

**Series:** Adoptions  
**Policy Name:** Adoption Home Study  
**Policy Number:** AS 410  
**Origination Date:** 10/29/10  
**Revision Date:** 09/21/2023  
**Regulation:** 65C-16, CFOP 170-12  
**Applicable To:** CPC Staff

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**PURPOSE:**

It is the policy of Community Partnership for Children, hereinafter referred to as CPC, to ensure that the adoptive applicants are evaluated timely, observed and screened through the adoption home study process to select prospective adoptive families who can meet the physical emotional, social, educational, and financial needs of permanently committed children, while safeguarding the child or children from further loss and separation from siblings and significant adults as established by Florida Administrative Code 65C-16.005.

**PROCEDURE:**

No person shall be denied the opportunity to become an adoptive parent on the basis of race, color, or national origin. The placement of a child with a particular family must not be denied or delayed on the basis of race, color or national origin of the family or the child as set forth in Florida Administrative Code 65C-16.005(1).

The Department is required to perform the preliminary home study only if there is no licensed child-placing agency, child-caring agency registered under Section 409.176, F.S., licensed professional, or agency described in Section 61.20(2), F.S., in the county where the prospective adoptive parent resides.

Adoption home study approval must consider all criteria established in 65C-16.005. The adoption home study is valid for twelve (12) months from the approval date.

**Timelines to minimize the time to complete final adoptive home studies:**

1. Adoption Counselor must contact prospective adoptive family within three (3) business days of assignment to discuss adoption process and schedule initial visit for local families.
2. Adoption Counselor must provide adoption application/packet electronically to local families. If local prospective adoptive family is unable to receive or complete adoption application/packet electronically, Adoption Counselor will ensure prospective family is provided adoption application with seven (7) business days of assignment.
  - a. Adoption Counselor will schedule initial home visit within five (5) business days of case assignment to complete initial evaluation of the adoptive family.
  - b. Prior to initial visit with family, Adoption Counselor will review information from family's prior unified home study (either relative, non-relative, or licensed care) to assess what additional information is required for adoption home study.

- c. Adoption Counselor will obtain demographic information for all adult household members during initial contact or home visit and will obtain the required written consent to complete required background checks within ten (10) business days of assignment.
  - d. Adoption Counselor will obtain reference information during initial home visit.
- 3. Adoption Counselor must ensure all required background checks to include local, statewide, national criminal records checks, and juvenile records checks (household members 12-17 years of age) are completed within 30 calendar days of case assignment.
  - a. When prospective adoptive applicant is a licensed caregiver, Adoption Counselor must utilize fingerprint results completed for licensure process for adoption home study if fingerprints were completed within the past twelve (12) months.
  - b. Adoption Counselor must ensure that fingerprint referrals are submitted for relative and non-relative applicants no later than ten (10) business days upon receipt of written consent to complete background checks from adoptive applicant.
- 4. Adoption Counselor must submit out of county adoption home study request or request Interstate Compact of Placement of Children (ICPC) within five (5) business days of receipt of signed TPR order for children that do not reside in Volusia, Flagler, or Putnam counties.
- 5. Adoption Counselor must ensure that child has current Comprehensive Behavioral Health Assessment (CBHA) or Adoptive Assessment and completed Child Study prior to adoption home study approval and adoption placement.
- 6. Adoption Counselor must ensure that child study is completed within 30 calendar days of case assignment.
- 7. Adoption Counselor must complete at least two (2) home visits to evaluate the adoptive family before adoption placement.
- 8. The evaluation study shall summarize in a written report (Adoptive Home Study) created and maintained in the Florida Safe Families Network System (FSFN) .
  - a. The Adoptive Home Study as defined by 65C-16.005 (3) will include but is not limited to:
    - (1) The child's choice, if appropriate, and consent to adoption, unless excused by Court.
    - (2) The applicant's motivation for adoption and commitment to recognize child's heritage and uniqueness
    - (3) The applicant's willingness to adopt some or all of sibling group.
    - (4) The strengths, weaknesses, and personal adjustment of each member of the household.
    - (5) References provided by the family, its extended family members, or significant others towards adoptive children.
    - (6) The attitudes of the applicants toward birth parents and the reasons children may be in need of adoptive placement as it relates to the child's original need for protective shelter.
    - (7) The applicants' plans for discussing adoption with the child.
    - (8) The applicants' emotional stability and maturity.

- (9) The applicants' ability to cope with problems and prior experience in adoption disruptions
- (10)The applicants' child rearing experience and ability to provide emotional support
- (11)The adjustment of birth children, and previously adopted children, if appropriate.
- (12)The applicants' ability to provide financially for the child and other family members.
- (13)A medical assessment identifying any medical problems which may limit applicants' ability to parent a child to adulthood, if applicable.
- (14)The location and physical environment of the home
- (15)The plan for childcare if the prospective adoptive parents both work outside the home
- (16)Evidence of screening of the applicants by the Abuse Registry, law enforcement clearance, and fingerprint clearance as evidenced by the FBI and FDLE.
- (17) PRIDE participation, if applicable

9. Adoption Counselor will submit completed home study to Adoption Supervisor and Adoption Program Manager for review and approval no later than 60 calendar days from receipt of adoption application.
10. If adoption home study is not approved, Adoption Counselor through consultation with Adoption Supervisor will determine if the application to adopt must be presented to Adoption Applicant Review Committee (AARC) for review. The Committee will either uphold or vacate the recommendation.
  - a. Adoption Counselor will submit Request for Review by Adoption Applicant Review Committee (AARC) and supporting documentation to be placed on AARC schedule no later than ten (10) business days of proposed recommendation to deny or defer adoption home study.
  - b. CPC's Adoption Applicant Review Committee will be held bi-weekly on Tuesdays.
  - c. If the Committee upholds the recommendation of not approving the Adoptive Home Study the prospective adoptive parent(s) will be notified and advised of their right to appeal the decision.
  - d. If the recommendation of the AARC is to approve the adoption home study over the agency's recommendation, the Adoption Counselor must complete an addendum to the home study discussing the events of the AARC and reasons for the final decision.
11. For prospective adoptive parents who have not been matched with a permanently committed child in available status and are assigned to an Adoption Homefinder/Recruiter, the adoption home study must be renewed annually to include, but not limited to, updated local and state criminal checks; child abuse registry checks; and any other changes in the family's status.

**Efforts to address timely completion of adoptive home studies:**

Adoption Leadership will provide oversight to permanently committed children to address identified needs or barriers.

- a. FSN TPR-eligible child data will be reviewed monthly to assess TPR date, length in care, placement type, and adoption status for permanently committed children in matched placements.
- b. Executive Leadership will monitor compliance efforts with timely adoption home study completion to identify and assist with eliminating barriers.

**BY DIRECTION OF:**

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**Karin Flositz, Chief Executive Officer  
Community Partnership for Children**

10/02/2023  
**Approval Date**