

STANDARD: RESPONSE TO INQUIRIES REQUESTING INFORMATION ON BECOMING A FOSTER PARENT OR AN ADOPTIVE PARENT

PURPOSE

The purpose of this standard is to provide direction and guidance to the Children and Family Services (CFS) program regarding timely response to inquiries from individuals interested in receiving information on becoming a resource parent or on adopting a special needs child. This standard is intended to achieve statewide consistency in the development and application of CFS core services and will be implemented in the context of all applicable laws, rules and policies. The standard will also provide a measurement for program accountability.

INTRODUCTION

According to Adopt US Kids, research has shown that less than 10% of the families who make the first inquiry regarding licensure as a resource family actually become licensed and have a child placed in their home. The Department must take every opportunity to recruit and license resource families. We must pursue all inquiries for resource family licensure and adoption information in a timely manner. A timely response communicates to the prospective resource parent that:

- The Department values and respects them;
- The individual made a good decision to inquire about foster care and/or adoption; and
- The Department is sincere in recruiting additional resource families to care for Idaho's children.

The ninety percent of initial inquiries that do not result in full licensure and placement of a child cite the following reasons for not following through with the licensing process:

- confused by the licensing criteria and process;
- process is not well-defined and/or consistently followed;
- not kept informed as to where they are in the licensing process or what to do next;
- feeling unwelcome and unappreciated; and
- becoming tired of waiting between the steps in the licensing process.

STANDARD

Inquires for information about providing foster care and/or adoption may be received directly by staff in a regional office.

PROCEDURE

The person inquiring about resource family care or adoption shall be contacted within 48 business hours of the receipt of an initial call. Department staff or contractors will welcome the caller, acknowledge the importance of their inquiry and answer any questions about the resource family licensing process or adoption. In discussing licensure or adoption, Department staff will:

- gather identifying data;
- identify and explore the caller's interest;
- ask how the caller heard about the Department's foster/adoption program ;
- provide information about PRIDE pre-service training;
- provide information on requirements for providing alternate care or adopting and the associated application process;
- CFS staff will log the call in FOCUS as a pending licensing inquiry ;
- send a packet of foster/adopt information to the person(s) who inquired. A Family Foster Care Application may also be provided at this time.

Follow-up contact. A personal visit and or follow-up call by Departmental staff or a contractor should take place within thirty days of the receipt of the inquiry if no response is received from the prospective resource after the foster/adopt packet is mailed. The prospective resource should be asked if they are still interested in becoming a resource family and/or adoption, if they have questions, and if we can be of assistance in helping them with the application.

Monitoring. CareLine/211 will provide regional program managers with a monthly report of inquiries received from individuals interested in becoming a resource family or an adoptive parent. This report will provide an opportunity for the program manager to monitor compliance with this standard.

Any variance to these standards will be documented and approved by Division Administration, unless otherwise noted.

FLOWCHART.

