

Unified Home Study Job Aid

Purpose: The Unified Home Study is the assessment of a common set of requirements that must be met before the child is placed by a Child Welfare Professional into someone's home, such as a relative/non-relative, foster family, or adoptive family.

All Unified Home Studies are comprised of the following components:

- **Demographics:** Requires demographic information for all household members. For the UHS, household members are defined as any person who resides in a household, including the caregiver(s). Household members do not need to be related and include adult visitors to the home who provide care of the child outside of the caregiver's ability to provide sight and sound supervision.
 - **Questions can include but are not limited to the following:**
 - What are the full names of all household members?
 - Do they have any other last names or aliases?
 - What are the date of birth and social security numbers for all household members?
 - Did the caregiver or any other household member ever live out of state? If so, how long ago and where?
 - Do they have frequent visitors who will be providing sight and sound supervision for the child(ren) being placed?
- **Background History and Prior Intakes/Investigations:** Includes an assessment of how the caregiver's or household member's criminal history and prior intakes and investigations/referrals, if any, will affect child safety.
 - **Tasks can include but not limited to the following:**
 - Inform participants of fingerprint requirements of household members over the age of 18.
 - Discuss any concerning criminal/prior abuse history.
 - Request local criminal history for all household members over the age of 12.
 - Request 911 calls out to the home.
 - Ensure that the obtained child abuse and criminal history is discussed with household members in order to assess for patterns. This includes, but is not limited to:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Patterns of assault & battery ✓ Domestic and/or family violence ✓ Substance abuse ✓ Sexual assault/offenses ✓ Patterns of maltreatments/ danger threat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Crimes against children ✓ Resisting arrest with violence ✓ Other crimes involving violence ✓ Open arrest warrants and probation/parole
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- **Financial Security, Resources, and Child Care Arrangements:** Requires details about the current financial situation of the caregiver(s) and all household members. Information gathered, assessed, and documented includes:
 - How will the caregiver(s) afford to have another person in the home?
 - What is the caregiver(s) and all household members' employment information?
 - Is there any additional monthly income, if so, what is the source?
 - What is the length of availability for the additional source of income?
 - What resources do the caregiver(s) need or already have available to them?
 - Will the caregiver(s) need assistance with the costs of childcare?
 - What new expenses are anticipated for the child(ren) to be placed in the home?
 - What is the household's monthly expenses? Discuss items such as housing, utilities, credit cards, loans, etc.

FINANCE BREAKDOWN

INCOME SOURCES & AMOUNTS	EXPENSES TYPE & AMOUNTS
Employment: (Name, Employer, Monthly Salary)	Housing:
	Utilities/Internet/Cable/Phone:
	Medical:
	Food/Supplies:
Additional Monthly Support: (Name, Income Type, Amount)	Child Care:
	Car Payment:
	Credit Card:
	Student Loans:
	Child Support Payments:
	Other:

OTHER FINANCIAL NOTES:

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- **Narrative Family Assessment:** An assessment of specific characteristics, feelings, knowledge, and abilities of the caregiver(s) to determine their capacities to provide care to child(ren). These elements include:
 - **Assess Caregiver:** Assesses the caregiver(s) abilities to provide a nurturing environment.
 - **Motivation:** Explores the caregiver's motivation to be a relative/non-relative placement, licensed foster care home, or adoptive caregiver. Also explores caregivers understanding of timeframe to achieve permanency within 12 months when possible.
 - **Education and Employment:** Assesses the caregiver(s) education, special training, and/or employment history and how this will prepare and impact their ability to care for the child(ren).
 - **Family History:** Describes the relationships between the household members and extended family and friends, and how these relationships may have an impact on the child and/or the caregiver's ability to care for the child.
 - **Child(ren) To Be Placed Interviews:** Assesses the child's understanding and feelings about being placed in the home.
 - **References and Reviews:** Document the references received from relatives, non-relatives, professionals and services providers regarding the family's ability to meet the needs of a child(ren) placed in the home.
 - **Child History:** Assesses each child currently living in the home separately. This includes developmental history/issues, personality, health, education level, special needs, and behavioral challenges. Also includes the adjustment and integration of children previously adopted by or placed with the family as well as any failed placements in terms of the cause, resolution, and any differences or changes that will be made as a result of lessons learned.
 - **Physical Environment:** Provides a description of the home and how the environment relates to the safety of the child(ren). This includes pets, vehicles, sleeping arrangements, and accommodations for child(ren)'s personal belongings.
 - **Family Supports and Resources:** Assesses the prospective caregivers support and available resources. This includes extended family, friends, and community organizations that affirms the caregiver's decision to provide care for a child placed in their home.
- **Attachments:** Ensure documents and necessary signatures are obtained. Possible attachments to the UHS include:

○ Water Addendum	○ Consents to Release information
○ Affidavit of Firearm Safety	○ Referrals & Personal References
○ Affidavit of Good Moral Character	○ Receipts of Rights and Responsibilities
○ Consent to Release Information	○ Receipt of Grievance Brochure
○ Adoption-Subsidy Acknowledgement form	

- **Signatures, Recommendations and Approvals:** Once all information required has been gathered and assessed, the prospective caregiver must be asked to review and sign the UHS created. The prospective caregiver(s)' signature provides attestation that the information shared by the prospective caregiver is accurate as of the date that their signature is provided. If known, it is at this time the prospective caregiver is informed of any concerns or changes that might affect the anticipated outcome of the home study.