PROCEDURE

Families interested in adopting a child or sibling group photo-listed on MARE may submit an inquiry through the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE) website or by contacting the MARE Office. Families approved for adoption and unstudied families are able to submit inquires.

MARE is a recruitment resource that identifies children who are legally ready for adoption without an identified adoptive family. MARE is not intended to share in-depth, detailed information about children or their history. Once the child’s adoption worker is notified by MARE or another licensed adoption agency that a studied and approved family is interested in a child or sibling group, the child’s adoption worker must document the date each inquiry was received using social work 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 child photo-listed on MARE.

Note: Approved non-relative 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 that a studied and approved family is interested in a child or sibling group, the child’s adoption worker has 21 calendar days to collect information on the studied and approved family, including, but not limited to, requesting the CWL-3130, Initial Foster Home/Adoption Evaluation. In all cases, if a family has not been selected after three months of photo-listing, the case must be referred to the adoption program office within the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) Children’s Service Agency Out-Of-Home Services bureau for further review.

SINGLE INQUIRY

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

MULTIPLE INQUIRIES

By the end of the 21-calendar daytime frame, the child’s adoption worker must decide which prospective adoptive family would best meet the child’s needs and forward the child’s adoption family match review packet to that family’s agency. The child’s adoption family match review packet must be sent only to the selected prospective adoptive family’s worker and not to every prospective adoptive family who inquired about the 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 a written notification to each family’s agency indicating that another adoptive family has been selected.

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.

ADOPTIVE FAMILY MATCH REVIEW PACKET

The DHS-4748, Prospective Adoptive Family Match Review, must accompany the packet sent to the prospective adoptive family’s agency. The adoption match review packet must include the following redacted documentation:

- DHS-1927, Child Adoption Assessment, and any addenda.
- DHS-441, Initial and Updated Service Plans and current DHS-442, Permanent Ward Service Plan.
- Summary of current interests, strengths and needs.
• Other documentation that may be requested by the requesting agency.

Decision to Adopt

Upon receipt of the child’s adoptive family match review packet by the family’s agency and if the prospective adoptive family can meet the documented best interest criteria of the child, the decision to proceed with the adoption process rests with the prospective adoptive family and the family’s adoption worker. The prospective adoptive family has 21 calendar days to decide whether to proceed with adoption planning. Unless the prospective adoptive family decides not to proceed with adoption or cannot meet the documented best interest criteria of the child, the child’s adoption worker must follow through with the information sharing (see ADM 670, Required Information to Be Shared) and adoption planning.

Should the prospective adoptive family decide to not move forward with adoption planning, the adoption worker should review other previously received inquiries to determine if other prospective families are able to meet the documented best interest criteria of the child.

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, State Ward Tracking System and Registration on the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange.

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

• Sharing additional information with the family as outlined in ADM 670, Required Information to Be Shared.

• Preparing the child and family for placement and adoption.

• Scheduling an initial visit between the child and family.

• Arranging for subsequent visits.

• Applying for adoption assistance and medical subsidy.

• Applying for Michigan Children's Institute (MCI) consent.
• Sharing responsibility in providing or arranging transportation for the child during visitations.

• Developing the quarterly adoption progress reports for judicial review.

• Attending scheduled court hearings.

• Preparing and filing legal paperwork.

• Obtaining services to meet the child's needs.

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 the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE) for photo-listing (see ADM 0710, Statewide Tracking System and Registration on the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange) and implement a child-specific plan to recruit an adoptive family for the child, see ADM 400, Recruitment Efforts.

POLICY CONTACT

Questions about this policy item may be directed to the Child Welfare Policy Mailbox.