

TITLE XVI  
ALTERNATIVE LIVING

CHAPTER 200  
ADOPTION SERVICES

[Prior to 7/1/83, Social Services[770] Ch 139]  
[Previously appeared as Ch 139—renumbered IAB 2/29/84]  
[Prior to 2/11/87, Human Services[498]]

PREAMBLE

These rules define and structure the adoption services to be provided to birth families, children legally available for adoption, prospective adoptive families and adoptive families. These rules also establish policy regarding requests for access to sealed records.

**441—200.1(600) Definitions.**

“*Adoption*” means a legal and social process through which a child becomes a member of a family into which the child was not born. Adoption provides the child the same rights, privileges and duties as a birth child.

“*Adoption service*” means a service directed towards children who are legally available for adoption, the birth family, prospective adoptive family and adoptive family.

“*Adoption work experience*” means supervised employment in adoption services which includes direct provision of adoption services, development of adoption policies, provision of training related to adoption services, oversight and review of adoption documents and activities, and direct supervision of adoption workers. Only the percent of time related to provision of adoption services shall be considered as adoption work experience for employment of which only a portion of time was spent on adoptions.

“*Adoptive family*” means an approved person or persons who have a child placed in their home and are being supervised prior to finalizing the adoption; or who have a child in their home who is legally adopted and entitled to the same benefits as a child born into the family.

“*Adoptive home study*” includes an assessment of the family’s parental attributes and a written report stating approval or nonapproval of the family for adoptive placement of a child or children.

“*Certified adoption investigator*” means a person as defined at rule 441—107.2(600).

“*Child study or social history*” includes a written description of the child including strengths and needs; medical, mental, social, educational, placement and court history; a description of the child’s relationships with the birth family, foster family, and significant others; a summary of the child’s understanding and feeling about adoption and recommendations as to the type of family that can best meet the child’s needs.

“*Court-ordered studies*” means home studies ordered by a judge for the purpose of determining custody of a child or placement of a child for the purpose of adoption.

“*Department*” means the department of human services.

“*Easy-to-place child*” means a healthy child who does not meet one or more of the criteria of a child with special needs.

“*Foster family adoption*” means the adoption of a child by a licensed foster family who has cared for the child.

“*Guardianship record*” means a case record regarding a child, established and retained by the department, when the department is named guardian of the child by court order. The purpose of the guardianship record is to collect and maintain information about the child and the birth family, legal documents, and other information that will assist in fulfilling the responsibility of guardian.

“*Life book*” means a compilation of information about the child, including birth information, photographs of the child; placement history, including dates of placement, names of caretakers, reasons for leaving the placement; relationships; school reports; social, medical, mental health developmental history; awards received, important events, letters from significant persons, and other information that the child wishes to include. The life book will assist the child in dealing with separation and loss issues and provide background and genealogy data.

“*Mental health professional*” means a psychiatrist, psychologist, social worker, psychiatric nurse or mental health counselor who holds a current license as required by law.

“*Placement services*” includes the activities and travel necessary to place the child in the adoptive family.

“*Postadoption services*” includes those services that an adoptive family may access after the adoption is finalized. These services may be obtained through community resources, the department, or support groups, to assist the family in coping with and resolving problems within the family.

“*Postplacement services*” includes the supervision, support and intervention necessary prior to finalization to assist in maintaining the adoptive placement.

“*Preadoptive family*” means an adoptive family with a child placed in the home whose adoption has not been finalized.

“*Preparation of child*” includes activities necessary to ready the child for placement into an adoptive family.

“*Preparation of family*” includes the activities necessary to assist the family in adding an adoptive child as a new member of their family.

“*Preplacement visits*” means contacts, activities, and visits between the child and adoptive family prior to the adoptive placement.

“*Procedendo*” means an order issued by the supreme court returning jurisdiction to the district court after a final appellate decision regarding an appeal.

“*Release of custody services*” includes providing information regarding options to assist the parents in making permanent plans for their child and counseling regarding resulting personal and emotional issues.

“*Selection of family*” means reviewing approved home studies to match a family’s strengths with a specific child’s needs.

“*Special needs child*” means a child who meets one or more of the criteria set forth at 441—subrule 201.3(1).

**441—200.2(600) Release of custody services.** This rule applies to all terminations filed under Iowa Code chapter 600A. The parents shall be offered a minimum of three hours of counseling by a person authorized to provide counseling under the provisions of this rule. If accepted, the counseling shall be provided after the birth of the child and prior to the signing of a release of custody that meets the requirements of Iowa Code chapter 600A or prior to the filing of a petition for termination of parental rights.

**200.2(1) Purpose of counseling.** The purpose of the counseling is to:

*a.* Provide information about options to assist parents in making an informed decision regarding release of custody.

*b.* Assist parents in resolving emotional issues related to separation and loss.

**200.2(2) Requirements for counseling providers.** Counseling to parents shall be provided only by the following persons:

*a.* Certified adoption investigators.

*b.* Mental health professionals who have the equivalent of two years of adoption work experience in the direct provision of adoption services.

*c.* Private agency staff with two years of adoption work experience in the direct provision of adoption services.

*d.* Department staff with two years of adoption work experience in the direct provision of adoption services.

**200.2(3) Forms.** The Adoptive Child's Medical and Social History, Form SS-6706, shall be completed for all children who are adopted under Iowa Code chapter 600. All forms used to execute a release of custody shall comply with the requirements of Iowa Code chapters 600 and 600A.

**200.2(4) Affidavit and documentation.** The person providing the counseling shall complete Form 470-3164, Counseling Affidavit, certifying that the counselor has provided the biological parent with the requested counseling or that the biological parent has refused counseling. Form 470-3164 and documentation that the person providing the counseling is qualified to provide the requested counseling shall be attached to the release of custody. Documentation shall include one of the following:

*a.* A copy of a professional license, when applicable.

*b.* A record of all adoption work experience including dates and location. In addition, the person providing counseling shall provide the names of employers and supervisors to enable the court to verify the counselor's adoption work experience.

**441—200.3(600) Application.** Persons wishing to apply to adopt a child through the department shall use Form 470-0771, Application for Adoption. An application for adoption shall only be accepted for children who are under the guardianship of the department.

**200.3(1) Limitations.** No applications shall be accepted or approved in any department office for the adoption of an easy-to-place child. Those applicants shall be referred to private child-placing agencies. Exceptions to this rule may be made for relatives of a child under the guardianship of the department or foster parents applying to adopt a child with whom the child has a significant relationship.

a. Foster parents. Foster parents shall be given consideration for selection as the adoptive family for a child in the foster parent's care who is legally available for adoption if the child has been in the foster parent's care for one year or longer, or the child has a significant relationship with the family.

b. Relatives. A relative who is within the fourth degree of consanguinity shall be given consideration for selection as the adoptive placement for a child who is legally available for adoption if the child has a significant relationship with the relative, or the child is aged 14 or over and elects adoption by the relative.

**200.3(2) Procedures.** An application for a special needs child shall be accepted by any department office. If a family assessment and home study cannot be begun by a department worker within 90 days, a referral shall be made to purchase a home study from a provider with whom the department has a purchase of service contract within available funding. Prior to completion of a home study, applicants shall complete Form 470-0771, Foster Care and Adoption Home Study Packet, and ensure that Form 470-0720, Physician's Report for Foster and Adoptive Parents, is completed by their family physician.

**441—200.4(600) Components of adoption services.** The components of adoption services are as follows: adoptive home study, preparation of child, selection of family, preparation of family, pre-placement visits, placement services, and postplacement services.

**200.4(1) Adoptive home study.** This component includes the following activities:

a. Family assessment. The family assessment shall include a minimum of two face-to-face interviews with the applicants and at least one face-to-face interview with each member of the household. At least one of the interviews shall take place at the applicant's home. The assessment of the prospective adoptive family shall include an evaluation of the family's ability to parent a special needs child or children including the following:

- (1) Motivation for adoption and whether the family has biological, adopted or foster children.
- (2) Family's and extended family's attitude toward accepting an adopted child and plans for discussing adoption with the child.
- (3) The attitude toward adoption of the significant other people involved with the family.
- (4) Emotional stability, marital history, including verification of marriages and divorces, family relationships and compatibility of the adoptive parents.
- (5) Ability to cope with problems, stress, frustrations, crises, separation, and loss.
- (6) Medical, mental and emotional conditions that may affect the applicant's ability to parent a child, treatment history, and current status of treatment.
- (7) Willingness to accept a child who has medical problems (such as a child who is at risk of, or is HIV positive), mental retardation, or emotional or behavioral problems. Ability to provide for the child's physical, medical and emotional needs and respect the child's ethnic and religious identity.
- (8) Adjustment of any children in the home, including their attitudes toward adoption, relationships with others, and school performance.
- (9) Disciplinary practices that will be used.
- (10) Capacity to give and receive affection.

(11) Statements from three references provided by the family and additional references the worker may wish to contact.

(12) Financial information, ability to provide for a child and whether there is a need for adoption subsidy for a special needs child or children.

(13) Attitudes of the adoptive applicants toward the birth parents and the reasons the child is available for adoption.

(14) Commitment to and capacity to maintain significant relationships.

(15) Substance use or abuse, if any, by family members, or members of the household, treatment history and current status of treatment.

(16) History of abuse, if any, by family members, or members of the household, treatment history, current status of treatment and the evaluation of the abuse.

(17) Criminal convictions, if any, by family members, or adults in the household, and the evaluation of the criminal record.

(18) Recommendations for number, age, sex, characteristics, and special needs of a child or children the family can best parent.

*b.* Record checks. The department shall submit record checks for each applicant and for any other adult living in the home of the applicant to determine whether they have founded child abuse reports or criminal convictions. Form 470-0643, Request for Child Abuse Information, and Form 595-1396, Request for Non-Law Enforcement Record Check, shall be used for this purpose.

If there is a record of founded child abuse or a criminal conviction for the applicant, or any other adult living in the home of the applicant, the applicant shall not be approved as an adoptive family, unless an evaluation determines that the abuse or criminal conviction does not warrant prohibition of approval.

Exception: The person making the investigation shall not approve a prospective applicant and shall not perform an evaluation if the applicant or any other adult living in the home of the applicant has been convicted of a felony offense as set forth in Iowa Code section 600.8(2) "b." The person making the investigation shall not approve a prospective applicant and shall not perform an evaluation if the applicant or any other adult living in the home of the applicant has committed a crime in another state that would be a forcible felony if the crime would have been committed in Iowa, as set forth in Iowa Code section 600.8(2) "b."

The evaluation shall consider the nature and seriousness of the abuse or crime, the time elapsed since the commission of the founded abuse or crime, the circumstances under which the abuse or crime was committed, the degree of rehabilitation, the likelihood that the person will commit the abuse or crime again, and the number of abuses or crimes committed by the person. The person with the founded child abuse or criminal conviction report shall complete and return Form 470-2310, Record Check Evaluation, within ten calendar days of the date on the form to be used to assist in the evaluation. Failure of the person to complete and return Form 470-2310 within the specified time frame shall result in denial of approval for adoption.

(1) If the applicant, or any other adult living in the home of the applicant, has been convicted of a simple misdemeanor or a serious misdemeanor that occurred five or more years prior to application, the evaluation and decision may be made by the regional administrator or designee. The department adoption worker and supervisor shall notify the applicant of the results of the evaluation using Form 470-2386, Record Check Decision.

(2) If the applicant, or any other adult living in the home of the applicant, has a founded child abuse report, has been convicted of an aggravated misdemeanor or felony at any time, or has been convicted of a simple or serious misdemeanor that occurred within five years prior to application, the evaluation shall be initially conducted by the department adoption worker and supervisor.

1. If the regional administrator or designee determines that the abuse or crime does warrant prohibition of approval, the department adoption worker shall notify the applicant of the results of the evaluation using Form 470-2386, Record Check Decision.

2. If the regional administrator or designee believes that the applicant should be approved despite the abuse or criminal conviction, the department adoption worker shall provide copies of the child abuse report or criminal history record, Form 470-2310, Record Check Evaluation, and Form 470-2386, Record Check Decision, to the Department of Human Services, Administrator, Division of Adult, Children and Family Services, Hoover State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0114. Within 30 days the administrator shall determine whether the abuse or crime merits prohibition of approval, and shall notify the department adoption worker in writing of that decision. The adoption worker shall mail the applicant Form 470-2386, Record Check Decision, when a decision is reached regarding the evaluation of an abuse or crime, or when an applicant fails to complete the evaluation form.

(3) Fees associated with the record checks shall be assessed to the adoptive applicant unless the family is being studied to adopt a child with special needs.

c. **Written report.** The worker shall prepare a written report of the family assessment, known as the adoptive home study, using Form RC-0025, Home Study Format. The home study shall be used to approve or deny a prospective family as an appropriate placement for a child or children. The department adoption worker and supervisor shall date and sign the adoptive home study. The worker shall notify the family of the decision using Form SS-6104-0, Adoption Notice of Decision, and if the worker denies the placement, reasons for denial shall be stated. The worker shall provide the family a copy of the adoptive home study with the notification of approval or denial.

d. **Preplacement assessment and home study update.** A preplacement assessment and home study update is required if the adoptive home study was written more than one year previously, in accordance with Iowa Code section 600.8, and placement of the child is imminent. The preplacement assessment and home study update shall be conducted by completing the following:

(1) The child abuse and criminal record checks shall be repeated. If there are any founded abuses or convictions of crimes that were not evaluated in the previous home study, they shall be evaluated using the process set forth in 200.4(1) "b."

(2) One face-to-face visit shall be conducted with the approved adoptive family.

(3) The information in the approved adoptive home study shall be reassessed.

(4) An updated written report of the reassessment and adoptive home study shall be written, dated, signed by the worker and the supervisor; and a copy provided to the adoptive family.

**200.4(2) Preparation of child.** This component includes specific activities designed to enable a child to make the transition to an adoptive placement. The activities shall include, but are not limited to:

a. Counseling regarding issues of separation, loss, grief, guilt, anger and adjustment to an adoptive family.

b. Preparation or update of a life book.

c. Provision of age-appropriate information regarding community resources available, such as children's support groups, to assist the child in the transition and integration into the adoptive family.

- d. Any appropriate evaluations or testing.
- e. HIV testing of a child by the University of Iowa Hospital or a local physician when any of the following conditions exist:
  - (1) The child was, or may have been, sexually abused by a person who participated in high-risk behavior such as sharing of needles with an infected person or sex participation with an infected person.
  - (2) The child's birth mother participated in high-risk behavior, or is HIV positive.
  - (3) The child participated in, or has participated in, high-risk behavior.
  - (4) The child is symptomatic or at high risk of infections.
  - (5) The child received blood products prior to 1986 or the birth parents received blood products prior to 1986, before or during pregnancy.
  - (6) There is a lack of medical information regarding the birth parents or the child.

**200.4(3) *Selection of family.*** This component includes the activities necessary to select the family which can best meet the needs of the adoptive child.

Prior to preplacement visits a staffing of the child shall be held to select an approved family. A minimum of two social workers and a supervisor shall be included in the staffing. The child's special needs, characteristics, and anticipated behaviors shall be reviewed in the staffing to determine a family that can best meet the needs of the child. Approved families shall also be reviewed in an effort to match the specific family's parenting strengths with a particular child's needs.

The following selection criteria shall be observed:

- a. Preference shall be given to placing children from the same birth family together. If placement together is not possible, or is not in the best interest of the children, the reasons shall be identified and documented in each child's case record. Efforts shall be made to ensure continuous contact between siblings when the siblings are not placed together.
- b. Race, color, or national origin may not be routinely considered in placement selections. Placement decisions shall be made consistent with the best interests and special needs of the child.
- c. A child who is sexually active and at risk of or is HIV positive shall not be placed in a family where other children reside due to the risk of transmission.

**200.4(4) *Preparation of family.*** This component includes activities designed to assist the adoptive family in expanding its knowledge and understanding of the child or children. This component should enhance the family's readiness to accept the child or children into their family and encourage their commitment. The activities shall include, but are not limited to:

- a. Completion of at least 12 hours of the department's designated preservice training for foster parents, 12 hours of the department's designated adoption training, and the Universal Precautions in Foster and Adoptive Family Homes course prior to placement of a child. These training requirements apply to families who are adopting special needs children who are under the guardianship of the department. Foster parents who have been caring for a foster child in their home for at least six months and who have been selected to adopt that child may have their participation in adoption training waived by the human services area administrator or designee. Relatives who have cared for a related child for at least six months and who have been selected to adopt that relative child may have their participation in the department's preservice training for foster parents or the designated adoption training waived by the human services area administrator or designee. Adoptive families approved for adoption prior to June 1, 1997, shall not be required to complete the department's designated adoption training. If the family is accepting placement of a child who is at high risk of, or is HIV positive, they shall also complete the Caring for Children With HIV course.

b. Discussion with family members regarding problems resulting from a child's separation, loss, grief, and anger due to the loss of the birth parents.

c. Provision of background information on the child and birth family, including a child study that includes experiences such as foster and adoption placements and other pertinent information and the child's life book.

d. Provision of information regarding the child's special needs and behavior patterns.

e. Provision of a description of the child's medical needs, including whether or not the child is at risk of or is HIV positive.

f. Discussion of the impact that adding a new member or members to the family may have on all current family members.

g. Explanation of the subsidized adoption program.

h. Provision of information regarding the community resources that are available to assist the family, such as parent support groups.

**200.4(5) *Preplacement visits.*** This component includes activities necessary to plan, conduct and assess the transitional visits between the adoptive family and the child or children prior to the adoptive placement of the child in the home.

**200.4(6) *Placement services.*** Placement services include the activities necessary to plan and carry out the placement of a child or children into the adoptive family.

Prior to placement of a child, the Agreement of Placement for Adoption, Form SS-6623, shall be signed by all parties.

**200.4(7) *Postplacement services.*** Postplacement services include supervision, support, crisis intervention and required reports. Postplacement supervision is provided from the time a child is placed with an adoptive family until finalization of the adoption occurs.

a. Postplacement supervision shall focus on the following areas:

(1) Integration and interaction of the child or children with the family.

(2) Changes in the family functioning which may be due to the placement.

(3) Social and emotional adjustment of the child or children.

(4) School adjustment of the child or children who are attending school.

(5) Changes and adjustments that have been made in the family since the placement.

(6) Family's method of dealing with testing behaviors and discipline.

(7) Child's growth and development since placement in the family.

(8) Behavioral evidence of the degree of bonding that is taking place and the degree to which the child is becoming a permanent member of the adoptive family.

b. A minimum of three adoptive home visits are required or, if the family is experiencing problems, as many as are necessary to assess and support the placement.

Home visits shall be completed at a minimum as follows: one no later than 30 days after placement, one no later than 90 days after placement, and a final visit prior to requesting a consent to adopt. Supervisory reports based on observations shall be completed after the home visits using Form SS-6713, Supervisory Report.



c. A written report based on the postplacement visits with recommendations regarding the finalization of the adoption shall be submitted to the court prior to the hearing to consider granting a decree of adoption.

**441—200.5(600) Termination of parental rights.** The department shall not place a child in an approved adoptive home until parental rights of the child's birth parents have been terminated and guardianship assigned to the department. If one or both birth parents are deceased, the worker shall provide the court with verification of the birth parents' death and the death shall be stated in the guardianship order. When the termination of parental rights is appealed by a birth parent, an adoptive placement may be made if the adoptive parents sign an adoptive placement agreement that includes an acknowledgment of the conditions of the placement should termination be overturned. However, the adoption may not be finalized until the appeal is withdrawn or a final decision regarding the appeal is reached and a procedendo issued.

**441—200.6(600) Service provision.** Services to a child, a prospective adoptive family or an adoptive family may be provided by the following methods:

**200.6(1) Direct.** All components of adoption service may be provided directly by department adoption workers.

**200.6(2) Purchase.** Components of adoption service may be purchased by the department from a licensed child-placing agency or a certified adoption investigator with a purchase of service contract with the department.

**441—200.7(600) Department fees.**

**200.7(1) Cost of service.** When the court orders the department to provide services to an individual or family, a fee for the cost of service based on a sliding fee schedule shall be used. The fee assessed shall be based on a reasonable fee for providing the service, median income as determined by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Family Assistance, and the family's gross income and household size. Fee schedules shall be revised whenever the median income is redetermined. Fee schedules shall be compiled by the department for:

- a. Preplacement assessment and adoptive home studies.
- b. Postplacement supervision and reports.
- c. Reassessment and adoptive home study updates.
- d. Any supplemental reports including court-ordered home studies for adoption or custody.

**200.7(2) Fee schedule.** The fee schedule to be used in determining the cost of service is as follows:

MEMBER RATES  
FEE SCHEDULE

Percent of Median Income	1 Member Income Range	2 Member Income Range	3 Member Income Range	4 Member Income Range	5 Member Income Range	6 Member Income Range	7 Member Income Range	8 Member Income Range	Preplacement Assessment Home Study	Home Study Update	Replacements Supervisors/ Reports	Court-Ordered Treatment/ Assessment of Custody Case Study
0-20%	\$0- \$1,904	\$0- \$2,863	\$0- \$3,820	\$0- \$4,775	\$0- \$5,730	\$0- \$6,685	\$0- \$7,640	\$0- \$8,595	\$100	\$ 50	\$100	\$100
21-30%	\$1,905- \$3,815	\$3,816- \$5,725	\$5,726- \$7,635	\$7,636- \$9,545	\$9,546- \$11,455	\$11,456- \$13,365	\$13,366- \$15,275	\$15,276- \$17,185	\$200	\$100	\$100	\$200
31-40%	\$3,816- \$5,725	\$5,726- \$7,635	\$7,636- \$9,545	\$9,546- \$11,455	\$11,456- \$13,365	\$13,366- \$15,275	\$15,276- \$17,185	\$17,186- \$19,095	\$300	\$150	\$150	\$300
41-50%	\$5,726- \$7,635	\$7,636- \$9,545	\$9,546- \$11,455	\$11,456- \$13,365	\$13,366- \$15,275	\$15,276- \$17,185	\$17,186- \$19,095	\$19,096- \$21,005	\$400	\$200	\$200	\$400
51% or more	\$7,636 and over	\$9,546 and over	\$11,456 and over	\$13,366 and over	\$15,276 and over	\$17,186 and over	\$19,096 and over	\$21,006 and over	\$500	\$250	\$250	\$500
	Per person additional \$1.45.											

Checks or money orders for fees for adoption services shall be made payable to the department of human services. Fees shall be collected by the worker prior to provision and delivery of a study or report.

**200.7(3) *Determination of income and household size.*** Income of families requesting adoptive services shall be verified in order to determine the appropriate fee. Income and family composition shall be defined as set forth in 441—Chapter 130.

**200.7(4) *Waiver of fees.*** The fees for adoption services shall be waived for the following:

- a. A family wishing to adopt a special needs child.
- b. A relative within the fourth degree of consanguinity wishing to adopt an easy-to-place child for whom the department has guardianship.
- c. A current or former foster family wishing to adopt a special needs child.

**441—200.8(600) *Interstate placements.*** Interstate placement of a child into Iowa, or out of Iowa, shall follow interstate placement of child procedures according to Iowa Code section 238.33.

**441—200.9(600) *International adoptions.***

**200.9(1) *Procedures.*** International adoptions involving child-placing agencies located outside Iowa shall follow the procedures outlined in the interstate compact on the placement of children, Iowa Code section 238.33. The compact is only applicable in instances when the child is placed through a child-placing agency. When a child is placed by an entity other than a child-placing agency, a child shall only be placed after the department has been furnished a preplacement assessment and adoptive home study as required by Iowa Code section 600.8; legal documents from the child's country of origin which demonstrate the child is legally available for adoption; and all available medical, mental health, social, and background information regarding the child.

**200.9(2) *Services provided and fees.*** The family wishing approval for placement of a child from a country other than the United States into their home for the purpose of adoption shall be assessed a fee of \$75 regardless of their income for service provided by the department. The fee shall accompany the request for service. Checks shall be made to the department of human services.

The services shall include: reviewing and processing the family's adoptive home study; reviewing the child's background and legal information and birth verification to ensure that both are in compliance with requirements in Iowa Code chapter 600; submitting documents to Immigration and Naturalization Services approving the Iowa family for adoptive placement of a child; and submitting a certification letter to the attorney, agency, or family, after the child has resided with the adoptive family 180 days, and the family has had postplacement supervision by an agency or certified adoption investigator. The department's certification letter shall indicate that the family has met the requirements in the Iowa Code and that there are no impediments to finalizing the adoption.

**441—200.10(600) *Requests for home studies.***

**200.10(1) *Court-ordered.*** Court-ordered home studies for adoption or custody of a child or children shall be completed by department workers. When a department worker completes the court-ordered home study, a fee shall be assessed the family based on subrule 200.7(2).

**200.10(2) *Interstate compact.*** Requests for an adoptive home study through the interstate compact process shall be completed by a department worker and the family assessed a fee based on the department's current fee schedule. No fee shall be charged the family if they are a relative of the child within the fourth degree of consanguinity, or the family is the child's foster family.

**200.10(3) *Referrals.*** Families wishing to adopt an easy-to-place child shall be referred to a child-placing agency or a certified adoption investigator for completion of the home study. Payment of a fee for completion of the home study shall be the family's responsibility.

**441—200.11(600) Reasons for denial.** An individual or family shall be denied approval of an adoptive home study for one or more of the following reasons:

**200.11(1) *Founded child abuse report.*** A founded child abuse report shall mean denial of approval unless an evaluation determines that it does not merit denial.

**200.11(2) *Criminal conviction.*** A criminal conviction shall mean denial of approval unless an evaluation determines that it does not merit denial.

**200.11(3) *Documented concerns.*** Concerns may be documented in one or more of the following areas:

- a. Motivation to adopt.
- b. Child-rearing ability and practices.
- c. Emotional stability.
- d. Physical or mental health.
- e. Interpersonal relationships.
- f. Finances.
- g. Marital relationship.

**200.11(4) *Substance abuse.*** Verified substance use or abuse that prevents the family from adequately caring for the child shall mean denial of approval.

**200.11(5) *Lack of cooperation.*** If the individual or family fails to cooperate in providing the information needed to complete the preplacement assessment or home study, the application shall be denied.

**441—200.12(600) Removal of child from preadoptive family.** When the department determines that it is in the best interest of a child to be removed from a preadoptive family, a Letter of Removal, Form 470-3018, shall be mailed to the family prior to the removal. Removal of a child from a preadoptive family is not an appealable issue, as a child continues to be under the guardianship of the department until an adoption is finalized.

**441—200.13(600) Consents.** A request for consent to the adoption shall be submitted to the guardian for a child who is under the guardianship of the department and for whom finalizing an adoption is recommended. If the adoption is in the best interest of the child, the director or designee shall sign a Consent to Adoption, Form 470-0775, prior to a court hearing to finalize the adoption.

A consent to adopt may be rescinded by the department, by signing Rescinding the Consent to Adoption, Form 470-2990, for any of the following reasons:

1. At the request of the adoptive family.
2. A founded child abuse report, or accusation of child abuse, pending determination of the report.
3. Conviction of a crime, or accusation of a crime, pending a court decision regarding the crime.
4. At the request of a child who is aged 14 or over and has reversed the decision regarding the adoption.
5. Other verified indications that the adoption is not in the best interest of the child.

**441—200.14(600) Requests for access to information for research or treatment.**

**200.14(1) *Requests.*** Any person seeking access to the department's sealed adoption records for the purpose or purposes set forth in Iowa Code paragraph 600.16(1) "c" or Iowa Code subsection 600.24(2) shall submit a request in writing to the director. Each request shall contain sufficient facts to establish that the information sought is necessary for conducting a legitimate medical research project, or for treating a patient in a medical facility.

**200.14(2) *Process.*** Upon receipt of a request for information sought in conducting a research project, the director or a designee shall review the request for information and make a decision to approve, or deny, the request based on the research to be conducted, the benefits of the research, the methodology, and the confidentiality measures to be followed. Upon a request for information for treating a patient in a medical facility, a decision regarding approval or denial shall be made by the director or designee based on the written information provided by a physician or the medical facility, making the request. Requesters shall be notified in writing of approval or denial and if denied, reasons for denial given.

**441—200.15(600) Requests for information for other than research or treatment.** Requests for information from department adoption records for other than research or treatment shall be made to the Department of Human Services, Division of Adult, Children and Family Services, Adoption Program, Hoover State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0114.

The department shall not release identifying information from sealed adoption records. Adult adoptees, adoptive parents, birth parents, siblings or descendants of an adopted person, or legal representatives of any of the above shall be provided an adoption packet containing a sample affidavit for filing with the court, directions for filing the affidavit, a list of county clerks of court and the address of the bureau of vital statistics which retains the name of the county where their adoption was finalized in Iowa.

An adopted person who was a resident of the Annie Wittenmeyer Home (Iowa Soldier's and Sailor's Home) may receive nonidentifying information from Annie Wittenmeyer records if the information is available.

**441—200.16(600) Appeals.** Prospective adoptive families may appeal denial of approval of their home study based on rule 441—200.11(600), pursuant to 441—Chapter 7.

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code chapter 600.

[Filed 2/11/77, Notice 11/3/76—published 3/9/77, effective 2/1/77]

[Filed 6/10/77, Notice 5/4/77—published 6/29/77, effective 8/3/77]

[Filed 9/6/79, Notice 6/27/79—published 10/3/79, effective 11/7/79]

[Filed 10/23/80, Notices 8/20/80, 9/3/80—published 11/12/80, effective 12/17/80]

[Filed 10/23/81, Notice 8/19/81—published 11/11/81, effective 1/1/82]

[Filed 10/28/83, Notice 8/17/83—published 11/23/83, effective 1/1/84]

[Filed emergency 2/10/84—published 2/29/84, effective 2/10/84]

[Filed 4/2/84, Notice 2/15/84—published 4/25/84, effective 6/1/84]

[Filed 3/22/85, Notice 10/24/84—published 4/10/85, effective 6/1/85]

[Filed emergency 1/15/87—published 2/11/87, effective 1/15/87]

[Filed emergency 6/19/87—published 7/15/87, effective 7/1/87]

[Filed 8/28/87, Notice 7/15/87—published 9/23/87, effective 11/1/87]

[Filed 11/12/93, Notice 9/15/93—published 12/8/93, effective 2/1/94]

[Filed 4/13/95, Notice 2/1/95—published 5/10/95, effective 7/1/95]

[Filed 11/16/95, Notice 9/27/95—published 12/6/95, effective 2/1/96]

[Filed 8/15/96, Notice 6/5/96—published 9/11/96, effective 11/1/96]

[Filed 4/11/97, Notice 1/15/97—published 5/7/97, effective 7/1/97]

[Filed 4/15/99, Notice 2/10/99—published 5/5/99, effective 7/1/99]

[Filed 9/12/00, Notice 7/26/00—published 10/4/00, effective 12/1/00]