



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**

ROY COOPER • Governor

MANDY COHEN, MD, MPH • Secretary

SUSAN OSBORNE • Assistant Secretary for County Operations for
Human Services

April 16, 2020

**DEAR EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS OF PRIVATE LICENSED CHILD PLACING AGENCIES
providing Adoption Services**

ATTENTION: Directors, Program Managers and Child Welfare Professionals

SUBJECT: ADMINISTRATIVE RULE FOR LICENSING WAIVERS

REQUIRED ACTION: Information Only Time Sensitive Immediate

NC DHHS recognizes that private agencies providing adoption services have been greatly affected by the COVID-19 virus public health crisis. In an attempt to provide guidance and relief wherever possible, NC DHHS will approve the following waiver requests made by licensed private adoption agencies regarding Administrative Rules for licensing.

Post-placement visits as required in NCAC 70H .0407 (d) may be accomplished using virtual communication technology such as skype or facetime visits with documentation in adoptive family record of the date, persons present, type of virtual visit and content with an approved waiver.

Face-to-face in-home visits with all members of a family are a critical part of the initial assessment of a family to adopt a child; therefore, agencies should postpone pre-placement assessment required contacts until face-to-face visits can be made in person safely and within current state mandates for remaining at home. NCAC 70H .0405 (a) requirements for the pre-placement assessment to be completed within 90 days of an approved application maybe be postponed with an approved waiver. Face-to-face interview requirements for pre-placement assessments cannot be waived; however, if your agency provides foster care and adoption services and you are completing a pre-placement assessment with one of the foster families that you supervise and who is well known to your staff, a recently conducted home visit and recent face-to-face contacts may be used to meet Administrative Rule requirements.

Pre-placement assessment **updates** as required in NCAC 70H .0405 (a) should be completed according to your agency's established policies and procedures. There are no specific Administrative Rule requirements for home visits or face-to-face contacts for pre-placement assessment updates.

A pre-populated waiver request containing the Administrative Rules noted above is attached to this letter and should be used to make the request for waiver of these Administrative Rules to the licensing authority. Please add your agency information to the top section of the form. Submit

NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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the waiver request via email to your assigned Program Consultant. The waiver will be approved, and the form returned to you.

We appreciate your patience as we work to provide consistent and comprehensive information.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact your assigned Program Consultant or Linda Waite at linda.waite@dhhs.nc.gov or 704-341-7300.

As always, thank you for your dedication to serving children and families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lisa Cauley".

Lisa Cauley, Deputy Director Child Welfare Services

Attachment: Pre-populated waiver request form

Cc: Susan G. Osborne, Assistant Secretary for County Operations
Carla McNeill, Section Chief for Licensing and Regulatory
Teresa Strom, Section Chief for County Operations
Linda Waite, Regulatory and Licensing Program Administrator

CWS-10- 20