

	<b>INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL</b>	
	<b>Chapter 12: Foster Family Home Licensing</b>	<b>Effective Date: 3/01/07</b>
	<b>Section 2: Responding to Initial Inquiries</b>	<b>Version: 1</b>

<b>POLICY</b>	<b>OLD POLICY: 609.11</b>
---------------	---------------------------

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will refer persons interested in becoming licensed foster or adoptive parents to the Indiana Foster Care and Adoption (IFCAA) toll-free number, 1-888-252-3678 (888-25-ADOPT) and the web site, [www.IFCAA.org](http://www.IFCAA.org).

Code References

N/A

<b>PROCEDURE</b>
------------------

As a contractor for DCS, IFCAA will respond to initial foster or adoptive parenting inquiries by providing general information.

If the prospective applicant does not want to call IFCAA directly, DCS staff will forward all foster/adoption initial inquiries to IFCAA by:

1. Recording all contact information on the Initial Inquiry Regarding Foster Family Home Licensure form
2. Fax the inquiry to IFCAA at 317-524-2609

After receipt of an initial foster/adoptive inquiry or of receiving a message on the IFCAA Call Center voice mail, IFCAA will:

1. Contact the prospective applicant
2. Provide general introductory information that explains the purpose of foster care and adoption, the need for foster care and adoption in the community, roles and expectations of foster and adoptive parents, and so forth
3. Provide basic licensing requirements, including training and an overview of the family preparation process
4. Submit all prospective applicants referred for the Foster/Adoption/Kinship Parent Training (FAKT) to local DCS Directors or designees
5. Refer prospective applicant to the FAKT coordinator so that the prospective applicant can receive training information
6. Refer prospective applicant to a Foster Care Support Specialist<sup>1</sup> for support services, such as:
  - a. Assisting the applicant(s) with completing forms or answering any questions, as necessary
    - i. The applicant should keep the completed forms until the first licensing home visit. Refer to separate policy, Chapter 12, First Licensing Home Visit

<sup>1</sup> Foster Care Support Specialist provide support to the prospective foster family throughout the training and licensing process for up to one year after approval of the license.

- b. Completing the Paving the Way to a Decision, part A (SF53185/CW3416) with the applicant
- c. Discussing the roles and responsibilities of resource parenting
- d. Providing other resources and information

The FAKT coordinators will provide prospective applicants with information regarding upcoming FAKT.

Within five working days of receiving the prospective applicant's information from IFCAA, the licensing worker should establish contact with the prospective applicant. Contact may be in the form of phone call, email, letter or face to face.

LCPA staff will be responsible for collecting and tracking initial inquiries. The Initial Inquiry Regarding Foster Family Home Licensure form should be maintained in the agency files. Inquiry statistics should be tracked by the agency to be reported when requested by DCS.

Next Steps: Refer to separate policies, Chapter 12, Initial Licensing Packet, Orientation Meeting, and Pre-Service Training Requirements

#### **PRACTICE GUIDANCE**

- N/A

#### **FORMS AND TOOLS**

- Initial Inquiry Regarding Foster Family Home Licensure
- Paving the Way to a Decision, part A (SF53185/CW3416)

#### **RELATED INFORMATION**

##### **Overview of Licensing Process**

At the time of initial inquiry, the prospective applicant should be provided with the following "high-level" overview of the DCS licensing process. The prospective applicant should:

- Receive a packet of information about foster parenting, including an application
- Complete an application
- Complete a background check
- Meet with a licensing staff person in applicant's home
- Complete additional paperwork
- Attend Pre-Service Training; Refer to separate policy, Chapter 12, Pre-Service Training Requirements
- Meet a second time with a licensing staff person in applicant's home
- Receive a license if all requirements are met
- Attend In-Service Training each year to maintain a foster family home license; Refer to separate policy, Chapter 12, In-Service Training Requirements