

## PROCEDURE

Families interested in adopting a photolisted child or sibling group may submit an inquiry through the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE) website [www.MARE.org](http://www.MARE.org) or by contacting the MARE Office. Families approved for adoption and unstudied families are able to submit inquiries.

Once the child's adoption worker is notified by MARE or another licensed adoption agency that a studied and approved family is interested, the child's adoption worker must document the date each inquiry was received using social worker contacts in the case record. Adoption workers are required to contact the adoptive family's worker when the family has been approved for adoption and has inquired about a photolisted child on MARE.

**Note:** Approved adoptive families from jurisdictions (counties or states) other than the child's county of commitment or county of residence who express an interest in adopting a child **must be given consideration** as adoptive parents when the child has no identified adoptive family; see ADM 0640, Interjurisdictional Adoptions.

## DECISION TIME FRAME

Once notified by MARE or the prospective adoptive family's agency, the child's adoption worker has 21 calendar days to collect information on studied and approved families, including, but not limited to, requesting the BCAL-3130, Initial Foster Home/Adoption Evaluation. **In all cases, if a family has not been selected after three months of photolisting, the case must be referred to the Adoption Unit in the Department of Human Services (DHS) Central Office for further review.**

## MULTIPLE INQUIRIES

By the end of the 21 calendar day time frame, the child's adoption worker **must** decide which prospective adoptive family is most appropriate to meet the child's needs and forward the child referral packet to that family's agency. The child's referral packet must be sent only to the selected prospective adoptive family's worker and not to every prospective adoptive family that inquires.

MARE is a recruitment resource that identifies waiting children. It is not intended to share in-depth, detailed information about children or their history.

### **MARE Inquiry Follow up**

The child's adoption worker and the adoption worker for each approved adoptive family must complete the MARE inquiry follow up report within 30 calendar days from receipt of the inquiry.

### **SINGLE INQUIRY**

If only one approved prospective adoptive family inquires, the child's referral packet must be forwarded to that family's agency. If the prospective adoptive family chooses not to proceed with adoption or cannot meet the documented best interest criteria of the child, the adoption worker must continue to recruit for and gather information on other families.

### **ADOPTION REFERRAL PACKET**

The DHS-4748, Child's Adoption Referral Packet Transmittal, must accompany the packet sent to the prospective adoptive family's agency. The adoption referral packet must include:

- Order terminating parental rights (PCA 318).
- Initial court order removing the child:
  - Order to Take Child(ren) into protective custody and place (JC05), or
  - Order After Preliminary hearing in Child Protective Proceeding (JC11a).
- Order Following Hearing to Terminate Parental Rights (JC 63) and/or Order Committing to Agency (PCA 322).
- Releases, if appropriate (PCA 305).
- Birth certificate or birth verification.
- DHS-1927, Child Adoption Assessment, and any addenda.
- Medical information on the child and birth parents.

- Medical, mental health and dental records for the child.
- School records.
- DHS-65, Initial Service Plan, and DHS-66, Updated Service Plans.
- Other court orders not listed above.
- Other documentation as requested for completion of an adoption or request for adoption subsidy.
- Name and address of the child's current foster parents.
- Report on preparation of the child for adoption.
- Other documentation as requested by the requesting agency.

### **Decision to Adopt**

Upon the receipt of the referral packet, the decision to adopt rests with the prospective adoptive family and the family's adoption worker. The family has 21 calendar days to decide whether to proceed with adoption planning. Unless the prospective adoptive family decides not to proceed with adoption, the child's adoption worker must follow through with the placement decision.

The child's adoption worker must inform the prospective adoptive family's agency within the 21 day time frame about the decision concerning placement of a child.

### **Notification to Non-selected families**

The child's adoption worker must notify each non-selected family's agency when a decision has been made, by sending each family's agency a letter indicating that another adoptive family has been selected.

### **Identified Family**

When the decision is made to proceed with the adoption process, the prospective adoptive family becomes the "identified family" and the child's agency must place the child on "Hold" with MARE; see ADM 0710.

The child's adoption worker and family's agency must develop a plan for the following:

- Sharing additional information with the family.
- Preparing the child and family for placement and adoption.
- Scheduling an initial visit between the child and family.
- Arranging for subsequent visits.
- Establishing subsidy eligibility.
- Sharing responsibility in providing or arranging transportation for the child during visitation.
- Developing the quarterly adoption progress reports for judicial review.

#### **ADOPTION DID NOT PROCEED**

If the adoption does not proceed and no other family has been identified, the child's adoption worker must immediately re-register the child with Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE) for photolisting (see ADM 0710) and implement a child-specific plan to recruit an adoptive family for the child.