

5101:2-48-12

Completion of the homestudy report.

- (A) The homestudy shall be a joint decision making assessment and process involving the applicant and the public children services agency (PCSA), private child placing agency (PCPA), or private noncustodial agency (PNA) which is designed to determine whether adoption and/or foster care is a viable option for the applicant and the characteristics of children the applicant can best parent.
- (B) Agencies shall respect the right of the applicant family to select an the agency for the purpose of completing the homestudy assessment with whom they work. Once the homestudy has been initiated, the PCSA, PCPA or PNA shall maintain involvement with the applicant through to completion of the homestudy assessment, unless the applicant requests a transfer or fails to follow through with timely submission of homestudy documents. Agencies shall cooperate with a family who has requested a transfer to another agency pursuant to rule 5101:2-48-19 of the Administrative Code.
- (C) All homestudies conducted by PCSAs, PCPAs and PNAs shall be documented on the JFS 01673; "ODJFS Assessment for Child Placement (Homestudy)-", or the JFS 01692 "Application for Adoption of a Foster Child" if applicable. Stepparent; ~~grandparent~~ and international homestudies are exempt from this requirement. The JFS 01698; "Step-parent/Adoption Homestudy Report" may be used when the court requests a PCSA, PCPA, or PNA to conduct a homestudy involving a stepparent adoption.
- (D) Homestudies completed by a PCSA, PCPA, or PNA shall be conducted by:
- (1) An adoption assessor who meets the requirements contained in rule 5101:2-1-01 of the Administrative Code; and
 - (2) A PCPA or PNA that has been certified to act as a representative of ODJFS to recommend foster homes for certification and/or to place children for adoption or to participate in the placement of children in foster homes or adoption; or
 - (3) A PCSA that acts as a representative of ODJFS to recommend foster homes for certification and/or to place children for adoption or to participate in the placement of children in foster homes or for adoption.
- (E) In addition to completion of the JFS 01673, the following documents shall be completed and attached to the homestudy document:
- (1) The JFS 01653 "Medical Statement for Foster Care/Adoptive Applicant and All

Household Members" signed by a licensed physician;

- (2) Four personal reference statements (three from non-relatives) for each applicant to determine the applicant's suitability to parent a child;
 - (3) A fire inspection by a state certified fire safety inspector or the state fire marshal's office ~~or the JFS-01348, "Safety Audit of a Foster Home"~~;
 - (4) The JFS 01348 "Safety Audit of a Foster Home, also used for adoptive homes":
 - ~~(4)~~(5) The JFS 01681, "Applicant Financial Statement." This form determines the family's ability to provide for the child and to determine the need for an adoption subsidy;-
 - ~~(5)~~(6) The bureau of identification and investigation (BCII) and, if applicable, federal bureau of investigation (FBI) reports; and
 - ~~(6)~~(7) Completed water test, if required;
- (F) The assessor shall complete a written homestudy report on the JFS 01673; "Assessment for Child Placement" and provide written notification to the applicant of approval or denial. The written notification shall be provided within one hundred eighty days of the date the completed application was submitted which initiated a homestudy for any applicant seeking a special needs child. For an applicant who was not seeking a child with special needs, the time frames for completion of a written homestudy report, approval or denial of the adoptive homestudy, and written notification to the applicant of the approval or denial shall be consistent with the agency's adoption and foster care policy prepared pursuant to rule 5101:2-48-05 of the Administrative Code.
- (G) The assessor shall arrive at one or more of the following recommendations at the completion of the homestudy:
- (1) Approve the applicants as adoptive parents only;
 - (2) Recommend the certification of the applicants as foster parents if the agency in which the assessor is employed or contracted by is certified to act as a representative of ODJFS to recommend foster homes for certification;
 - (3) Approve the applicants as adoptive parents and recommend the certification of the applicants as foster parents simultaneously if the agency in which the assessor is employed or contracted by is certified to act as a representative of

ODJFS to recommend foster homes for certification and place children for adoption or to participate in the placement of children in foster homes and for adoption;

- (4) Deny the adoption application;
 - (5) Recommend that the certification for foster care not be approved; or
 - (6) Deny both the adoption application and recommend that the certification for foster care not be approved.
- (H) If the decision of the assessor is to approve the applicant as an adoptive parent or to renew the approval of an adoptive parent through an updated study, the written notification shall include, but not be limited to, the following information:
- (1) Date of approval of the adoptive homestudy or updated adoptive homestudy with the date the approved homestudy or update will expire; and
 - (2) A description of the characteristics of the child or children for whom the applicant is being approved.
- (I) If the decision of the assessor is to deny the applicant for adoption or updated adoptive homestudy, the written notification shall contain the following:
- (1) An explanation of the reason for denial; and
 - (2) A description of procedures for an agency review pursuant to rule 5101:2-48-24 of the Administrative Code.
- (J) The PCSA, PCPA or PNA shall follow procedures contained in rule 5101:2-5-22 of the Administrative Code for approval or denial of an applicant for certification as a foster home.
- (K) Homestudies initiated prior to the effective date of this rule shall be in compliance with Administrative Code rules which were in effect prior to the effective date of this rule. These homestudies shall be updated in accordance with the update process outlined in paragraphs (L) and (M) of this rule.
- (L) The expiration date of an initial homestudy is six years from the date of the initial approval of the applicant(s) as adoptive parent(s). No homestudy shall be valid after a six year period. ~~The PCSA, PCPA, or PNA shall update an approved adoptive~~

~~homestudy at least once every two years. Additional updates during a two-year period to the initial homestudy shall be completed at least once every two years. If~~ one any of the following changes occurs in the family's composition or life circumstances ~~occur~~ that alter the validity of information contained in ~~this~~ the original homestudy or subsequent updates that have been completed, and the family is being considered for a placement of a child, the agency shall complete an additional update:

- (1) A change in the marital status of an approved adoptive applicant;
 - (2) A change in the significant health status of an approved adoptive applicant;
 - (3) The placement or finalization of an adoption of a child;
 - (4) The birth of a child;
 - (5) The death of a child or household member;
 - (6) A criminal conviction of an approved adoptive applicant;
 - (7) A change in the number of adult household members;
 - (8) A family's relocation.
- (M) Once a homestudy has been updated, the expiration date is calculated from the date of approval of the update, not to exceed six years from the date of the initial approval. The date of approval of the most current update will become the new date to determine when the next two-year update is due. After the expiration of the homestudy, the family shall submit a new JFS; 01691; "Application For Child Placement" and a new JFS 01673; "Assessment for Child Placement" shall be completed.
- (N) The PCSA, PCPA, or PNA assessor shall notify the family in writing, not less than ninety or more than one hundred twenty calendar days prior to the expiration of the homestudy that their homestudy is due to expire. The notification shall include:
- (1) The date of expiration of their homestudy;
 - (2) A directive to the family to contact the assessor in writing regarding completion of the homestudy process;

- (3) Notification that the homestudy update must be completed prior to the date of expiration;
- (4) Notification that should the homestudy expire, the family would have to reapply for approval for adoptive placement as outlined in rule 5101:2-48-09 of the Administrative Code.
- (O) When updating the JFS 01673 ~~adoptive homestudy report~~ the assessor shall complete the JFS 01385, "Ohio Department of Job and Family Services Assessment for Child Placement Update" and conduct face-to-face interviews with the applicant, one of which shall take place in the home of the applicant.

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CERTIFIED ELECTRONICALLY

Certification

07/08/2003

Date

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