

LCCS POLICY 750

Foster & Adoptive Home Recruitment

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See new Policy #:	

Scope:	Foster Care Workers & Supervisors, Adoption Workers & Supervisors, Independent Living Workers & Supervisor, and Public Information Officer
Responsibility:	Manager of Placement Department
Purpose:	To ensure that foster and adoptive homes are available for the types of children served by the agency.
Legal Cite:	O.R.C. §§ 5103.03, 5153.16; O.A.C. 5101:2-48-05.

POLICY STATEMENT

Lucas County Children Services (LCCS) will diligently recruit prospective adoptive and foster parents who reflect the diverse needs of children needing placement.

No one will be denied an opportunity to become a foster or adoptive parent based on race, color, national origin, handicap or age. All LCCS recruitment activities and materials shall be in compliance with the Multiethnic Placement Act, 42 U.S.C.A. 1996 (B), as amended by Section 1808 of the Small Business Job Protection Act of 1996 (MEPA), and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), and the "Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978."

PROCEDURE - including required timeframes and documentation

Lucas County Children Services will develop a yearly recruitment campaign for both foster and adoptive homes, aimed at the characteristics and needs of children coming into care, as part of its goals and objectives. This campaign will be part of the recruitment plan submitted to ODJFS every two years on May first (1st) of each even numbered year, and shall address the upcoming two (2) state fiscal years.

Characteristics of the statewide waiting pool are as follows:

Over half of the children are school-aged, need to be placed with siblings and/or are African American. Over half are male.

The recruitment campaign for Foster and Adoptive homes will include, but not be limited to, a broad variety of recruitment techniques, including:

- Media presentations, television, newspaper ads and radio;
- Flyers and brochures on types of children available;
- Church bulletins;
- Speeches;
- Networking with other professionals;
- Cultivation of families under study or current foster or adoption parents to meet specific identified needs.

All of LCCS's recruitment activities and materials will be in compliance with the Multiethnic Placement Act (MEPA), Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, "Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978", and 42 U.S.C. 671(a), the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997, Pub. L. No. 105-89.

Lucas County Children Services will schedule orientation classes quarterly, at a minimum. These dates will be advertised in the community via print and electronic media. Instructions for access to information about upcoming training dates and an explanation of the homestudy process will be sent to any individual interested in foster care and/or adoption.

Informational meetings will be scheduled in the community throughout the year where individuals can receive homestudy information.

Lucas County Children Services will implement strategies to ensure that the orientation and homestudy process is accessible to all members of the community. This will include offering a variety of dates, times, and locations. The agency's traditional working hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. However, caseworkers will schedule appointments in the evening and on weekends.

LCCS will offer the pre-service training to prospective foster and adoptive families from other counties if space permits.

Lucas County Children Services staff will be required to participate on an ongoing basis in training classes that will prepare them to work with individuals from diverse cultural, racial, ethnic and economic communities. These trainings will be available via the Regional Training Center, department and unit meetings, and outside community resources.

In compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, individuals in need of assistance to deal with linguistic barriers in order to participate in the orientation and homestudy process will have accommodations arranged by the Placement Department. Services offered, but not limited to, will include professionals proficient in American Sign Language and interpreters for non-English and Limited English Proficient (LEP) speaking candidates.

The Placement Department will be responsible for searching for appropriate and placing children in foster and adoptive placements in a timely manner. Placements will be identified by utilizing LCCS foster and adoptive homes, other agency homes and in some cases, for foster care, restrictive treatment resources. Placements will be made with an attempt to best meet the needs

of the children requiring foster care or adoption and will not be delayed by a search for a same race or ethnic placement.

PROCEDURES SPECIFIC TO ADOPTIVE RECRUITMENT

Instructions for electronic access to a description of the characteristics of children available for adoption, both in Lucas County and the State of Ohio, including their developmental, emotional, physical and cultural needs will be provided to all adoption inquiries within seven (7) business days from time of inquiry. Additionally, the agency will provide instructions for electronic access to a copy of the adoption policy (LCCS #800), and subsidy policy (LCCS #240), and requirements for fingerprints and police checks.

Use of a public computer with internet access will be provided to applicants who do not have internet access or need assistance navigating online. Printed copies of these documents will be provided upon request.

Adoption homestudy services will be offered only to Lucas County residents as a rule; however, there may be occasion when another county family is interested in fostering or adopting a Lucas County child(ren). In that event, Lucas County and the family's home county will discuss and agree upon which agency should complete the foster and/or adopt homestudy.

Relatives and foster parents will be notified of the agency's decision to pursue permanent custody within one (1) week to assess their desire to be a potential adoption resource for that child placed with them.

The Placement Department begins diligent recruitment efforts at the point of permanent custody pending in an effort to implement concurrent permanency planning so all children will be placed within six (6) months of adoption free and clear status.

Procedures for a timely search for prospective parents for a child in the permanent custody of the agency will include, but not be limited to the following:

- Creating a flyer with information about the child
- Posting the child's photo on the agency website

No fees will be charged by the agency for the provision of adoption services.

FOSTER HOME CATEGORIES (Refer to Continuum of Care document for more detailed description of all foster home categories.)

Family Foster Homes

Foster home that provides care for children who do not need specialized foster home.

Treatment Foster Homes

Foster home that incorporates special rehabilitative services designed to treat the specific needs of the children received in the foster home, and receives and cares for children who are

emotionally or behaviorally disturbed, chemically dependent, developmentally disabled, or who otherwise have exceptional needs.

Gaining Independence for Teens (Gift) Homes

Homes in which foster parents have sixteen (16) hours of specialized training. They are responsible for teaching and monitoring progress on the identified independent living goals for the teenagers placed in their home.

PER DIEM RATES for FOSTER CAREGIVERS

The per diem rates for foster caregivers are provided to foster caregivers at the time of their orientation. The most current rates are available upon request from the Placement Department.

CASE PRACTICE GUIDES

RELATED POLICIES and FORMS

LCCS Policy 240 (Adoption Assistance & Adoption Subsidy Programs)
LCCS Policy 736 Treatment Services
LCCS Policy 800 (Assessment, Training and Homestudy Process for Adoptive Families)
LCCS Policy 801 (Pre-finalization Adoption Matching and Placement Services)
LCCS Policy 803 (Legal Risk Placement)
LCCS Continuum of Care Document