OVERVIEW

If a child must be removed from his/her home, preference must be given to placement with a relative. In addition to placement preference, federal and state laws allow for relative case participation and contact with children removed from their homes. Due diligence must be exercised to identify and provide notice to all adult relatives that a child is in foster care. Ongoing efforts to identify, locate, and engage relatives is an expected part of case planning and permanency.

Note: Additional efforts are required for the placement of American Indian/Alaskan Native children; see NAA 215, Placement Priorities for Indian Children.

SCOPE

The policy requirements described in this item apply to children’s protective services, juvenile justice, foster care (MDHHS and private child placing agency caseworkers) and licensing (MDHHS and private child placing agency certification workers). Multiple program types may overlap during the lifetime of a case, therefore the caseworker with primary case management responsibility, at the time the policy directive is required, is responsible for completing the task, unless otherwise specified.

DEFINITION OF RELATIVE

Per MCL 712a.13a a relative is defined as an individual who is at least 18 years of age and related to the child by blood, marriage, or adoption, as grandparent, great-grandparent, great-great-grandparent, aunt or uncle, great-aunt or great-uncle, great-great-aunt or great-great-uncle, sibling, stepsibling, nephew or niece, first cousin or first cousin once removed, and the spouse of any of the above, even after the marriage has ended by death or divorce.

A stepparent, ex-stepparent, or the parent who shares custody of a half-sibling shall be considered a relative for the purpose of placement. Notification to the stepparent, ex-stepparent, or the parent who shares custody of a half-sibling is required as outlined in FOM 722-03, Placement Selection and Standards.

A child may also be placed with the parent of a man whom the court has found probable cause to believe is the putative father if there is no man with legally established rights to the child. A placement with the parent of a putative father is not to be construed
as a finding of paternity or to confer legal standing on the putative father.

**Note:** Step relationships for the relationship types listed above are included as relatives for placement purposes.

**Diligent Search and Notification Process**

The relative search **must begin prior to the child's removal** from the home and **continues** until legal permanency for the child is achieved or case closure for a youth with a permanency goal of another planned permanent living arrangement (APPLA). Caseworkers must pursue the identification and notification of relatives and document the initial and ongoing efforts in the investigation report and **each** case service plan.

**Relative Search Forms**

**DHS-991, Diligent Search Checklist** is a tool that must be used in the search for relatives.

**DHS-987, Relative Documentation** is a mandatory form used to document the name, address, telephone number, results of American Indian heritage inquiry, and relationship of every relative identified. Caseworkers must document all relative search contacts on the DHS-987, Relative Documentation.

**Note:** CPS caseworkers must upload the DHS-987, Relative Documentation, into MiSACWIS prior to case transfer.

**DHS-990, Relative Notification Letter** must be sent to all relatives upon identification. The DHS-990 includes a Relative Response and Relative Information attachment. The Relative Response portion allows the relative to indicate whether she/he would like to be considered for placement and/or support for the child. The Relative Information attachment allows the relative to provide the contact information of other relatives who may have an interest in becoming a resource for the child. The caseworker must contact any new relative that is identified, within five business days from receipt of this form (or any other form of contact).
Documentation

Upon receipt or completion, all relative search forms must be uploaded to the Document hyperlink under Case Overview in MiSACWIS.

RELATIVE PLACEMENTS

When children are placed in out-of-home care, preference must be given to placement with a relative. Safety assessments, safety planning (when appropriate), and background checks must occur for all non-licensed homes prior to placement. Caseworkers must discuss the items listed below with the prospective relative caregiver to help determine if the relative is willing and able to meet the child's needs.

- Case service plan for the child and parents.
- Permanency goal and concurrent permanency goal.
- Needs of the child.
- Safety plan (when appropriate).
- Financial benefits; see FOM 722-12, Financial Support.
- Expectations and process of foster home licensure.
- Available support and resources; see DHS-Pub-114, Relative Caregiving: What You Need to Know, in this item.

Emergency Relative Placements

An emergency relative placement is defined as an initial placement made by CPS or a subsequent placement made by a supervising agency when a child has experienced an unplanned placement disruption and there is an immediate need for a placement resource.

Emergency relative placements are made based on the results of the DHS-588, Initial Relative Safety Screen. The Initial Relative Safety Screen must be completed prior to an emergency placement. All Relative Safety Screens must be completed in MiSACWIS; see Initial Relative Safety Screen in this item for more information.

Prohibited Emergency Placements

Emergency placement is prohibited if:
• A caregiver or an adult household member has a **felony conviction** for any of the following:
  
  • Child abuse/neglect.
  
  • Spousal abuse.
  
  • A crime against a child or children (including pornography).
  
  • A crime involving violence, including rape, sexual assault, or homicide.
  
  • Physical assault or battery for which there is a felony conviction in the last five years.
  
  • A drug-related offense for which there is a felony conviction in the last five years.

• A caregiver or any member of the household has been adjudicated or convicted of a sexual offense **and** is required to register as a sex offender.

• A caregiver or an adult household member is listed as a perpetrator of abuse or neglect on central registry.

**Emergency Placement Denials**

Relatives who meet all the requirements on the Relative Safety Screen except for central registry history are **not** disqualified from placement consideration. Placement may be made upon central registry removal, amendment, or expunction and director approval of the Relative Placement Home Study; see **Central Registry Removal, Amendment, or Expunction, and Relative Placement Home Study**, in this item for more detail.

The Relative Placement Home Study may be completed prior to a child's initial placement by CPS to ensure placement resources are available.

If CPS denies placement with a relative caregiver and the child is placed in an unrelated/licensed foster home, then the foster care caseworker must review the denied Relative Safety Screen with his/her supervisor to determine if placement would be appropriate upon further assessment via the Relative Placement Home Study. The result of this review must be documented in the initial case service plan.
If it is determined that further assessment is warranted, the Relative Placement Home Study must be completed within 45 days of removal. If the placement recommendation on the Relative Placement Home Study is approved, the child must be placed with the relative. All placement change criteria must be followed; see FOM 722-3, Placement Change.

Subsequent or Planned Placements

Caseworkers must complete a Relative Safety Screen for all adult relatives who express an interest in placement, within five business days of the relative’s written request for placement consideration.

If the relative meets the requirements on the Relative Safety Screen, then he/she must be fully assessed on the Relative Placement Home Study prior to placement; see Relative Placement Home Study in this item, for timeframes for completion.

Note: Relatives who meet all the requirements on the Relative Safety Screen except for central registry are not disqualified from placement consideration. Placement may be made upon central registry removal, amendment, or expunction and director approval of the Relative Placement Home Study; see Central Registry Removal, Amendment, or Expunction, and Relative Placement Home Study, in this item for more detail.

Relative Placement Priority

Priority must always be given to placing children with siblings and/or with relatives; see FOM 722-03, Placement Selection and Standards. When a child is placed with a licensed/unrelated caregiver and an appropriate relative is available for placement, then consideration must be given to whether a placement change to the relative’s home would be in the child’s best interest. Caseworkers must review all placement selection criteria to make this determination. If placement with the relative is determined to be in the child’s best interest, then the caseworker must follow all placement change policy outlined in FOM 722-03, Placement Selection and Standards.
Multiple Relatives Interested in Placement

If multiple relatives express an interest in placement, caseworkers are encouraged to hold a family team meeting (FTM) with the immediate family and all the interested relatives to allow the group to determine who would be best suited for placement and to explore different ways in which the other members can provide support and remain actively involved.

If the group can come to a consensus, then only the agreed upon relative needs to be assessed on the Relative Placement Home Study. If the group is unable to come to a consensus and multiple relatives continue to request placement, then all interested relatives must be assessed on the Relative Placement Home Study.

Maintaining Contact when Placement is not an Option

Relatives who are not considered for placement are encouraged to maintain contact in other ways, which include but are not limited to:

- Supervising parent/child visitation.
- Transporting the child to appointments, visitation, etc.
- Attending school programs, athletic events, etc.
- Visits, phone calls, and letters.

Out-of-State Relative Home Study Requests

If an out-of-state relative requests placement consideration, then the caseworker must request a home study to be completed through ICPC; see ICM 130, Interstate Foster Care Procedures.

The caseworker must document the date the out-of-state home study was requested and any follow-up contacts in the case service plan until the home study is received.

CLEARANCES

Identity

The identity of the prospective primary caregiver must be verified. Any document or collateral contact that reasonably establishes the
caregiver’s identity must be accepted. Examples of acceptable verification of identity include, but are not limited to:

- Driver’s license.
- U.S. Passport.
- State-issued identification.
- School-issued identification.
- Birth certificate/record.
- Identification for health benefits.
- Voter registration card.
- Wage stub.

**Collateral Contacts**

If documentary evidence is not readily available, use a collateral contact to verify identity. A collateral contact is a direct contact with a person, organization, or agency to verify information from the client.

When communicating with collateral contacts, disclose only the information necessary to obtain the needed information. **Do not disclose confidential information.**

**Prior CPS Investigations**

Prior CPS history must be reviewed for all prospective caregivers. If a prospective caregiver was confirmed as a perpetrator on a prior CPS investigation, a review and assessment of his/her CPS history must be completed prior to placement. The assessment is completed on the Relative Safety Screen and the Relative Placement Home Study and includes the following questions:

- The length of time since last investigation and any services that were provided to rectify the problem(s).
- If services were provided, determine whether the individual(s) benefitted and completed services successfully.
- Any risk factors that may impact the safety of the child and describe the protective interventions that are needed or currently in place.

**Director approval is required when a placement is made with a prospective caregiver who was confirmed as a perpetrator on**
Central Registry

All caregivers and adult household members must have a central registry check completed prior to placement. The date and result of each central registry check and out-of-state child abuse/neglect check (if applicable) must be documented on the Relative Safety Screen and the Relative Placement Home Study.

A caregiver or adult household member identified as a perpetrator on central registry is not disqualified from placement consideration but is disqualified from foster home licensure. Children may be placed with the caregiver upon director approval of the Relative Placement Home Study and the expunction of the caregiver/adult household member's central registry history.

Caseworkers must include the following supporting information in the Relative Placement Home Study:

- Reason for substantiation.
- Length of time since the substantiation.
- Services that were provided to rectify the problem(s).
- If services were provided, assess whether the individual completed and benefited from the services.
- Describe the circumstances that have changed since the substantiation.
- Address any risk factors that may impact the safety of the child and describe what protective interventions are currently in place.

Central Registry Removal, Amendment, or Expunction

The caregiver/adult household member must pursue removal, amendment, or expunction of their central registry history. PSM 717-2, Amendment or Expunction, provides information on the circumstances that warrant the removal, amendment, or expunction of central registry history. Caseworkers must assist the relative caregiver in the process in PSM 717-2 as soon as central registry history is identified. If the request for removal, amendment, or expunction is not supported, either by MDHHS or through an
administrative hearing, then the child cannot be placed in the home, unless the court orders the placement.

**Criminal History**

All caregivers and adult household members must have a state criminal history background check completed prior to placement. All criminal history information must be verified. Verification is accomplished by corroborating the information obtained from the state criminal history background check with credible sources, including Internet Criminal History Access Tool (ICHAT), Michigan Public Sex Offender Registry (MPSOR), the U.S. Department of Justice National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW), and police or court records/personnel. The date and results of all criminal history background checks must be documented on the Relative Safety Screen and the Relative Placement Home Study. Documentation guidelines are outlined in SRM 700, Law Enforcement Information Network (LEIN).

**Prohibited Felony Convictions**

Placement is prohibited if anyone residing in the home has a felony conviction for one of the following crimes:

- Child abuse/neglect.
- Spousal abuse.
- Crime against children (including pornography).
- Crime involving violence, including rape, sexual assault, or homicide but not including other physical assault or battery.
- Physical assault, battery, or drug related felony offense within the last five years.

**Good Moral Character Convictions**

A caregiver or an adult household member with a conviction listed in the CWL Pub 673, Good Moral Character, or BEM 705, Crime Codes, (excluding the prohibited felony convictions listed above) is not disqualified from placement consideration.

If a caregiver or an adult household member has been convicted of a good moral character offense, a review and assessment of the conviction(s) must be completed prior to placement. The assessment is completed on the Relative Safety Screen and the
Relative Placement Home Study and includes the following questions:

- The explanation for the conviction and length of time since the offense.
- Any services provided to rectify the problem.
- If services were provided, whether the individual completed and benefitted from the service.
- Any risk factors that may impact the safety of the child and describe the protective interventions that are needed or currently in place.

If placement occurs, the assessment of the conviction(s) must support the basis for the placement and describe how the child is safe in the relative’s home. **Director approval is required when a placement is made with a prospective caregiver who has a good moral character conviction; see Initial Relative Safety Screen or Relative Placement Home Study in this policy for details.**

**Registered Sex Offender**

All caregivers and household members aged 12 years and older must have his/her name and address searched on the Michigan Public Sex Offender Registry prior to placement.

Placement is prohibited if anyone (adult or minor) residing in the home has been adjudicated or convicted of a sexual offense **and** is required to register as a sex offender.

**Out-of-State Child Abuse Neglect Registry and Criminal History Background Checks**

Any caregiver or adult household member who has resided outside of the State of Michigan's jurisdiction, for example, another state, country, territory, or tribal jurisdiction, within the last five years must have a child abuse/neglect registry check and a criminal history background check from all previous places of residence during those five years.
Out-of-state clearances must be requested no later than 72-hours after an emergency placement and prior to a planned placement. The out-of-state requests and responses must be documented on the Relative Safety Screen and Relative Placement Home Study and any correspondence received pertaining to the request must be uploaded in MiSACWIS.

**Note:** Results received after the approval of the Relative Safety Screen must be documented in an addendum on the Relative Safety Screen.

The Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs has created a guide, [How to Obtain Clearances from Other States Required by R 400.8125(9)](https://www.michigan.gov) that may be used to assist in obtaining clearances from other states.

**Responsibility for Completion**

**Initial placements occurring after hours:** CPS caseworkers must request CPS history, central registry history, and criminal history background checks through their local county resources or contact centralized intake at 855-444-3911 and request completion of a CPS history, central registry, and criminal history background check for all members of the household.

**Initial placements occurring during normal business hours and subsequent placements for cases supervised by MDHHS:** Local offices are responsible for CPS history, central registry history, and criminal history background checks.

**Subsequent placements for cases supervised by a private child placing agency:** Private child placing agency caseworkers must request CPS history, central registry history, and criminal history background checks for all caregivers and household members from the MDHHS monitoring caseworker. Requests must be made immediately for emergency placements and at least 14 calendar days before the Safety Screen/Home Study due date for planned placements. PAFC caseworkers must check iCHAT, MPSOR, and NSOPW and evaluate the information that is available to them prior to making an emergency placement. The MDHHS monitoring caseworker must share all verified criminal history, CPS investigation history, and central registry history with the private child placing agency caseworker; see [FOM 914, Placement Resources: MDHHS Responsibilities](https://www.michigan.gov).
Expiration Date

Clearances must be current whenever a placement is made. If the
date of placement is more than 30 calendar days after the date the
clearances were completed, then new clearances must be
completed.

Documentation

Clearances are documented within the applicable Relative Safety
Screen or Relative Placement Home Study.

UNLICENSED
PLACEMENT
LIMITATIONS AND
EXCEPTION
REQUESTS

Placement exception requests (PERs) are completed when there is
a need to waive certain placement standards to maintain sibling
and caregiver bonds or to meet the medical, emotional, and
psychological needs of children in care.

A placement should not be made with an unlicensed relative
caregiver if it will result in one of the placement compositions listed
below. Exceptions to these limitations may be made on an
individual basis when it is determined to be in the best interest of
the child being placed.

If an exception exists then a PER must be completed,
reviewed, and approved using the approval process in
MiSACWIS.

Placement Limitations

- More than three foster children in the unlicensed relative
caregiver’s home.

- More than five total children, including the unlicensed relative
caregiver’s birth and/or adopted children.

- More than three children under the age of three residing in the
unlicensed relative caregiver’s home.

For all other placement limitations and placement exception
requests; see FOM 722-3, Placement Selection and Standards.
Placement
Exception Request
Approval Path

**MDHHS Supervised Cases - Wayne County Only**

When a PER is required, the following approval path must be utilized for Wayne County cases supervised by MDHHS:

MDHHS caseworker completes and routes the PER --> MDHHS supervisor reviews and routes the PER --> MDHHS district manager reviews and approves the PER.

**Private Child Placing Agency Supervised Cases - Wayne County Only**

The following approval path must be utilized for Wayne County cases supervised by private child placing agency providers:

Private child placing agency caseworker completes and routes the PER --> Private child placing agency supervisor reviews and routes the PER --> Private child placing agency director reviews and routes the PER --> MDHHS district manager reviews and approves the PER.

**Private Child Placing Agency Supervised Cases - Kent County Only**

The following approval path must be utilized for cases supervised by a private child placing agency provider operating under the child welfare continuum of care model in Kent County:

Private child placing agency caseworker completes and routes the PER --> Private child placing agency supervisor reviews and routes the PER --> Private child placing agency director reviews and approves the PER.

**MDHHS Supervised Cases - All Other Counties**

When a PER is required, the following approval path must be utilized for cases supervised by MDHHS:

MDHHS caseworker completes and routes the PER --> MDHHS supervisor reviews and routes the PER --> MDHHS county director reviews and approves the PER.
**Private Child Placing Agency Supervised Cases - All Other Counties**

The following approval path must be utilized for cases supervised by private child placing agency providers:

Private child placing agency caseworker completes and routes the PER --> Private child placing agency supervisor reviews and routes the PER --> Private child placing agency director reviews and routes the PER --> MDHHS county director reviews and approves the PER.

**INITIAL RELATIVE SAFETY SCREEN**

The DHS-588, Initial Relative Safety Screen, is used to examine basic qualifications of a prospective caregiver and to identify immediate safety concerns in the caregiver's home. The Relative Safety Screen must be completed and approved prior to, but no more than 30 calendar days before a child's placement. **All adult relatives who express an interest in placement must be screened using the Relative Safety Screen.**

The Relative Safety Screen consists of the following:

- Home visit.
- Verification of identity.
- Review of prior CPS investigation history.
- Central registry clearance on all caregivers and adult household members.
- Statewide criminal history background check on all caregivers and adult household members.
- Michigan Public Sex Offender Registry clearance on all caregivers and household members aged 12 years old and older.
- Placement consideration assessment and recommendation.

**Note:** If a safety concern is identified but does not prohibit placement, then the caseworker must establish a safety plan with the relative. Safety plans must be documented on the Relative Safety Screen.
Responsibility for Completion

CPS is required to complete and approve the Relative Safety Screen for initial placements.

The supervising agency is required to complete and approve the Relative Safety Screen for subsequent placements.

**All Relative Safety Screens must be completed and approved in MiSACWIS.**

Supervisor Approval

The Relative Safety Screen must be reviewed and approved by a supervisor *prior* to placing a child with an unlicensed relative.

Director Approval

Approval from the county director, designated child welfare director, or private child placing agency director is required prior to an emergency placement with:

- A caregiver who was confirmed as a perpetrator on a prior CPS investigation.
- A caregiver or adult household member who has a conviction of a good moral character offense.

Verbal Approval

Verbal approval may be obtained from a supervisor and, if applicable, the county director/designated child welfare director, or private child placing agency director, for emergency placements. Verbal approval must be documented on the hard copy and in MiSACWIS.

Verbal approval is *not appropriate* for subsequent planned placements.

**MISACWIS Approval**

Supervisors are required to electronically approve the Relative Safety Screen, no later than one business day following an emergency placement. CPS must not transfer the case to foster
care before obtaining supervisor approval on the Relative Safety Screen.

For subsequent placements, supervisors must approve the Relative Safety Screen within 5 business days from the date the Relative Safety Screen is routed for review.

**Distribution**

A copy of the Relative Safety Screen must be given to the relative caregiver who is the subject of the safety screen.

**Denied Placement Recommendation**

Relatives who meet all the requirements on the Relative Safety Screen except for central registry are not disqualified from placement consideration. Placement may be made upon completion and approval of the Relative Placement Home Study; see *Clearances* in this item.

If the placement recommendation on the Relative Safety Screen is denied, then a DHS-31, Foster Care Placement Decision Notice, is required to be provided to the relative with a copy of the Safety Screen, within five business days of the denial; see Foster Care Placement Decision Notice in this item. Caseworkers must complete a social work contact in MiSACWIS documenting that the DHS-31, Foster Care Placement Decision Notice, and Relative Safety Screen were provided to the relative.

**RELATIVE PLACEMENT HOME STUDY**

The DHS-3130A, Relative Placement Home Study is a comprehensive home assessment that considers multiple domains in a prospective caregiver’s life. The Relative Placement Home Study allows caseworkers to identify strengths and barriers that may impact a child’s placement. The Relative Placement Home Study must be completed within the timeframes described below:

- **For emergency placements**, within 30 calendar days of the child’s placement in the relative home.

- **For planned placement changes**, prior to placement in the relative home, but within 30 calendar days of the written request.
• For requests received when the child is placed with a relative, within 90 days of the written request; see Multiple Relatives Interested in Placement in this item.

Note: This extended timeframe is only to be used when there is not an immediate need for a placement change, e.g., when the child is in a stable placement with another relative.

Relative Safety Screen Review and Validation

Caseworkers must begin the Relative Placement Home Study by reviewing the Relative Safety Screen. This review consists of validating all clearances completed on all caregivers and household members and evaluating and resolving any identified concerns.

The results of the Relative Safety Screen review must be documented on the Relative Placement Home Study.

Responsibility for Completion

Placement decisions are the responsibility of the foster care program; therefore, the supervising agency is responsible for completing and approving the Relative Placement Home Study. Relative Placement Home Studies completed by an alternate unit within the supervising agency must be reviewed by the primary foster care caseworker and approved by the foster care supervisor.

Obtaining Required Information

Caseworkers must attempt to obtain the required information for each segment of the home study by asking questions of the prospective caregiver and other information sources. Caseworkers cannot rely solely on the caregiver’s self-report; all members of the household, including children, must be interviewed. Additionally, the caseworker’s observations must be included as part of the final recommendation.
MISACWIS Documentation

The Relative Placement Home Study must be completed in MiSACWIS and the date of each face-to-face contact must be documented in the social work contacts.

Completion Date

The date the home study was completed is listed on the first page of the Relative Placement Home Study as Date Home Study Completed. The completion date is the date the caseworker submits the Relative Placement Home Study to the foster care supervisor for review in MiSACWIS.

Supervisor Approval

A foster care supervisor is required to review and approve the Relative Placement Home Study in MiSACWIS within 14 calendar days of the date the home study was completed.

Director Approval

Approval from the county director, designated child welfare director, or private child placing agency director is required when placing a child in a home when:

- A caregiver was confirmed as a perpetrator on a prior CPS investigation.

- A caregiver or adult household member has a conviction of a good moral character offense.

- A caregiver or an adult household member is listed as a perpetrator on central registry.

Director approval must be obtained in MiSACWIS within 14 calendar days of the date the home study was completed.

Denied Placement Recommendation

If the placement recommendation on the Relative Placement Home Study is denied, then the child is required to change placements, unless the court orders the placement against MDHHS’ recommendation. If the child is required to change placements, the
foster care caseworker **must** follow the placement change policy outlined in **FOM 722-03, Placement Selection and Standards** and the caregiver **must** be provided the **DHS-30, Foster Parent Notification of Move**.

If the placement recommendation on the Relative Placement Home Study is denied **before** the child is placed in the caregiver’s home, then a DHS-31, Foster Care Placement Decision Notice, is required to be provided to the relative, with a copy of the Relative Placement Home Study **within five business days of the denial**; see Foster Care Placement Decision Notice in this item. Caseworkers must complete a social work contact in MiSACWIS documenting that the DHS-31, Foster Care Placement Decision Notice, and Relative Placement Home Study were provided to the relative.

**Distribution and Redaction**

A copy of the home study must be given to the court and to the relative caregivers who are the subject of the home study. Social Security numbers and other protected information must be redacted from all written reports; see **SRM 131, Confidentiality**.

**Annual Review**

The Relative Placement Home Study **including all clearances** must be completed and approved annually (within 365 days of the previous Relative Placement Home Study completion date) for unlicensed caregivers. **An approved Relative Placement Home Study is valid for one year.**

**Changes in an Approved Caregiver’s Household**

Because an approved Relative Placement Home Study is valid for one year, a new Relative Placement Home Study is not required when:

- A new child in foster care is placed in the caregiver’s home during the year.
- A child in foster care is placed with the caregiver and subsequently changes placement (e.g. returns home) but returns to the caregiver’s home during the year.
• The caregiver moves to a new residence during the year.

• A new household member is added during the year.

For these situations, caseworkers are only required to reassess the placement using the Relative Safety Screen. The Relative Safety Screen must be completed within 14 calendar days of the change/move to ensure safety criteria continue to be met.

**Exception: Temporary Breaks and Caregivers Enrolled to be Licensed**

**Temporary Breaks** - when a child enters one of the temporary break situations listed below and returns to the caregiver’s home within 30 calendar days, then completion of a Relative Safety Screen is **not** required.

- Absent without legal permission (AWOLP).
- Detention.
- Jail.
- Medical hospitalization.
- Psychiatric hospitalization.

**Caregivers Enrolled to be Licensed** - completion of a Relative Safety Screen is **not** required for caregivers who are enrolled to be licensed. Caregivers are only required to have the criminal history background check and central registry clearance completed. The results of the criminal history background check and central registry check must be documented in an addendum to the Relative Placement Home Study.

**DOCUMENTS TO BE PROVIDED**

**Upon Placement**

Any time placement is made with an unlicensed caregiver, the caregiver must receive the following documents at or before the time of placement:

- [DHS-Pub-114, Relative Caregiving: What You Need to Know](#)
  - Caseworkers must document that the publication was given to the caregiver in the social work contacts in MiSACWIS.
• **DHS-972, Foster Home Licensing Requirements for Relative Caregivers**
  - Caseworkers must discuss licensure with the caregiver, the discussion of licensure includes the completion of the DHS-972, Foster Home Licensing Requirements for Relative Caregivers.
  - The caregiver is required to sign the DHS-972 at or before the time of placement.

• **DHS-3307, Placement Outline and Information Record**

• **Medical Information**
  - DHS-3762, Consent to Routine, Non-Surgical Medical Care and Emergency Medical/Surgical Treatment Card.
  - DHS-Pub-268, Guidelines for Foster Parents and Relatives Caregivers for Health Care and Behavioral/Mental Health Services.
  - Medicaid card.
  - Medicaid Health Plan member card, if applicable.
  - Medical Passport.

See **FOM 801, Health Services for Children in Foster Care**, for a complete list of documents and exceptions to the standard of promptness (SOP).

• **Education Information**
  - All of the child’s available student records, such as, report cards or Individualized Education Plans (IEPs); see **FOM 723, Educational Services**, for exceptions to the SOP.

**Upon Placement Change**

For documents that must be completed and/or provided upon a placement change; see **FOM 722-3, Placement Change**.
Upon Placement Decision or Denial

MCL 722.954a requires the supervising agency to make a placement decision and document the reason for the decision within 90 days of the child's removal from his/her home.

If the supervising agency places a child with a relative and approves the placement on the Relative Placement Home Study during the first 90-days a child is in care, then this is the placement decision that must be recorded on the DHS-31, Foster Care Placement Decision Notice; see FOM 722-03, Placement Selection and Standards.

Additionally, anytime a relative is denied for placement on the Relative Safety Screen or the Relative Placement Home Study a DHS-31, Foster Care Placement Decision Notice, is required to be provided to the relative caregiver, with a copy of the denied Relative Safety Screen or Relative Placement Home Study, within five business days of the denial. Caseworkers must complete a social work contact in MiSACWIS documenting that the DHS-31, Foster Care Placement Decision Notice, and Relative Safety Screen/Relative Placement Home Study were provided to the relative.

A copy of the DHS-31, Foster Care Placement Decision Notice, must be sent to:

- Child's attorney, guardian, and/or guardian ad litem.
- The prosecutor.
- All legal parents.
- The attorney(s) for the child's parents.
- Each relative who expresses an interest in caring for the child.
- Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA).
- Tribal representative.
- The child, if the child is developmentally/age appropriate.

Note: If there is a safety concern, the child's current placement address may be redacted.

RELATIVE LICENSURE AND WAIVERS

For information on relative licensure and waivers; see FOM 923, Relative Licensing and Waivers.
Denied Recommendation for Licensure

The Division of Child Welfare Licensing (DCWL) is the only entity with the authority to deny a recommendation for licensure. Informal denials of licensure from a certification worker or licensing agency are prohibited.

If DCWL denies the recommendation for licensure on the CWL-3130, Initial Foster/Adoption Home Evaluation, the change of placement process must be followed as outlined in FOM 722-03, Placement Selection and Standards. The relative caregiver must be provided the DHS-30, Foster Parent Notification of Move.

Exception: Children are not to change placements if the placement has been court ordered.

American Indian/Alaskan Native Children

For caregivers of American Indian/Alaskan Native children as defined by the Indian Child Welfare Act, foster home licensing is optional. Caseworkers must refer to NAA 200, Identification of an Indian Child and NAA 215, Placement Priorities for Indian Children for policy requirements.

COURT ORDERED PLACEMENTS

Against MDHHS Recommendation

If the court orders placement with an unlicensed caregiver against MDHHS' recommendation all of the following must be completed:

- Relative Safety Screen.
- Relative Placement Home Study.
- DHS-875, Waiver of Foster Home Licensure Relative Caregiver.

All standards of promptness identified in this item must be followed. See FOM 923, Relative Licensure and Waivers, for more information on the DHS-875, Waiver of Foster Home Licensure Relative Caregiver.
FAMILY INCENTIVE GRANT

Policy on the Family Incentive Grant (FIG), a grant for home improvement purchases or services required to meet DCWL licensing standards or to maintain placement, can be found in FOM 980, Family Incentive Grant.

LEGAL AUTHORITY

Federal Law

Social Security Act, 42 USC 671(a)(19)
Social Security Act, 42 USC 671(a)(20)(A)
Social Security Act, 42 USC 671(a)(29)

State Laws

Probate Code, 1939 PA 288, as amended, MCL 712A.13a
Probate Code, 1939 PA 288, as amended, 712A.13b
Foster Care and Adoption Services Act, 1994 PA 203, as amended, MCL 722.954a

POLICY CONTACT

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