



State of Florida
Department of Children and Families

Ron DeSantis
Governor

Chad Poppell
Secretary

DATE: July 10, 2019

TO: Regional Managing Directors
Community-Based Care Lead Agency CEOs
Sheriff's Offices Conducting Child Protective Investigations

THROUGH: Patricia Babcock, Deputy Secretary *Patricia Babcock*

FROM: Patricia Medlock, Assistant Secretary for Child Welfare *Patricia Medlock*

SUBJECT: Foster Home Licensing 2019 Legislative Updates
Effective: July 1, 2019

PURPOSE: The purpose of this memorandum is to provide notification of 2019 legislative changes related to foster home licensing. Updates outlined in this memorandum went into effective July 1, 2019.

BACKGROUND: During the 2019 legislative session, updates were made s. 409.175, F.S., related to foster home licensing. Those updates included the following:

- Changes to background screening requirements for Level I – child specific foster parents;
- The removal of provisional license;
- Addition of extended licenses;
- Changes to pre-service and in-service training requirements

1. Changes to background screening requirements for Level I – child specific foster parents

For individuals seeking Level I licensure, background screening requirements now consist of fingerprint-based checks per s. 39.0138, F.S., federal and state background screenings, local law enforcement checks, local law enforcement calls for service (e.g., 9-1-1 calls), civil records checks, sexual offenders and predators checks, and abuse registry checks. Florida Statute 435 background screenings are not required for Level I foster home licensing.

2. Removal of provisional license

Previously, the state of Florida allowed for the issuance of a provisional license under specific circumstances. The ability to issue a provisional license has been removed from Florida Statutes.

3. Addition of extended licenses

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While the ability to issue a provisional license has been removed from Florida Statutes, the ability to extend a license has been added. Family foster homes now have the ability to extend their current license once during a licensure period; this extension may not exceed more than 30 days. The primary usage of the extended license functionality is to provide a short-term license to an active licensed foster parent until their home meets all re-licensing requirements. Functionality to create an extended license is currently in Florida Safe Families Network (FSFN) and must be issued by the regional licensing authority.

4. Changes to pre-service and in-service training requirements

Pre-service and in-service training hours outlined in s. 409. 175, F.S; have been removed. Families seeking to be licensed as Level II foster parents will continue to complete 21 hours of pre-service training prior licensure and eight hours of in-service prior to re-licensure.

Families seeking to be licensed as Level I foster parents must complete two hours of pre-service training prior to being licensed. Hours for in-service will be determined at a later date.

To further streamline the training needs of caregivers seeking licensure, a new online statewide educational resources titled "Caring for Children: The Florida Child Welfare System" has been approved for all levels of licensure. This resource consists of five modules designed to provide a high-level overview of the child welfare system, address behaviors and trauma of children in out-of-home care, and provide additional support/information to caregivers. This resource will fulfill the two hours of pre-service training required for Level I licensure and can be used to supplement two of the 21 hours required for level II licensure.

The link to "Caring for Children: The Florida Child Welfare System" is:
<http://www.centerforchildwelfare.org/CaringForChildren.shtml>

ACTION REQUIRED: Please share this memorandum, with all appropriate staff in the regions, circuits, Community-Based Care Lead Agencies, case management organizations, and sheriff offices conducting child protective investigations.

CONTACT INFORMATION: If you have questions or need clarification regarding this memorandum, please contact Teanna Houston, Statewide Foster Home Licensing Specialist, at Teanna.Houston@myffamilies.com or 850-717-4203.

cc: Regional Family and Community Services Directors
Scott Stewart, Assistant Secretary for Operations
Center for Child Welfare