

441—113.3(237) Licensing procedure.

113.3(1) Application. Applications for an initial license to operate a foster family home shall be submitted and processed as directed in rule 441—112.3(237). In addition to the application form, the applicant shall submit the following forms during the licensing process:

a. Form 595-1396, DHS Criminal History Record Check, for each person living in the home who is 14 years of age or older, as required by rule 441—113.13(237).

b. Form 470-0720, Physician's Report for Foster and Adoptive Parents, to satisfy the requirements of rule 441—113.11(237).

c. Form 470-0693, Foster Care Private Water Supply Survey, if applicable.

d. Form 470-4657, Floor Plan. The applicant or the recruitment and retention provider shall complete a drawing of the floor plan of the family's home.

e. If licensed to drive, a copy of the driver's license and motor vehicle insurance.

113.3(2) Orientation. Applicants shall attend an orientation provided by the recruitment and retention contractor as described in rule 441—117.2(237).

113.3(3) Record checks. Before beginning preservice training, applicants shall pass at least the local record check procedures as specified in rule 441—113.13(237).

113.3(4) Home study. The worker for the recruitment and retention contractor shall complete a family home study.

a. Process. Information for the home study is gathered primarily through the required preservice training as described in rule 441—117.1(237). Tribal agencies may also be involved in conducting home studies for American Indian and Alaska Native children. 42 U.S.C.A. Section 671(a)(26)(B) provides that any receiving state must treat any tribal home study report as meeting the requirements imposed by the state for the completion of a home study.

(1) The worker shall hold at least two face-to-face interviews with the applicant with one of the interviews taking place in the applicant's home.

(2) The worker shall hold at least one face-to-face interview with each member of the household in the applicant's home to observe family functioning and to assess the family's capacity to meet the needs of a child in foster care. The worker will determine whether to interview or just observe each household member based on the household member's age and development.

(3) A physical inspection of the home is required. The worker shall use the Foster Family Survey Report to complete the physical inspection of the home to verify compliance with the licensing and regulation standards in this chapter.

(4) Reference checks shall be conducted as described at rule 441—113.14(237).

b. Family assessment topics. The assessment of the prospective foster family shall evaluate the family's ability to parent a special needs child. The assessment shall include the following:

(1) The applicant's motivation for foster care and whether the family has biological, adopted, or foster children.

(2) The attitude of the family and the extended family toward accepting a foster child.

(3) The applicant's emotional stability; marital relationship and history, including verification of marriages and divorces; family relationships; and compatibility.

(4) The applicant's ability to cope with problems, stress, frustrations, crisis, separation, and loss.

(5) Medical, mental, and emotional conditions that may affect the applicant's ability to parent a child; treatment history; current status of treatment; and the evaluation of the treatment. Applicants and all household members must disclose any past or current mental health or substance abuse issues, or both. The department may require further documentation or evaluation, or both, to determine the suitability of the home.

(6) All children who are household members must be up to date on immunizations jointly recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the American Academy of Family Physicians, unless the immunization is contrary to the child's health as documented by a licensed health care professional.

(7) An evaluation of the applicant's willingness to accept a child who has medical problems (such as HIV), an intellectual disability, or emotional or behavioral problems. The applicant shall complete the department form to indicate choices about caring for children who have or are at risk for HIV infection and other medical problems.

(8) The applicant's ability to provide for a child's physical, medical, and emotional needs and respect the child's ethnic and religious identity.

(9) The safety of foster children in relation to any animals that live on the applicant's property.

(10) The adjustment of any children in the home, including their attitudes toward foster care and adoption, relationships with others, and school performance.

(11) An assessment of the applicant's disciplinary techniques and practices.

(12) The applicant's financial information and ability to provide for a child.

(13) The applicant's attitude toward the foster child's birth parents and siblings.

(14) The applicant's commitment to and capacity to maintain a foster child's significant relationships and work with the child's parents when the permanency goal is reunification.

(15) Any history of substance use or substance abuse by family members or members of the household, including treatment history and current status of treatment.

(16) Any history of abuse by family members or members of the household, including treatment history, current status of treatment, and how this issue would affect the applicant's ability to be a foster parent.

(17) Any criminal convictions of family members or adults in the household and the evaluation of the criminal record.

c. Written report. The recruitment and retention contractor shall prepare a written report of the family assessment using Form 470-5436, Resource Parent Home Study. The Resource Parent Home Study shall include a recommendation for the number, age, sex, characteristics, and special needs of a child or children the family can best parent and any other pertinent information in making the licensing recommendation. The home study shall be maintained in the foster family record.

113.3(5) Decision. The department worker shall use the home study to approve or deny a prospective family as an appropriate placement for a child or children. The department worker shall notify the family of the licensing decision using Form 470-0709, Notice of Action: Foster Family Home.

a. Upon approval, the department shall issue the applicant a foster family home license as described at rule 441—112.4(237). The license shall indicate the licensed capacity for the number of foster children approved for placement in the foster family home under subrule 113.4(1).

b. If the department worker does not approve the home study, the notice shall state the reasons for that decision, as listed in rule 441—112.5(237). A license denial may be appealed as described at rule 441—112.8(237).

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code section 237.5.

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