

# Foster Care Model Rule Changes/Family First Prevention Act

## Quick Overview

1. New foster/adoptive families will be cleared in the National Sex Offender Registry, in addition to the current background checks. This also applies to current foster parents at the time of re-certification. All aliases and maiden names will be cleared. If anyone turns 18 in the home (including a child placement), they must also be cleared in the National Sex Offender Registry for the next re-certification.
2. The medical service provider signature that used to be required for all households is no longer required. The first part includes a doctor's statement for the applicants, requiring documentation of having had a physical exam in the past 12 months, and a physician signature.

The change is that adult household members (non-applicants) do not have to see a doctor or obtain a medical professional's signature, but sign their own statement regarding their medical status. All known issues that might impact child safety should still be explored by seeking information after obtaining the proper authorization for release of information. All are required to disclose serious illnesses or injuries that have occurred in the past year.

3. All children (custodial/birth/adopted) of the applicants must be up to date on childhood immunizations.
  - a. If any of the children to be placed is an infant or has special medical needs, all household members must have an annual flu shot. If the flu shots are not being issued at that time, that information should be documented in the record with a timeframe in which the vaccine will be obtained.
  - b. If the children to be cared for are infants (0 to 18 mos. old), all adult household members are to have the (pertussis) whooping cough vaccination.
  - c. All vaccine/immunization requirements may be declined by the applicants/household members due to medical contra-indication, conscience or religious conflict. Place shot records in the file. The new medical form includes space to document refusals for the reasons already listed.
4. At initial licensing, at least one of the references must be from a relative/family member.
5. There are capacity limit exceptions regarding the number of children allowed to be placed in a home, to accommodate sibling groups being placed together, being joined together, or returning to a home where they were before.
6. There are additional training requirements (beyond pre-service) that must be completed before applicants can be licensed:

- a. Completion of First Aid/CPR Training
- b. Reporting C/A N
- c. Medication Administration
- d. Normalcy/Prudent Parent Standard

Caregivers are no longer required to be certified in CPR/First Aid; instead, the requirement is that they complete training, which can be done completely online. In the future, it will be included as part of the 36 hours of pre-service. Current pre-service classes include the other topics that are required.

7. The minimum age to foster is reduced from 21 to 18 years old.
8. There are some language changes related to criminal offenses and their rehabilitation standards that impact licensing.
9. Statements of Assurance are being added to the application, indicating that the applicant's signature indicates agreement to:
  - a. No corporal punishment
  - b. No abuse of substances or use of illegal substances
  - c. No smoking in home or vehicle where child resides or is transported
  - d. Adherence to the reasonable and prudent standard practices
10. No one is to co-sleep with an infant that is placed in a foster home (including the minor mom/parent of the child).
11. Site/safety audit modifications:
  - a. Swimming pool/hot tub rules more detailed
  - b. Carbon monoxide detector required
  - c. First aid supplies required
  - d. Rodent/insect infestation prohibited
  - e. Smoking is prohibited
  - f. Chipping and peeling paint is detailed.

There is a guidance document for chipping and peeling paint. We should follow that protocol, instead of offering individual remedies or suggestions to resolve the matter.

There is a **tip sheet regarding pools** that can help with assessing pools. Upon licensing, the assessor may require certain safety measures based on age of children to be placed, types of barriers that are currently in place, and ease of access to the pool. Foster homes should maintain those safety measures as they maintain their license.

12. **Transportation rules** provide guidance as to what are considered safe transportation options. There is some change in the rules that are in place to support kinship placements. For example, there is a provision that a teen driver might be able to transport children. That should not be misinterpreted as a new standard of practice and will be addressed during initial licensing.