



NC DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES**

ROY COOPER • Governor

KODY H. KINSLEY • Secretary

SUSAN OSBORNE • Deputy Secretary for Opportunity and Well-Being

November 09, 2023

DEAR COUNTY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES

ATTENTION: DIRECTORS, CHILD WELFARE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS, MANAGERS, SUPERVISORS,  
SOCIAL WORKERS, AND LICENSED CHILD PLACING AGENCIES

SUBJECT: Kinship Licensure Standards

REQUIRED ACTION:  Information Only  Time Sensitive  Immediate

North Carolina Division of Social Services (NC DSS) is committed to keeping county child welfare and child placing agencies informed of upcoming changes to North Carolina's foster home licensing practices. On September 28, 2023, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) revised the definition of foster family home. Effective November 27, 2023, the new definition of a foster family home is:

*“For the purpose of title IV-E eligibility, the home of an individual or family licensed or approved as meeting the standards established by the licensing or approval authority(ies), that provides 24-hour out-of-home care for children. The licensing authority must be a state authority in the state in which the foster family home is located, a tribal authority with respect to a foster family home on or near an Indian Reservation, or a tribal authority of a tribal title IV-E agency with respect to a foster family home in the tribal title IV-E agency's service area. **Agencies may establish one set of foster family home licensing or approval standards for all relative or kinship foster family homes that are different from the set of standards used to license or approve all non-relative foster family homes.** Anything less than full licensure or approval is insufficient for meeting title IV-E eligibility requirements. Title IV-E agencies may, however, claim title IV-E reimbursement during the period of time between the date a prospective foster family home satisfies all requirements for licensure or approval and the date the actual license is issued, not to exceed 60 days.”*

This definition is a significant and needed step in supporting our kinship families. NC DSS is excited to report that North Carolina is working diligently to create foster home licensing standards for our kinship families. NC DSS believes that by adopting different licensing standards for relative or kinship foster family homes, many of the barriers our kinship families face in the licensing process will be addressed.

Our office will provide ongoing communication regarding the new kinship licensing standards. If you have questions or need more information, please do not hesitate to reach out to Jenny Millsaps, Foster Home Licensing Manager, at [jenny.millsaps@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:jenny.millsaps@dhhs.nc.gov).

Sincerely,

*Kimaree Sanders*

Kimaree Sanders, MSW, MPA  
Section Chief for Regulatory and Licensing  
Division of Social Services, Child Welfare  
North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES • CHILD WELFARE SERVICES  
REGULATORY and LICENSING SERVICES

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AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

cc: Lisa T. Cauley, Senior Director of Human Services  
Katherine Swanson, Deputy Director for Child Welfare Operations  
Adrian Daye, Deputy Director for Child Welfare Practice  
Kathy Stone, Section Chief for Safety and Prevention  
Carla McNeill, Section Chief for Permanency  
Peter West, Section Chief for County Operations

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