts; and
 - (5) Report to the supervising agency any changes as required by 10A NCAC 70E .0902
 - (6) Complete in-service training as required in 10A NCAC 70E .1117 and obtain required documentation for relicensure **180 days prior** to expiration of license biennially

- B. Quarterly Visits:** Applicants agree to allow licensing social workers from the supervising agency to visit the home or meet with the licensing social worker outside of the home on at least a quarterly basis for the specific purpose of assessing licensing requirements. Minimally, two of the quarterly visits each year shall take place in the foster home. Visits outside of the home may occur at a location of the licensing social workers preference. YES NO
- C.** Foster parents who provide therapeutic foster care services agree to allow weekly supervision and support from a qualified professional as defined in 10A NCAC 27G .0104 and .0203. YES NO N/A

VII. PHYSICAL & ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY (10A NCAC 70E .1108, .1109, .1110, .1112)

A. Fire & Building Safety

- (1) Fire and Building Safety regulations met as evidenced by DSS-1515 Fire and Building Safety Inspection Form attached. YES NO

B. Health Regulations

- (1) Discussion was held regarding water quality and sanitation. Family is not aware of any health hazards caused by the family’s water supply and sanitation facilities, and has informed the supervising agency about any water testing that has been done and any immediate or past problems concerning water quality and sanitation. There is no reason to believe the water supply is not safe or the toilet and bathing facilities are not sanitary. YES NO

C. Environmental Regulations

- (1) Environmental regulations met as evidenced by DSS-5150 Environmental Conditions Checklist attached? YES NO

D. Exterior Setting & Safety

- (1) Exterior spaces around the foster home, including any yard spaces are clear of any dangerous objects or hazardous items? YES NO
- (2) Exterior spaces around the foster home are clear of bodies of water such as: swimming pools, beaches, rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, etc.? YES NO
- If you answered ‘NO’ to (1) or (2) document how access to these objects, hazardous items, and/or bodies of water is avoided: _____

E. Room Arrangements and Environment

- (1) Briefly describe house, kitchen and dining areas, family or living areas and bathing facilities, and the setting in which the house is located. _____
- (2) Home’s design allows children privacy while bathing, dressing, and using toilet facilities? YES NO
- (3) Indicate sleeping arrangements in **Table Below** for all members of the household including prospective and current foster children. Bedrooms shall be identified as such and not serve dual purposes. Each child must have his/ her own bed. Identify types of beds in each bedroom and who occupies each bed. Only describe beds that are available or in use as of the date of application.

Bed Type: Twin, Full, Queen, King, Bunk-Twin/Twin, Bunk – Full/Twin, Crib.

Occupant(s): To signify occupant list name of Applicant(s), Applicant’s Minor Child, Applicant’s Relative Child, any Non-relative child, or Adult household member occupying each bed. Enter “FC”(Foster Child) as the occupant where applicable to signify beds available for foster children.

SLEEPING ARRANGEMENTS CHART	Bed Type / Occupant(s)	Bed Type / Occupant(s)	Bed Type / Occupant(s)	Bed Type / Occupant(s)
<i>Example Bedroom 0.</i>	<i>Queen / Mr. & Mrs. Applicant</i>	<i>Crib/FC</i>		
Bedroom 1.				
Bedroom 2.				
Bedroom 3.				
Bedroom 4.				
Bedroom 5.				

- (4) Each bed is provided with comfortable, supported mattress, two sheets, blanket and bedspread? YES NO

- (5) Separate and accessible drawer space and closet space for personal belongings and clothing available for each child? YES NO

VIII. TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

- A.** Each applicant has successfully completed 30 hours of pre-service training covering the components listed in 10A NCAC 70E .1117 (1). YES NO **Date Completed:** ____/____/____
- B.** Each applicant agrees to receive training in medication administration and; first-aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and universal precautions such as those provided by the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association or equivalent organizations before a foster child is placed with the foster family. YES NO
- C.** Each applicant agrees and understands they must successfully complete at least 10 hours annually of in-service training to be re-licensed. YES NO
- D.** Each applicant agrees to receive six hours of advanced medical training consisting of issues relevant to human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) annually if they care for a child with HIV or AIDS. YES NO
- E.** Each family foster parent applicant agrees to receive child specific training as outlined in the out-of-home family services agreement. *This training will count towards the 20 hours of in-service training requirement.* YES NO
- F.** Each therapeutic foster parent applicant has successfully completed 10 hours of additional pre-service training covering the components listed in 10A NCAC 70E .1117 (2). YES NO N/A **Date Completed:** ____/____/____
- G.** Each therapeutic foster parent applicant understands and agrees to receive additional training as specified in 10A NCAC 70E .1117 (3). This training will count towards the 20 hours of in-service training requirement. YES NO N/A
- H.** Each therapeutic foster parent applicant understands and agrees to receive additional child-specific training and supervision as required in 10A NCAC 70E .1117 (5). This training will count towards the 20 hours of in-service training requirement. YES NO N/A

IX. OTHER (10A NACA 70E subsections .0806, .0902, .1101, .1116, .0804)

- A.** Foster Parent Agreement signed and copy given to applicant(s) YES NO
- B.** Discipline Agreement signed and copy given to applicant(s) YES NO
- C.** Written notice regarding criminal history checks as required by G.S. 131D-10.3A(e) given to applicant(s) and adult household member(s) YES NO
- D.** At least 3 References obtained on all adult members of the foster home, copies in agency file YES NO
- E.** Agency Foster Parent Handbook with information on services, policies, standards, and expectations has been discussed with and reviewed by applicant(s) YES NO
- F.** Waiver of licensing rule requested and DSS-5199 Waiver Request form attached. YES NO

X. CRITERIA FOR THE FOSTER FAMILY & MUTUAL HOME ASSESSMENT (MHA) (10A NCAC 70E .0800, .0802, .0803 & .1104) Applicants are persons whose behaviors, circumstances and health are conducive to the safety and well-being of children.

- A. Physical and Mental Health of Applicants:** The foster family shall be in good physical and mental health as evidenced by: **DSS-5017, DSS-5156, and TB test results attached.** YES NO
- (1) Answer ‘YES’ in the chart below regarding **Physical Health** if there is **NO** indication of significant Physical Health needs as reported on DSS 5017 – Medical History form, DSS 5156 – Request for Medical Information form, and TB test results (TB tests required for all adults 18 years old and up; children under 18 only need to be tested if an adult in the home has tested positive).
- (2) Answer ‘YES’ in the chart below regarding **Mental Health** if there is **NO** indication of significant **Mental Health** needs as reported on DSS 5017 – Medical History form, DSS 5156 – Request for Medical Information form, and as indicated by the following factors:

Name of Applicant/ Household Member	Good Physical Health? Check Yes or No	Good Mental Health? Check Yes or No
Example Mr. Applicant	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO

	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
Answer here regarding all Children in the home.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO

If the answer is 'NO' for any applicant, household member or child, explain how the identified medical or mental health need(s) will affect the ability of the applicant(s) to care for the children in foster care. _____

Attach doctor, psychologist, counselor, therapist notes as needed.

- (3) Is there an indication of alcohol abuse, drug abuse or illegal drug use by a member of the foster family? YES NO
- (4) Is there an indication that a member of the foster family is a perpetrator of domestic violence? YES NO
- (5) Is there an indication that a member of the foster family has abused, neglected, or exploited a disabled adult? YES NO
- (6) Is there an indication that a member of the foster family has been found to have abused or neglected a child or has been a respondent in a juvenile court proceeding that resulted in the removal of a child or has had child protective services involvement that resulted in the removal of a child? YES NO

If the answer to any of the above questions (3,4,5,6) is **YES** provide an explanation. _____

B. Mutual Home Assessment: The mutual home assessment shall be carried out in a series of planned discussions between the supervising agency staff, the prospective foster parent applicants and other members of the household. The family shall be seen by the social worker in the family's home and in the supervising agency's office. For two or more applicants, separate as well as joint discussions with all applicants shall be arranged. The mutual home assessment is completed by the licensing professional or social worker.

There are Five Parts (I – V) to the Mutual Home Assessment.

Part I. Documentation of Family History – A preplacement assessment (adoption study) can be substituted for the Family History. MAPP profiles, agency questionnaires/applications are unacceptable. Are you substituting a preplacement assessment for the Family History? YES NO (If YES, attach after the signature page). A preplacement assessment (adoption study) **CANNOT** be substituted for the assessment of the 12 Skills in Part II.

	Foster Parent Applicant	Foster Parent Applicant
Name:		
Race:		
Birth Date:		
Place of Birth:		
Marital Status:		
Date of Marriage:		
Place of Marriage:		
County of Residence:		

Present Employment:		
Phone Number:		

Information about parents and siblings (who raised applicants, describe relationship with parents and siblings, describe parents' relationship with each other):

Family Support Systems in family of origin and currently:

Disciplinary methods used by the applicants' parents:

Personal experiences of abuse, neglect and domestic violence in family of origin and currently:

Significant experiences of loss and ability to cope with loss, grief, problems, stress, frustrations, crises:

Drug or alcohol abuse (in family of origin and currently):

Education and Employment History:

Religious orientation {(if any) in family of origin and currently}:

Marriages and other significant relationships:

Parenting Experiences:

Emotional stability and maturity:

Ability to give and receive affection:

Child Care Plans (if applicable):

Part II. Documentation of Assessment of 12 Skills – completed by licensing professional. Foster parents shall be selected on the basis of demonstrating strengths in the skill areas of 10A NCAC 70E .1004 (a), (1) through (12) which permit them to undertake and perform the responsibilities of meeting the needs of children, in providing continuity of care, and in working with the supervising agency. Foster parents shall demonstrate skills in:

Skill 1: Assessing individual and family strengths and needs and building on strengths and meeting needs.

Strength:

Need:

Skill 2: Using and developing effective communication.

Strength:

Need:

Skill 3: Identifying the strengths and needs of children placed in the home.

Strength:

Need:

Skill 4: Building on children's strengths and meeting the needs of children placed in the home.

Strength:

Need:

Skill 5: Developing partnerships with children placed in the home, parents or the guardians of the children placed in the home, the supervising agency and the community to develop and carry out plans for permanency.

Strength:

Need:

Skill 6: Helping children placed in the home develop skills to manage loss and skills to form attachments.

Strength:

Need:

Skill 7: Helping children placed in the home manage their behaviors.

Strength:

Need:

Skill 8: Helping children placed in the home maintain and develop relationships that will keep them connected to their pasts.

Strength:

Need:

Skill 9: Helping children placed in the home build on positive self-concept and positive family, cultural, and racial identity.

Strength:

Need:

Skill 10: Providing a safe and healthy environment for children placed in the home which keeps them free from harm.

Strength:

Need:

Skill 11: Assessing the ways in which providing family foster care or therapeutic foster care affects the family.

Strength:

Need:

XI. Recommendation for Licensure.

Recommendation for licensure:

Document agency's plan for supporting the family when placements occur:

SIGNATURES

I have reviewed and am in agreement with the above information, declare that it is true and accurate, and understand that according to G. S. 132-1 this information may be furnished to others upon proper request. Application must be signed by all applicants, social worker, and agency head for licensure to be considered by the licensing authority.

Type Name of Applicant	Type Name of Applicant
✓	✓
Applicant Signature / Date	Applicant Signature / Date

Type Name of Applicant	Type Name of Applicant
✓	✓
Applicant Signature / Date	Applicant Signature / Date

Type Name of Social Worker	
✓	
Social Worker Signature / Date	
Social Worker Phone Number:	
Social Worker E-Mail Address:	

Type Name of Agency Director or Designee*
✓
Signature of Agency Director or Designee / Date
<p>*I certify that the Agency Director has appointed me as Designee for the purpose of signing documents for Regulatory and Licensing Services.</p>

IMPORTANT CONTACTS FOR FOSTER CARE LICENSING

Fingerprints

Send to:

NC Division of Child Development
Criminal Records Check Unit
2201 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-2201

800/859-0829 (Ask to speak to someone in the Criminal Record Check Unit)

Financial, Rates, and Reimbursement Issues

Tina Bumgarner, Foster Care Financial Resource Coordinator
NC Division of Social Services
828-397-3901
Tina.Bumgarner@dhhs.nc.gov

Licensing Authority

Rhoda Ammons, Licensing Consultant
828/669-3388
rhoda.ammons@ncmail.net

Nicole Jensen, Licensing Consultant
828/669-3388
Nicole.Jensen@dhhs.nc.gov

NC Division of Social Services
Regulatory and Licensing Services Team
952 Old U. S. 70 Highway
Black Mountain, NC 28711
828/669-3388

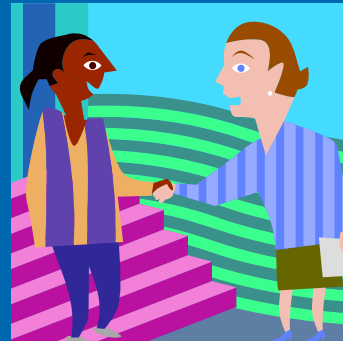
Agenda

- Brief Orientation
- Introductions
- Foster home licensing update
- The DSS-5016
- Other Topics and Licensing Resources
- Q & A



Panel Participants today are:

Bob Hensley
Rhoda Ammons
Nicole Jensen



Your facilitator is:
John McMahon

Technical support is
provided by:

Phillip Armfield
Mellicent Blythe

Snapshot of NC's Infrastructure

1. 225 licensed child-placing agencies
 - 100 county DSS agencies
 - 123 private agencies
2. 8,802 children in foster care on 12/31/10

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Other Licensing Office Staff



Cindy Norton



Joyce Moore



Sandy Craig

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Greater Scrutiny: 3 Reasons

1. Increase in substantiations and revocations
2. North Carolina's upcoming (July 2011) federal IV-E audit
3. Staffing levels/workload in the Regulatory and Licensing Services Unit

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AREAS OF CONCERN

Increase in Substantiations & Revocations

Jan. 1 – Dec. 2, 2010

29 *revocations letters sent*

- 10** from DSS's
- 19** from private agencies
 - 17 neglect
 - 3 abuse and neglect
 - 4 sexual abuse
 - 2 abuse
 - 3 rule violations

22 *pending revocations*

- 8** from DSS's
- 14** from private agencies
 - 14 neglect
 - 1 abuse and neglect
 - 3 sexual abuse
 - 1 sexual abuse & neglect
 - 3 rule violations

Two Primary Contributing Factors

1. Foster parents raised in families that used corporal punishment
2. Job loss

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AREAS OF CONCERN

High Application Return Rates

TFC applications

96 reviewed

- 35 approved (36%)
- 61 returned (64%)

FFC applications

30 reviewed

- 13 approved (43%)
- 17 returned (57%)

- See handouts for a list of the most common errors that lead to returned applications
- Last statement on 1515--no question should be answered no--NA is for homes with no extension cords and homes that do not require CO detectors

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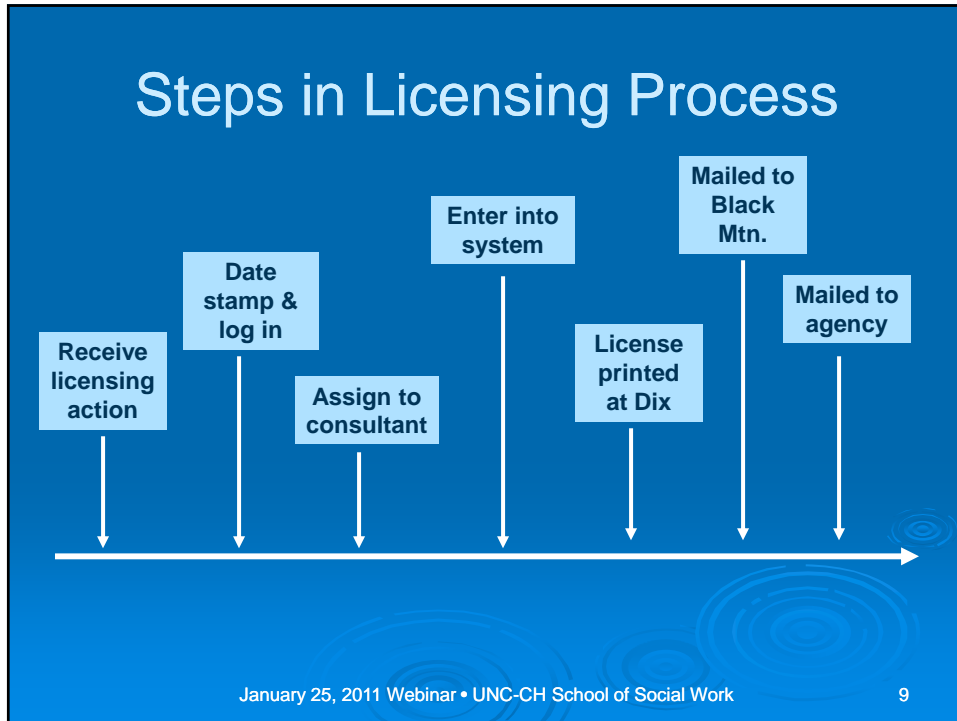
AREAS OF CONCERN

Troubling Transfers

- Recruiting another agency's foster parents is unethical and short-sighted.
 - Can be detrimental to children
 - May undermine relationships and supports in the foster family's life
 - Violates the social work value of integrity, which calls upon us to behave in a trustworthy manner
- Can poison interagency relationships, retard collaboration, and interfere with efforts of entire child welfare community to achieve positive results for children and families

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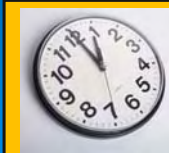
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- ## Licensing Office Priorities
1. ICPC
 2. Re-license
 3. Returns (applications sent back)
 4. New
 5. Transfers or changes
 6. Terminations
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Licensing Timeframes

- Agencies receive response in 30-35 work days unless errors in licensing packets
- Agencies may request a status check if they no response within 50 work days
- Re-licensing: send in 2 months ahead
 - Allows 30 days for processing and leaves time if there are errors



Clock starts ticking when we have complete and accurate information

11

Three Core Skill Areas

1. Selection and information gathering
 - Includes skillfully and consistently asking difficult questions
2. Clearly communicating what you know
 - Help Licensing Consultants answer this question: **Would I feel safe placing my child with this family and in this home?**
3. “Care and completion” with paperwork

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Foster Home License Application (DSS-5016)

- Criminal conviction and/or *charges*
- Child abuse and neglect
- Financial stability
 - In arrears on child support payments?
- What is status with their own children?
- Shared parenting
- Visits required in the assessment process

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Assessing the 12 Skills

- Expands the family's story
- Describe **specific behaviors** that demonstrate the skill
 - "Mrs. Smith effectively managed her children's behavior during home visits by setting clear boundaries."
 - Avoid using only affective/cognitive language: "Mr. Smith appreciates/understands shared parenting."

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Assessing the 12 Skills, cont.

- Include life experience: jobs, volunteer work, etc.
- We don't expect perfection
 - But explain how you will meet needs
- Resources:
 - *Supplemental Guide*, 5016 instructions

Perfect New Application

Send to Licensing Authority:

- Cover letter
- Foster Care Facility License Action Request (DSS-5015)
- Foster Home License Application (DSS-5016) & Mutual Home Assessment
- Fire Safety Inspection Report (DSS-1515)
- Environmental Conditions and Health Regulations Checklist (DSS-5150)
- Medical History Form (DSS-5017) & TB test results
- Request for Medical Information (DSS-5156)
- Results of RIL search (DSS-5268)
- Finger Print Clearance Letter

For Agency Foster Parent File:

- Copy of all documents at left
- DSS-1796
- DSS-5280
- Discipline Agreement
- Results of Local Court Record Check
- Results of NC Sex Offender & Public Prot. Registry Search
- Results Health Care Personnel Registry Search
- Results of NC Offender Information Search
- Documentation of training requirements
- References on all applicants

- X. CRITERIA FOR THE FOSTER FAMILY & MUTUAL HOME ASSESSMENT (MHA) (10A NCAC 70E .0800, .0802, .0803 & .1104)** Applicants are persons whose behaviors, circumstances and health are conducive to the safety and well-being of children.
- A. Physical and Mental Health of Applicants:** The foster family shall be in good physical and mental health as evidenced by: **DSS-5017, DSS-5156, and TB test results attached.** YES NO
- (1) Answer 'YES' in the chart below regarding **Physical Health** if there is **NO** indication of significant Physical Health needs as reported on DSS 5017 – Medical History form, DSS 5156 – Request for Medical Information form, and TB test results (TB tests required for all adults 18 years old and up; children under 18 only need to be tested if an adult in the home has tested positive).
 - (2) Answer 'YES' in the chart below regarding **Mental Health** if there is **NO** indication of significant **Mental Health** needs as reported on DSS 5017 – Medical History form, DSS 5156 – Request for Medical Information form, and as indicated by the following factors:

Name of Applicant/ Household Member	Good Physical Health? Check Yes or No		Good Mental Health? Check Yes or No	
	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
Example Mr. Applicant	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO

DSS-5016 (Rev. 02/10)
Child Welfare Services

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Must be consistent with 5017 and 5156 re: medical or mental health issues

C. North Carolina Criminal History & Background Check Information

Type of Background Check Findings:	Check Conducted	Date Conducted
Local Court Record Checked by Agency Staff	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Date :
Findings: Explanation of Findings:		
NC Dept. of Corrections Offender Information http://www.doc.state.nc.us/offenders/	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Date:
Findings: Explanation of Findings:		
NC Sex Offender and Public Protection Registry http://sexoffender.ncdoj.gov/	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Date:
Findings: Explanation of Findings:		
Health Care Personnel Registry https://www.ncnar.org/nchcpr.html	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Date:
Findings: Explanation of Findings:		

Explain criminal convictions or charges: when, what happened, why still able to be foster parent

Waivers

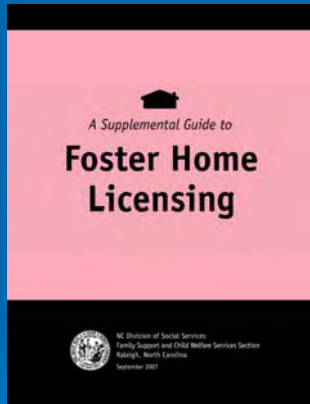
- Waiver = request to **temporarily** forgo a rule
- Some rules may be waived on a case-by-case basis, especially for
 - Keeping siblings groups together
 - Placing children with relatives
- Some may not:
 - Fingerprinting and criminal record checks

If you think a non-safety rule is preventing a placement that is in the best interest of an individual child, contact us.

Specific to Therapeutic Foster Care

- Capacity limits
- No in-home daycare
- No babysitting

Supplemental Guide



- A few rules have changed

http://www.dhhs.state.nc.us/dss/licensing/foster_care_rules.htm

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Upcoming Resources

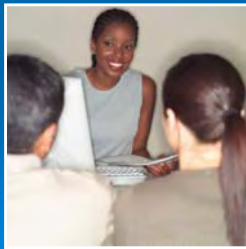
- Foster home licensing manual being re-written
- Online foster home licensing course to be launched July 2011
 - Mandatory: Licensing office won't accept licensing actions from people who have not taken this course, once it is available

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Implications for Practice

- Use your chat pod:
What have learned today
that will be helpful?



What questions do you still
have about North Carolina's
foster home licensing process?

Licensing Office Contact Info

- Rhoda Ammons and Nicole Jensen

NC Division of Social Services
Regulatory and Licensing Services
952 Old U.S. 70 Highway
Black Mountain, NC 28711
828/669-3388

Follow-up Document from the Webinar

Foster Home Licensing: What You Need to Know

Webinar delivered January 25, 2011

Follow-up document date: February 8, 2011

Presented by

Bob Hensley, Rhoda Ammons, Nicole Jensen, and Mellicent Blythe

Produced by

Family and Children’s Resource Program,
part of the Jordan Institute for Families
School of Social Work, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Sponsored by

North Carolina Division of Social Services

Be sure to consult the handouts for this webinar:

https://www.ncswlearn.org/ncsts/webinar/handouts/11_Webinar_1-25-11_Handouts.pdf

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Recommendations, Questions, and Answers from the Webinar

I. Tip: Use current forms and save them electronically

It is the responsibility of licensing workers to ensure that they are using up to date forms. The most recent version of all NC Division of Social Services forms, including those needed for all licensing actions, can be found on the Division’s website: <http://info.dhhs.state.nc.us/olm/forms/forms.aspx?dc=dss>

You can also reach this page through the link called “Manuals and Forms” on the left side of the Division’s homepage. The page includes all forms in chronological order.

Many forms have an “interactive” version available – you can click to enter information directly on the form, then save and print it from your own computer. These versions are indicated by “ia” in their title. The 5016 and 5157 are not currently available on this page as interactive forms. However use of these forms in their interactive forms is required and were made available in word format and emailed to all agencies. You can request these forms in word version from Rhoda Ammons (Rhoda.Ammons@dhhs.nc.gov) or Nicole Jensen (Nicole.Jensen@dhhs.nc.gov).

2. Tip: Be familiar with the rules for foster home licensing in North Carolina

North Carolina’s foster home licensing rules are found in Chapter 10A (Subchapters 70E, F, G, and H) of the NC Administrative Code. You can find links to each subchapter by selecting “Programs and Services” from the Division’s main website, and then selecting “Licensing Services”; or by using this link: http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dss/licensing/foster_care_rules.htm

Agencies should also review The Perfect Packet documents and the Supplemental Guide to Foster Home Licensing at this link: http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dss/licensing/foster_care_rules.htm

Please note that these documents were developed before the results of the RIL were required to be included in new licensure packets and in some cases at relicensure (addressed in questions below). The RIL results should be placed before the fingerprint clearance letters.

3. Income and Employment Questions

Foster parents need to have reliable, independent income, to ensure they are not dependent on the foster care stipend for their own expenses. For this reason, applicants who are unemployed should wait until they are employed before submitting an application. Rather than trying to apply a simple formula, you need to explore each family’s income, debt, and expenses individually. For example, if a family is making \$80,000 a year but they have bills each month that total \$85,000 per year, then they are not financially stable.

If a foster parent becomes unemployed and they have a foster child, does the child need to be moved or the parent's license need to be terminated?

NCDSS does not want children moved simply because foster parents experience loss of job. But it is an expectation in this situation that the agency will be more present and supportive in the family’s life, and that no additional children are placed in the home. Also once any foster child leaves the home, other foster children should not be placed in the home until the family member(s) is employed and they have sufficient income to meet their needs without the foster care stipend.

If it’s a two-parent family and only one is unemployed, will their application still be delayed?

If the employed parent’s regular income can meet the family’s expenses, then the application will not be delayed.

If prospective foster parent receives a stipend (\$1400/mo) to attend school, can this be included as income? Applicant is not employed but is attending school full time. Stipend is in addition to payment of school expenses (GI Bill).

You cannot include educational stipends as income. In general, full-time students need to be carefully assessed as foster parents, given the demands of classes and home-work. Unlike someone with a full-time job, school work often takes time in the evening and on weekends. In addition, many adults who go to school full-time also have part-time employment.

What about Work First?

After much consideration, the Licensing Authority has determined that Work First cannot be used as an income source. Exceptions can be made for relatives.

What about Disability?

It would depend on the disabling condition and whether the disability payment is likely to continue long-term. In addition to the financial consideration, applicants on disability have to be assessed for how their disability might make it difficult for them to care for children. Are there limitations in their movement, energy level, etc. that need to be explored?

4. Background Checks

See Section 10A NCAC 70-E.1114, 1115 and 1116 for information on background checks for foster home applicants.

Does a conviction or charge mean that you cannot be a foster parent?

All charges need to be listed with date, charge, and outcome (conviction, dismissal, etc.). There also needs to be an explanation of the charges, which should include the explanation given by the applicant, results of background checks, and the licensing worker's assessment.

Your decision about whether to recommend licensing, and the Division's decision on whether to grant a license, is based on case-specific factors such as the date and seriousness of the charges, the applicant's openness with the licensing worker (i.e., is the applicant's explanation complete and accurate based on the background check?), and his or her personal history (for example, age at time of offense, evidence of rehabilitation and change in life style). Again, you need to "paint the picture" in order to make your own decision about the family and to provide a comprehensive picture for the staff reviewing the application in Black Mountain.

What are the conviction charges that you can't have?

From **10A NCAC 70E .1114** "An applicant or any member of the applicant's household is not eligible for licensure if the applicant or any member of the applicant's household has [at any time] been convicted of a felony involving:

- (1) child abuse or neglect;
- (2) spouse abuse;
- (3) a crime against a child or children (including child pornography); or
- (4) a crime involving violence, including rape, sexual assault, or homicide but not including other physical assault or battery.

An applicant or any member of the applicant's household is not eligible for licensure if the applicant or any member of the applicant's household has ***within the last five years*** [emphasis added] been convicted of a felony involving:

- (1) physical assault;
- (2) battery; or
- (3) a drug-related offense."

What If I have a foster family with an adult child that they want to bring back into the home who has a recent felony?

If the felony is one of the above offenses the foster family would have to relinquish their license. With any other crime the situation would have to be considered on a case by case basis. The total family situation should be assessed with respect to the reasons the family wants to allow their adult child to live with them after committing a felony and their expectations as to what their foster child will need from them in terms of support. Consider whether it is a good time for them to foster. Look at how they

plan to supervise any contact between their adult child and a foster child. What would be the potential for inappropriate role modeling? What are the safety/risk factors for the foster child?

When listing and explaining record check findings on a relicensure application (DSS-5157), do we only list/explain charges that occurred within the most recent licensure period (the past 2 years) if other/earlier charges were reported on a previous application, or do we have to re-explain older charges/violations again with each application? How far back should we report/explain?

In a relicensure application you need to include all charges, not just those that took place during the licensing period. You need to go back as far as there are criminal charges.

Can fingerprint clearances be returned to the counties in a more timely manner? We have had issues with the applicants having to have them redone (at their expense) because they are lost by the processors or somebody.

Sheryl McNeill at the DHHS Criminal Record Check Unit can assist with this issue. She can be reached at (919) 773-2856 or 1-800-859-0829. Please note that the processing time for fingerprints is about 15 work days.

Can we use FBI fingerprint clearance letters that were not processed by Sheryl McNeill?

No. All fingerprints for foster home licensing purposes have to be processed by Sheryl McNeill. Some agencies have foster care applicants who previously worked in Level II, III, IV group homes. These individuals were required to be fingerprinted for employment purposes. However their fingerprint results are not in the database for foster parent fingerprints and at this time cannot be transferred to the foster parent fingerprint database. Therefore these individuals have to be fingerprinted again and processed by Sheryl McNeill.

I have heard that we no longer have to check the Nurse's Aide Registry when screening applicants for licensure. Is that true, and if so, why the change?

It is OK to be on the Nurse's Aide Registry, but not OK to be on the Healthcare Personnel Registry. The current version of the 5016 on the Division's website no longer includes a question about the Nurse's Aide Registry. Please note that it was an error to have initially included a check of the Nurse's Aide Registry. This should not have been in our rule and was subsequently removed.

Can't we do some sort of web-based criminal record check as opposed to local criminal record checks? It is cost prohibitive for the agency to pay \$25 for each local criminal record check. (The answer to this question has been updated since the last webinar).

Agencies can use private companies for criminal background checks for employees and foster parents as long as the company is listed on the North Carolina Administrative Office of the Courts website. The link for this website is (<http://www.nccourts.org/Citizens/GoToCourt/Documents/cbccompanies.pdf>). County departments of social services will need to send the waiver request to the Black Mountain Licensing Office. Private agencies will need to send the waiver request to the licensing consultant assigned to your agency (<http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dss/licensing/docs/cpalistfostercare.pdf>).

5. RIL Process and DSS-5268

The 5268 contains instructions on the first page for how to complete. You can find an interactive version of the form on the Division's Forms page:

<http://info.dhhs.state.nc.us/olm/forms/dss/dss-5268-ia.pdf>

When is the DSS-5268 completed?

Complete the 5268 for each new licensing applicant. The form is completed and sent to Raleigh. The fastest way to get a reply is to fax the form to (919) 715-6714, Attn: RIL. The fax number is also provided

on the first page of the form. It can also be sent by mail with a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) which will be used to mail the results back to you. The mailing address is provided on the form.

Was the 5268 updated or is the form we were using prior to stoppage of checking the registry still okay?

The 5268 has been updated and you must use the updated form.

Do you want the original RIL letter or copies?

We prefer originals.

Do we have to do a RIL for re-licensure?

Usually you do not have to do a RIL for re-licensure. However you will need complete a RIL if a new adult has moved into the home or a birth child has turned 18. You will also need to do RIL's for re-licensure if there has been a lapse in the license for more than 30 days.

Do we need to obtain RIL clearance on families that have already been licensed/were licensed when RIL was not required?

No, unless you are re-licensing a family whose license has lapsed for more than 30 days.

Is the RIL needed for transfers?

Not unless there is a new adult in the home or a biological child has turned 18.

6. Applicants from Other States or Countries

What information do we need to get if the applicant recently moved to North Carolina from other states?

If the applicants have not resided in NC for the last 5 years in addition to the North Carolina required checks (Local Court Record, NC Dept. of Correction, NC Sex Offender and Public Protection Registry, Healthcare Personnel Registry) they will also need child central registry child abuse/neglect checks from the other states. Safety considerations for children and good social work practice dictate that criminal record checks should be obtained from the states where the applicants resided for the past five years.

How do we get RIL information on child abuse and neglect from different States?

Go to: http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/child_care/other_child_care_information/abuse_registry.asp

How do we get RIL information on child abuse and neglect if the prospective foster parent is from another country?

RIL's are not required for applicants who have lived in another country.

7. Children Not in DSS Custody

The rule says the social worker must visit children in DSS custody once a month and document on a monthly report form. What is the rule for a child NOT in DSS custody and what needs to be documented in their file?

This information is found in 10A NCAC 70G .0503. Requirements for children in DSS custody and those children not in DSS custody are the same.

“Children in family foster homes and therapeutic foster homes shall have a monthly face-to-face contact by the social worker or case manager or more if specified in the out-of-home family services agreement or person-centered plan. The parents or guardian of children in family foster care and therapeutic foster care shall have a monthly face-to-face contact by the social worker or case manager unless the out-of-home family services agreement or person-centered plan indicates a different schedule of face-to-face contacts.

The agency social worker or case manager shall meet with the children and the parents, guardian or legal custodian, either separately or together based on the out-of-home family services agreement or person-centered plan to assess and work on the following:

- (1) progress in resolving problems which precipitated placement;
- (2) parent and child relationship difficulties;
- (3) adjustment to separation;
- (4) adjustment to placement; and
- (5) achievement of out-of-home family services agreement goals or person-centered plan goals.”

Please note that therapeutic foster care parents shall have at least 60 minutes of supervision by a qualified professional as defined in 10A NCAC 27G .0104 on a weekly basis for each therapeutic foster child placed in the foster home.

If a child is NOT in DSS custody, do they require out-of-home family service agreements?

Yes. See 10A NCAC 70G .0504. All children in family foster care must have an out-of-home family services agreement. All children in therapeutic foster care must have a person-centered plan. If a child in DSS custody is in a therapeutic foster home, the child must have an out-of-home family services agreement and a person-centered plan.

Do you have to do treatment team meetings with kids that are in DSS custody?

Yes.

8. Communication with Black Mountain

When is it OK to ask for a status check from the Black Mountain Office?

Status checks are performed only if you have had no response from Black Mountain within 50 work days. If 50 work days have passed with no info from Black Mountain, email your status check to Sandy Craig (Sandy.Craig@dhhs.nc.gov). Please note that resubmitted packets start the 50 working days again.

How can an agency be assured that the Black Mountain Office has received its licensing action?

If you want to know when a licensing packet has been received at the Black Mountain office, you can send it certified mail.

9. Electronic Correction Form

Can you please explain about the new correction form Black Mountain is using?

Black Mountain has an electronic correction form: they will send it to you via email asking about a specific error in an application. When you receive it, you correct the error on the correction form and return it to Black Mountain. Make sure the foster parent is aware of the correction, since it means their file has changed somewhat. It is important that you make this correction within five work days. If you need longer to make the correction put this information in the electronic correction form and email it to the consultant.

The Black Mountain office sent notices to all private child-placing agencies in the state asking for a single name and contact information for each agency to receive electronic correction forms. This individual should be a manager or supervisor in the agency. In some agencies this request may not have been given to the correct person. If you need to provide an agency contact for this purpose, send it to cindy.norton@dhhs.nc.gov. Indicate that this is the contact person for your agency for electronic corrections, and be sure to provide the person's address, email address, and phone number. Public agencies did not receive this notice. The Licensing Office has access to contact persons for county departments of social services.

10. Transfers

If foster parents are being transferred from another agency, how many agencies do we need to go back to get information about their ability to care for children and their reason for leaving their last agency?

You need to go back to all of the previous agencies. If an applicant has had multiple previous agencies, that should be a red flag to be explored. Why have they changed agencies so many times? What problems came up, and how or why would it be different with your agency?

I have a home trying to transfer to our agency and it states she was a foster parent and wants to add the therapeutic component. Her license capacity is for 3 children. Is it true foster parents have to be either family foster care or therapeutic, not both?

That is correct. Foster parents have to be licensed for either family foster care or therapeutic foster care. They cannot be licensed for both. In order to qualify for therapeutic foster care the capacity has to be reduced to two and the additional training requirements have to be met.

If a foster parent is transferring their license and they are unemployed at the time of the transfer, do we have to wait to license her until she is employed?

The question did not include information about whether there is a foster child in the home. If there is a foster child in the home, this would need to be taken into consideration and discussed with the Black Mountain office. If there is not a child in the home and the parent or parents are unemployed, they should be encouraged to focus on their own financial situation. This is not a good time for a transfer.

11. Capacity Questions

What if a child is already in the home with another therapeutic child and his or her siblings need placement?

This situation is not eligible for a waiver. Capacity can be waived for siblings if all of the foster children are siblings.

What is the rule for babysitting/sleepovers?

Please refer to 70E .1001 a and b for rules about babysitting. Babysitting is not allowed for therapeutic homes. Becoming licensed as a therapeutic home means that the family is agreeing to focus their time and energy on meeting the therapeutic needs of the foster children. This does not mean the foster parents could not have relative children visit. Family foster parents can provide babysitting services. However the children the foster parents babysit for is counted in the capacity. Foster children and birth children of the foster parents can have friends over for sleepovers without this affecting the capacity.

If a foster home is licensed for 2 therapeutic foster children, I am assuming they cannot do respite for any additional children as long as their beds are full. Is that right?

Respite is no different than other foster care. If they have 2 foster children they can not have additional consumers.

If a family is licensed as therapeutic with a capacity of 2, and I placed 2 family foster care children, would I have to change their license to basic?

No, therapeutic homes can have two therapeutic children, two family foster children OR one therapeutic foster child and one family foster child. The capacity it still two.

What if the foster parent is babysitting for their grandchild and not for income? Is all babysitting not allowed or just not for income?

70E 1001 a and b does not distinguish between babysitting for relatives vs. non-relatives. Family foster parents can babysit for relatives or non-relatives and it does not matter if it is an income source or not.

However the children the family foster parents babysit for are counted in the capacity. Therapeutic foster parents cannot babysit for other children regardless of relationship or whether it produces income or not. This does not preclude visits from grandchildren (but not for babysitting purposes).

12. DSS-5016

If an applicant has any health or mental health issue, like high blood pressure or depression, that is managed appropriately with medication, should we check “no” on “good mental or physical health” on this form and then explain?

Health issues are another area where you need to “paint the picture” of how the health or mental health issue is treated and how it might be affected by caring for children. Whether “yes” or “no” is checked for good physical or mental health is not as important as whether the issue is explored and explained. You also need to have consistent information on medical or mental health conditions across all documents. For example, the same issue should be listed on the 5016 that you complete, the 5017 that the applicant completes, and the 5156 that the medical provider completes. Please note that on Item X of the 5016, you will need to explain any mental health or physical health issues identified by the medical provider or the applicant. Even if you check “Yes” to Good Physical Health and Good Mental Health, you will need to provide an explanation in the space provided under the grid if the medical provider or applicant identified physical or mental health issues.

Are we to write the name of each child in the home and answer the physical/mental health question, or just answer the last question that says for all children in the home?

You don’t need to list the names of their children in this block. Of course if one child is not healthy and others are you can explain this.

We had a potential foster parent that had TB in 1995, thus she tests positive in all future test. What is the appropriate form to send in for her medical clearance? She was screened by the Health Dept., but they would not send her for x-rays due to law prohibiting it.

Her medical doctor simply needs to document this fact on the medical form (5156).

What needs to be done when a biological child in the home turns 18?

Fingerprint clearances, RIL’s and TB tests need to be completed. At relicensure, the 18 year old needs all the same paperwork as any other adult in the home.

Can you clarify the rule on the safe guarding of swimming pools and other bodies of water?

The rule is clear. Rule 10A NACA 70E .1112 states access to such hazards shall be avoided by either a fence at least 48 inches high with a locked gate around the hazard, or by a fence at least 48 inches high with a locked gate around the yard and exterior space of the home while still providing play space for children. Access to water in above ground swimming pools shall be prevented by locking and securing the ladder in place or storing the ladder in a place inaccessible to the children. The supervising agency shall observe and document that the foster parents have taken measures to protect foster children from having unsupervised access to swimming pools, beaches, rivers, lakes, streams, other water sources, or other hazards.

With regards to family information, do you want names of siblings of foster parents etc.?

The point is to provide a picture of the family, including extended family relationships. While you don’t necessarily need to list all sibling names, you should address the general nature of the applicant’s relationship with his or her own family.

How far in advance before submitting the 5016 can we check the DOC, Health Care Registry, etc? I ask because I typically do these when first working with an applicant and end up needing to do them again before submitting the packet.

Background checks need to be done within 180 days of the application being submitted to Black Mountain.

For any of the 12 skills, is it acceptable for the needs to answer "none noted at this time?" We may not have noted any need at this time.

Yes, it is possible that you cannot professionally identify a need at a point in time. However, no one is perfect, so they should have self-identified needs in most if not all areas. If an applicant says they have no needs, they either aren't being completely honest or they need help considering ways to develop their skills.

If you have a husband and wife, do you need to show a strength and need for both parents under each skill, or can you pick one person?

Both applicants need to be addressed in the 12 skills since they both will be parenting.

Please clarify skills number 3 and 4.

See page 20 of *A Supplemental Guide to Foster Home Licensing*:

<http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dss/licensing/docs/Guide-03-16-09.pdf>

Refer to the MAPP curriculum and the 12 Skills for successful foster parents' description sheet.

Can toddler beds be approved for a child, since they use the same mattress as a crib?

Yes.

What about trundle beds since they are attached permanently to the bed?

No.

13. DSS-5157

For a relicensure, where should we write to "paint a picture" of the changes in the home? Should we write explanations in the change section of the 5157 or write it on the cover letter?

Begin with the 5157 but if you need to explain further you may certainly do so in your cover letter.

14. DSS-1515

Do foster parents need to have a land line if they have a cell phone?

Land lines are not a necessity. Cell phones can be used. They must work throughout the house. The family must have a reliable way to get emergency assistance when they need it. If fire inspectors do not feel that cell phones are reliable in certain locations and they check "no" to Question 4 on the 1515, the foster home will not be approved.

How often does the fire inspection need to be completed?

The 1515 was updated 2/1/10. The new 1515 has no expiration date, so it needs to be completed at relicensure.

15. Visits Required for Licensure

How many visits are required for licensure?

From 10A NCAC 70E.0802: "The family shall be seen by the social worker in the family's home and in the supervising agency's office. For two-parent homes, separate as well as joint discussions with both parents shall be arranged." See the rule for a full description. Talking with the applicant's birth children

alone is also STRONGLY encouraged. You need to assess how all family members will be affected by, and how they might affect, children being placed in the home.

The licensing worker can use her professional judgment to decide when and where individual and group visits take place, and how many additional visits might be needed for each family. (For example, you might meet with a mother at 4 pm, then with the father when he comes home at 5. Or you may have each parent spend time alone with you in your office while the other fills out paperwork or reviews literature.) Different and important issues and impressions arise when a family is seen in the comfort of their own home versus in an office setting. You need enough information to make a decision about whether you can vouch for the family as a safe and appropriate home for children in foster care.

You will also need to document on Part V of the 5016 where the visits occurred and who was present. You can also list visits with children on Part V. Do not include training contacts, phone contacts, etc.

Do we need to ask the parent for permission to speak with their child alone correct?

It is best practice to ask parents' permission as a sign of respect. However, if a parent refuses to let you speak privately with their children, or seems overly concerned about it, this is serious red flag that suggests they may not be appropriate foster parents.

What age is appropriate for interviewing a child?

Each child needs to be assessed based on his or her developmental level. 10A NCAC 70H .0405 (adoption preplacement assessment requirements) states: "There shall be separate face-to-face interviews with each member of the household ten years of age or older."

Exactly where do we document on the application that we have talked with the children?

It fits well under skill 12 and in the section about parenting. You can include notations such as, "During a conversation with Tommy separate from his parents, he noted that he is excited to have a new brother or sister." You need to list visits on Part V of the 5016.

16. Training Questions

Does CPR need to stay up-to-date or only before initial placement?

70E .1117 (4): "Training in first-aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and universal precautions such as those provided by the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association, or equivalent organizations shall be provided to foster parents before a foster child is placed with the foster family. Training in CPR shall be appropriate for the ages of children in care. **First-aid, CPR, and universal precautions training shall be updated as required by the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association, or equivalent organizations** {emphasis added}. The supervising agency shall ensure that family foster parents and therapeutic foster parents are trained in medication administration before a child is placed with the foster family."

If an employee has taken MAPP as a train the trainer, are they required to take MAPP to get licensed as a foster parent?

No.

17. Lapsed Licenses and Liability for Payment

If a license expires before the paperwork is returned to the worker to complete and sent to Black Mountain, does the license become retroactive? How is payment handled?

If a license expires before a new license has been issued, the placement becomes an unpaid placement and is not eligible for any state or federal foster care or Medicaid funding. Depending on the terms of the placement contract, a private agency provider may be held liable for any payments made by the county DSS agency. From 10A NCAC 70E .0704(d): "If materials are submitted after the foster home

license expires, a license, if approved, shall be issued effective the date the licensing materials are received by the licensing authority.”

18. Family Configuration

If a family is a blended family and one of the parents share custody of their child(ren) with their former spouse are they considered an appropriate parent for fostering?

This individual is not automatically ruled in or out. The licensing worker will need to do a careful assessment reflected in the Mutual Home Assessment (Family History and 12 Skills). What does sharing custody mean? How often are the children with the applicant? What is their relationship? How involved is the applicant with the children?

I have a new parent that is married and the husband is a long distance truck driver. What is the process for completing that license?

The husband has the same licensing requirements as his wife, so all of the licensing elements will have to be coordinated when he is available.

What about a spouse who is on an extensive deployment. Are they required to apply as an additional household member or should we submit a waiver?

List as a household member.

If a couple is separated, can one of them go through the process and be licensed, and then we do the licensing process with the other spouse if he or she returns to the home?

If a couple separates, you need to wait at least a year before considering either of them as foster parent applicants. Hopefully within a year they will have made final decisions about their marital status.

If an engaged couple is living together who is licensed in the home as the primary foster parent?

There is not a designation of primary foster parent. Both individuals will have to go through the licensing process and be listed as foster parents in the 5015. The male is listed in Block 7 and the female is listed in Block 14.

19. Miscellaneous

Can DSS employees who work in other parts of the agency be licensed?

It is especially important to show that a conflict of interest does not occur in situations such as your describe. We can consider this on a case-by-case basis depending on the size of the agency and the position held by the employee. We advise that you contact one of the licensing consultants to discuss specific situations.

What was the guidance provided about special situations with potential foster parents?

Agencies should wait at least one year before considering applicants for foster care if the applicants have experienced some major changes or crises in their lives. This includes but is not limited to death of a spouse, death of a child, death of someone they were really close to, divorce, separation, marriage, birth of a child, loss of a job, arrests, criminal convictions (including traffic violations, DWI, etc.,). Good social work judgment is essential in discussing life changing situations with applicants and helping them understand the decision about being a foster parent needs to be delayed for at least a year or longer depending on the situation.