

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

POLICY GUIDE 2019.05

**Rules 402
Family First Model Foster Home Standards**

DATE: June 28, 2019
TO: All DCFS and Purchase of Service (POS) Staff
FROM: Marc D. Smith, Acting Director
EFFECTIVE: Immediately

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy Guide is to notify Department and Purchase of Services (POS) staff of recently adopted federal standards for foster home licensure, for which Department and POS staff are to begin following immediately.

II. PRIMARY USERS

The primary users of this Policy Guide are all DCFS and Purchase of Service (POS) Foster Family Home Licensing Staff

III. BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY

The Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) was signed into federal law on February 9, 2018. The FFPSA, in Division E, Title VII., Section 50731, included requirements for the Children’s Bureau to develop and adopt National Model Foster Family Home Licensing Standards. National Model Foster Family Home Licensing Standards were adopted and issued by the Children’s Bureau on February 4, 2019.

IV. INSTRUCTIONS

- Please find below, language proposed for Administrative Rules 402 for the purpose to meet National Model Foster Family Home Licensing Standards that were adopted by the Children’s Bureau, as part of federal legislation, on February 4, 2019.
- All applicants for foster home licensure and current licensees are to be made aware of new requirements, so they can begin taking steps to meet them, before they are promulgated into Rules 402. Once adopted into Rules 402, foster parents will be out of compliance with standards and required to take corrective steps to meet them.



- No formal licensing violation is to be entered against a current licensee for these new requirements, until the proposed language is adopted into Rules 402. Applicants are not to be denied foster home licensure based upon new requirements for the applicants to meet, until formal adoption into Rules 402.
- Please Note: Foster Home Licensing Staff is to follow new requirements in Rule 402.4 (Application for License), as outlined directly below:

Requirements in Model Foster Family Home Licensing Standards being Added to Rule 402:

Rules 402.4 Application for License (Language to be Added)

- The child welfare agency shall conduct a home study for each initial application for foster home licensure under its supervision. The home study shall be conducted by a qualified licensing representative and reviewed and approved by a qualified licensing supervisor. The home study shall require the licensing representative to have one scheduled initial on-site visit to determine if the home meets licensing standards. The licensing representative shall provide in writing how the applicants can meet standards, or why they cannot meet standards for foster home licensure at that time.
- When more than 30 days pass since the licensing representative has been to the home the following applies: Prior to the recommendation to issue a foster home license, the licensing representative shall go to the home a second time to ensure the home continues to meet standards.
- The licensing representative, with supervisory approval, shall have discretion on whether to interview or observe each household member based on his or her age and development. The licensing representative shall make a scheduled visit to the home when all household members are present to observe and assess family dynamics.
- The licensing representative shall assess the applicant and their ability to communicate and effectively work with youth in care in conjunction with their health care providers and other service providers.
- Before a final recommendation for licensure is made, applicants shall provide specific and signed assurances they understand and shall adhere to:
 - 1) Reasonable & Prudent Parenting Standards
 - 2) No excessive use of alcohol in presence of youth in care;
 - 3) No use of illegal drugs or abuse of any prescription and/or non-prescription medication
 - 4) No smoking in residence or vehicle used to transport a youth in care.

Rules 402.8 General Requirements for the Foster Home – (Language to be Added)

- A foster home shall have a kitchen, with a properly operating stove, oven, refrigerator and sink. Appliances and sink are not required to be in the same room.
- A foster home shall have a bathroom, with properly operating toilet, sink, and shower or tub.
- The applicant or licensee shall maintain their home, grounds, and all structures on the grounds in a safe and sanitary condition.
- Alcoholic beverages and toxic/hazardous materials shall be kept where youth in care cannot access them.
- The foster home shall maintain a first-aid kit and supplies containing items such as, but not limited to, a first aid kit consisting of adhesive bandages, scissors, thermometer, non-permeable gloves, sterile gauze pads, adhesive tape, tweezers and mild soap.
- Applicants and Licensees, as well as their guests will not smoke in the family foster home, or in any vehicle used to transport the child, or in the presence of the child in foster care
- The foster home shall be free from rodent and/or insect infestation.
- The foster home shall have a comprehensive list of emergency telephone numbers, including poison control, and post those numbers in a prominent place in the home
- The foster home shall comply with all requirements of the State, tribal, and local laws and/or municipal codes for household pets.
- Any and all firearms and ammunition shall be stored and locked up separately at all times and kept in places inaccessible to children. No firearms possessed in violation of a State or federal law or a local government ordinance shall be present in the home at any time. Loaded guns shall not be kept in a foster home unless required by law enforcement officers and in accordance with their law enforcement agency's safety procedures.
- The foster home shall have at least one operable fire extinguisher that is readily accessible.
- Swimming pools shall be equipped with life saving device(s).
- Swimming pools shall have a working pump and filtering system when they cannot be emptied after each use.

Rules 402.9 Requirements for Sleeping Arrangements (Language to be Added)

- Foster parents shall not co-sleep or bed share with a youth in care.

Rules 402.12 Qualifications of Foster Family (Language to be Added)

- Foster home applicants for licensure shall provide the names and addresses of at least four persons, with one being related to the applicant, who can attest the applicants are of reputable and responsible moral character.
- at least one applicant for foster home licensure can read and write at the level necessary to participate effectively in the community in which they reside and meet the needs of youth-in-care.
- The foster parents shall have sufficient and stable financial resources to provide for all needs of current household members and for any youth placed in the foster home.
- applicants and licensees shall not use any illegal substance, abuse prescription and/or non-prescription drugs and/or abuse alcohol. Applicants shall not drink alcohol in excess while caring for youth in care.
- Licensed foster parents shall ensure they have access to reliable, legal, and safe transportation

Rules 402.14 Health of Foster Family (Language to be Added)

Before licensing, the foster parents shall furnish the supervising agency with a medical report on forms provided by the agency for each member of the household. A medical report shall be obtained for the foster parents, each child and other persons residing in the foster home, and child care assistants. Medical reports shall include up-to-date immunizations for all children as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), unless the child's licensed primary care physician documents that an immunization is contrary to the child's health. Each medical report shall be no more than 12 months old from the date the application is accepted by the Department. All caregivers in a foster home licensed to care for infants and/or children with special medical needs are required to have the following up-to-date immunizations, per the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (ACIP): Pertussis, Tdap and an annual flu vaccination, unless their primary care physician documents that an immunization is contrary to their health. Copies of medical examinations of school age children who are members of the household that were completed in accordance with the requirements of the School Code [105 ILCS 5/27-8.1] are acceptable copies of the medical examinations that are on file with the supervising agency.

Rules 402.15 Number and Ages of Children Served (Includes Two Additional Criteria for Expanded Capacity Waivers)

- To allow a child with an established meaningful relationship with the family to remain with the family.
- To allow a family with special training or skills to provide care to a child who has a severe disability.

V. NEW, REVISED AND/OR OBSOLETE FORMS

CFS 452-A, Acknowledgement of Compliance – Part 402 Licensing Standards for Foster Family Homes, has been revised to include foster parent assurances for reasonable and prudent parenting standard, alcohol and drug use, and smoking prohibitions.

VI. QUESTIONS

Questions regarding this Policy Guide may be directed to the Office of Child and Family Policy at 217-524-1983 or via Outlook at DCFS.Policy. Non-Outlook users may e-mail questions to DCFS.Policy@illinois.gov.

VII. FILING INSTRUCTIONS

File this Policy Guide immediately following Rule 402, Licensing Standards for Foster Family Homes.

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