

## OVERVIEW

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) operates a tracking system through the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE) for all state wards and title IV-E funded permanent court wards whose goal is adoption. Tracking of state wards begins on the date of commitment to the Michigan Children's Institute (MCI). Tracking of permanent court wards begins on the date of acceptance of the referral to adoption. Status is tracked until the child is placed for adoption or the permanency goal is changed.

**All state wards and title IV-E funded permanent court wards whose goal is adoption must be registered, either on hold or for photolisting, with MARE.**

**Note:** The MCI superintendent has given written authorization for the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange to use personal information of an MCI ward on their public website for adoption recruitment purposes. For permanent court wards, the adoption worker must seek written approval or a court order from the court to allow the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange to use personal information on the permanent court ward on their public website for adoption recruitment purposes. The adoption worker must also document when they requested this approval/order and if they received approval in the DHS-614, Quarterly Adoption Progress Report.

## NOTIFICATION AND REGISTRATION PROCESS

DHHS and contracted adoption agencies must report to MARE on the progress toward adoption for all wards being tracked. The following MARE notification and registration process must be followed.

### MARE Forms

The contracted adoption agency or local DHHS office responsible for adoption planning must send the registration to the MARE office. All MARE forms are available online at [www.mare.org](http://www.mare.org) and can be submitted electronically. One of the following must be submitted within 30 calendar days of the date of termination of parental rights or the date of receipt of the court order of termination of parental rights:

- Order Placing Child (PCA 320),
- Hold Registration Status on the child profile for Child being Adopted by Relatives, Unrelated Caregivers or Current Foster Parents, including a copy of the DHS-4809.
- Hold Registration Status on the child profile for Recruited Adoptive Family, including the signature page of the family's current BCAL-3130, Initial Foster Home/Adoption Evaluation.
- Proof of permanency goal change to a plan other than adoption by court order and an approved foster care DHS-66, Updated Service Plan (USP) or DHS-67, Permanent Ward Service Plan (PWSP), with approval signature from the local DHHS.
- Child Entry Form - For Child Appearing on MARE website.

### Children With an Identified Adoptive Parent

For children who have an identified adoptive parent, the child must be registered on HOLD on the MARE public website within 30 calendar days of the receipt of the termination of parental rights order or the date of the acceptance of the adoption referral or for photolisted children, the date the family signs the DHS-4809, whichever is later. A copy of the signed DHS-4809, Intent to Adopt, from the prospective adoptive parent must be submitted with the registration status.

The applicable Hold status on the Child's Profile must be selected on the MARE public website:

- Foster Parent HOLD or Relative HOLD.
- Recruited Adoptive Family HOLD.

**Note:** The signature page of the family's current BCAL-3130, Initial Foster Home/ Adoption Evaluation must also be submitted.

Hold cases will continue to be monitored by MARE; however, the child will not be photolisted for recruitment purposes. If, at any time, the prospective adoptive family decides to no longer proceed with the adoption and if no other family has been identified, the child must be immediately registered with MARE for recruitment

purposes. The adoption worker must update the child's Registration Status to Open and submit the photolisting requirements including strength based information documented in the Child Profile, a Child Specific Recruitment Plan, a high quality, current photograph of the child, and if the child is age 9 or older, the Recruitment Consent Signature page. An updated Hold Registration Status may be submitted when a new adoptive parent is identified.

Children may not be listed on HOLD for more than six months. If a child is to remain on HOLD after six months, a face-to-face case review meeting must occur and must be documented in the adoption worker's case contacts; see ADM 0610 for face-to-face case review meeting requirements. Additionally, a MARE HOLD-Extension report documenting the circumstances that warrant an extension must be sent to MARE within 15 calendar days of the six month date and quarterly thereafter, until the Order Placing Child After Consent is issued or a goal change occurs. The MARE Hold-Extension Report must detail the reasons for continuation of the hold status, the plan for adoptive placement and the projected timeline. The adoption manager in DHHS central office or designee will review all requests for extensions and may require additional documentation.

### **Children Without an Identified Adoptive Parent**

If an adoptive parent has not been identified for a child prior to termination, the child must be registered for photolisting on the MARE system within 30 calendar days of receipt of the termination order or the date of the acceptance of the adoption referral, whichever is later. In cases where a child's goal has changed to adoption from another permanency goal and there is no identified adoption resource, the date the goal change is effective starts the 30 calendar day time frame.

The MARE registration for photo listing must include strength based information documented in the Child Profile, a Child Specific Recruitment Plan, a high quality, current photograph of the child, and if the child is age 9 or older, the Recruitment Consent Signature page.

For children who are photo listed on the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE) website and a potential adoptive family is in process of being identified or a change in the child's

plan is in process, the adoption worker must submit one of the photo listing registration status changes to MARE within five calendar days of a status change occurring. This will identify the status of the adoption process next to the child's photolisting on the MARE website. The photolisting registration status changes are:

- Photolisting Status Change- REVIEWING HOMESTUDIES. This registration status change must only be submitted to MARE to display this status on the MARE website prior to the 21-day time frame from the first family inquiry per policy.

**Note:** This status can be used for up to 21 calendar days from receiving the first family inquiry before placing a photo listed child on hold or placement pending status or returning the child to Open status. At the end of the 21 calendar days, the child will automatically be returned to Open status.

- Photolisting Status Change-PLACEMENT PENDING. This registration status change including the identified family's name must be submitted to MARE when a file disclosure is in process, the child is visiting with a family or a relative is being explored prior to the DHS-4809, Intent to Adopt, being signed and/or the potential family has not yet been approved for adoption.

**Note:** Placement Pending can be used for 60 calendar days for a photo listed child before placing the child on hold with a foster parent, relative or recruited family. At 60 calendar days the child will be returned to Open status. Extensions may be granted upon MARE approval. If the plan changes for the child prior to the 60 calendar days, the adoption worker may return the child to Open status.

- Photolisting Status Change- OTHER. This registration status change must be submitted to MARE if the court ordered recruitment to cease or for a pending goal change.

**Note:** This status may not be used for youth whose goal is being changed to APPLA or if the Michigan Children's Institute (MCI) has instructed the adoption worker to place the child on hold. This status can be used for 90 calendar days before returning the child to Open status. At the end of the 90 calendar days, the child will be automatically returned to Open status.

**Receipt of  
Documentation  
After Deadline**

If MARE receives documentation after 30 calendar days, financial sanctions may apply to contracted adoption agencies.

**Discharging  
Children from  
MARE tracking**

The child's registration status is tracked by MARE until the child is placed for adoption or the permanency goal changes. When a child is placed for adoption, the child's adoption worker must submit the Order Placing Child (PCA 320) to discharge the child from MARE tracking. When a child's permanency goal changes, a copy of the court order changing the permanency goal to a goal other than adoption and an approved foster care DHS-66, Updated Service Plan (USP) or DHS-67, Permanent Ward Service Plan (PWSP), must be submitted to discharge the child from MARE tracking.

**Registration  
Following a  
Disrupted  
Adoption**

The adoption worker must submit a child registration to MARE within six months of the court order of adoption disruption if there is no identified family at the time of disruption. This period allows the agency time to help the child adjust to the disruption, if necessary.

**Registration  
Following a  
Dissolved  
Adoption**

The adoption worker must submit a child registration to MARE within 30 calendar days of the order of termination/release of the adoptive parent's parental rights; an exception may be granted by the DHHS Adoption Program Office.