

National Model Foster Family Home Licensing Standards: Washington State Alignment Plan

Subject Standards	Model Foster Family Home Licensing Standards	Comparable State Standard (Washington Administrative Code)	Are standards consistent with MLS?	Plan to Address Alignment—WAC, Policy, Procedure	Reason for Deviation
Foster Family Home Eligibility – Threshold Requirements	<p>A. Foster Family Home Eligibility: A foster family home license includes the following:</p> <p>a. Threshold Requirements</p> <p>i. Applicants must be age 18 or older.</p> <p>ii. Applicants must have income or resources to make timely payments for shelter, food, utility costs, clothing, and other household expenses prior to the addition of a child or children in foster care.</p> <p>iii. Applicants must be able to communicate with the child, the title IV-E agency, health care providers, and other service providers.</p> <p>iv. At least one applicant in the home must have functional literacy, such as having the ability to read medication labels.</p>	110-148-1365	Partial.	<p>iii. & iv. WAC Change:</p> <p>Qualifications— WAC 110-148-1365 <i>What are the personal requirements for foster parents?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add 2 (c) At least one applicant in the home must have functional literacy. Add 2 (d) Applicant must be able to communicate with the child, the title IV-E agency, health care providers, and other service providers. 	Specific language and criteria regarding communication and literacy requirements are needed to WAC.
Foster Family Home Eligibility – Physical and Mental Health	<p>b. Physical and Mental Health: All applicants must have recent (conducted within the prior 12 months) physical exams from a licensed health care professional that indicate that the applicants are capable of caring for an additional child or children.</p> <p>i. All household members must disclose current mental health and/or substance abuse issues.</p>	110-148-1320, 110-148-1365, 110-148-1370	Partial.	<p>b. Policy Change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update Policy 5110: Completing the Home Study to include for initial licensing, applicants must have a physical exam completed by a licensed health care professional within the prior 12 months from receipt of the application. The Medical Form will be completed and include information on if the applicant is capable of caring for an additional child or children. 	<p>Policy does not include specific language or note a timeframe for the physical exam.</p> <p>Policy and WAC change needed to be in compliance with immunization requirements. Present practice allows for Philosophical and religious exemptions and does not require caregiver/household members of children with special medical needs above the age of two to obtain flu vaccine.</p>

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	<p>ii. All household members must provide information on their physical and mental health history, including any history of drug or alcohol abuse or treatment.</p> <p>iii. The title IV-E agency may require further documentation and/or evaluation to determine the suitability of the home.</p> <p>iv. All children who are household members must be up to date on immunizations consistent with the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (ACIP), and the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), unless the immunization is contrary to the child's health as documented by a licensed health care professional.</p> <p>v. All household members who will be caregivers of infants must have an up-to-date pertussis (whooping cough) vaccine consistent with the recommendations of the ACIP, unless the immunization is contrary to the individual's health as documented by a licensed health care professional. All household members who will be caregivers of infants and children with special medical needs must have</p>			<p>b. Form Change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update to Applicant Medical Form 13-001 <p>iv. WAC Change: Licensing Process—WAC 110-148-1320 <i>When will the department grant me a foster family license?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (5) Change the phrase “living on the premises” to “living in the household.” (5) Include language that exceptions will only be granted for medical reasons as advised by a Licensed Health Care Provider. <p>iv. Practice Change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only exception allowed for immunization requirement will be if the immunization is contrary to the child's health as documented by a licensed health care professional. <p>iv. Form Change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update DCYF 15-455 Certificate of Exemption to remove option for Personal and/or Philosophical Reasons. <p>v. WAC Change: Licensing Process—WAC 110-148-1320 <i>When will the department grant me a foster family license?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (6) Add language to include flu requirement when caring for children who are “medically fragile.” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Definition in Practice and Procedures 45171. <u>Medically Fragile Children.</u> 	

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	<p>an up-to-date annual influenza vaccine consistent with the recommendations of the ACIP, unless the immunization is contrary to the individual's health as documented by a licensed health care professional.</p>				
Foster Family Home Eligibility – Background Checks	<p>c. Background Checks i. Applicants must submit to criminal record and child abuse and neglect registry checks as required in section 471(a)(20) of the Social Security Act (the Act).</p>	110-148-1320	Yes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No change for Licensing Division at this time. 	Current Compliance.
Foster Family Home Eligibility – Home Study	<p>d. Home Study: Applicants must have completed an agency home study, which is a written comprehensive family assessment to include the following elements: i. At least one scheduled on-site visit to assess the home to ensure that it meets the state, tribal and/or local standards applicable to the safety and care of the home; ii. At least one scheduled in home interview for each household member to observe family functioning and assess the family's capacity to meet the needs of a child or children in foster care; iii. The title IV-E agency has discretion on whether to interview or observe each household member</p>	110-148-1370, DCYF Policy 5110 Completing the Home Study	Partial.	<p>ii. Policy Change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update Policy 5110: Completing the Home Study specify that each household member is to be interviewed in the family's home. <p>iv. Policy Change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will update Policy 5110: Completing the Home Study to note that at least one applicant reference must be from a relative. <p>iv. Form Change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family Home Study Application 10-354 will be updated to require one related reference. 	Current practice is mostly consistent. However, policy will be updated in order to implement the requirement for in home interviews with all household members and a mandatory relative reference.

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	<p>based on his or her age and development; and</p> <p>iv. Multiple applicant references that attest to the capability of the applicant to care for the child, including at least one from a relative and one from a non-relative.</p>				
Foster Family Home Health and Safety – Living Space	<p>B. Foster Family Home Health and Safety</p> <p>a. Living Space: The home must be a house, mobile home, housing unit or apartment occupied by an individual or a family. The home must have:</p> <p>i. An adequate supply of safe drinking water;</p> <p>ii. A properly operating kitchen with a sink, refrigerator, stove, and oven;</p> <p>iii. At least one toilet, sink and tub or shower in operating condition;</p> <p>iv. Heating and/or cooling as required by the geographic area, consistent with accepted community standards and in safe operating condition; and</p> <p>v. A working phone or access to a working phone in close walking proximity.</p>	110-148-1440, 110-148-1445	Partial.	<p>ii. WAC Change: Health and Safety— WAC 110-148-1440 <i>What are the requirements for my home and property?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add (d) to include a properly operating kitchen with a sink, refrigerator, stove, and oven. <p>ii. Form Change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foster Home Inspection Checklist 10-183 	Current practice is mostly consistent. However, WAC will be updated in order to implement additional details requiring an operating kitchen.
Foster Family Home Health and Safety – Condition of the Home	<p>b. Condition of the Home: The applicant’s home, grounds, and all structures on the grounds of the property must be properly maintained in a clean, safe, and sanitary</p>	110-148-1440, 110-148-1445, 110-148-1455, 110-148-1480, 110-148-1500,	Partial	<p>i. WAC Change: Health and Safety— WAC 110-148-1445 <i>What are the requirements water, garbage, and sewer in my home?</i></p>	<p>WAC will need to be updated as recycling service has not been a previous requirement.</p> <p>WAC changes will be need regarding Swimming Pools and the requirements for a</p>

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	<p>condition and in a reasonable state of repair within community standards. The interior and exterior must be free from dangerous objects and conditions, and from hazardous materials. The home must meet the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Have adequate lighting, ventilation and proper trash and recycling disposal, if recycling is available; ii. Be free from rodents and insect infestation. iii. Proper water heater temperature; iv. Weapons and ammunition (separately) stored, locked, unloaded, and inaccessible to children; v. Pets are vaccinated in accordance with state, tribal and/or local law; vi. Have conditions that prevent the child's access, as appropriate for his or her age and development, to all medications, poisonous materials, cleaning supplies, other hazardous materials, and alcoholic beverages; vii. Swimming pools, hot tubs, and spas must meet the following to ensure they are safe and hazard free (and additionally must meet all state, tribal and/or local safety requirements): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Swimming pools must have a barrier on all sides. 2. Swimming pools must have their methods of access through the barrier 	110-148-1560		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (1) Add language to include recycling disposal service when available to the applicant. <p>vii. (3) WAC Change: Health and Safety— WAC 110-148-1455 WAC <i>How must I keep children safe around bodies of water?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (1) Add subsection (d) to include that swimming pools must be equipped with a life saving device, such as a ring buoy. <p>vii. (4) WAC Change: Health and Safety— WAC 110-148-1455 <i>How must I keep children safe around bodies of water?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (1) Add subsection (e) to include if swimming pools cannot be emptied after each use, the pool must have a working pump and filtering system. <p>vii. Form Change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster Home Inspection Checklist 10-183 	<p>floatation device and filtration system. These have not been required previously.</p>

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	<p>equipped with a safety device, such as a bolt lock.</p> <p>3. <u>Swimming pools must be equipped with a life saving device, such as a ring buoy.</u></p> <p>4. <u>If the swimming pool cannot be emptied after each use, the pool must have a working pump and filtering system.</u></p> <p>5. Hot tubs and spas must have safety covers that are locked when not in use.</p>				
Foster Family Home Capacity	<p>C. Foster Family Home Capacity: <u>The total number of children in foster care in a foster family home must not exceed six</u> consistent with section 472(c)(1)(A)(ii)(III) of the Act. Per section 472(c)(1)(B) of the Act, <u>the number of foster children cared for in a foster family home may exceed this numerical limitation at the option of the title IV-E agency for any of the following reasons:</u></p> <p><u>a. To allow a parenting youth in foster care to remain with the child of the parenting youth;</u></p> <p><u>b. To allow siblings to remain together;</u></p> <p><u>c. To allow a child with an established meaningful relationship with the family to remain with the family; and</u></p>	110-148-1385, 110-148-1390	No	<p>C. WAC Change: Qualifications— WAC 110-148-1390 <i>Can I accept children outside the limitations of my license?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add to this section, between the two existing rules to include the following language: - If your home is licensed for six foster children, LD will not allow an overcapacity unless the following criteria is met: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. To allow a parenting youth in foster care to remain with the child of the parenting youth; B. To allow siblings to remain together; C. To allow a child with an established meaningful relationship with the family to remain with the family; and D. To allow a family with special training or skills to provide care to a child who has a severe disability. 	WAC and practice change will be needed to define when licensing would allow an overcapacity for homes licensed for six foster children.

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	<p>d. To allow a family with special training or skills to provide care to a child who has a severe disability.</p>				
Foster Family Home Sleeping Arrangements	<p>D. Foster Family Home Sleeping Arrangements: Applicants must provide a safe sleeping space including sleeping supplies, such as a mattress and linens, for each individual child, as appropriate for the child’s needs and age and similar to other household members. Foster parents must not co-sleep or bed-share with infants.</p>	110-148-1470	Partial	<p>D. WAC Change: Health and Safety— WAC 110-148-1470 <i>What are the general requirements for bedrooms?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between (9) and (10) a new item will be added to note: - Foster parents must not co-sleep or bed share on any sleeping surface (such as a bed, sofa or chair). 	WAC will be updated to specifically detail that co-sleeping is not allowed. Although practice has been consistent with this through safe sleep training for foster parents licensed for children ages 0-2.
Emergency Preparedness, Fire Safety, and Evacuation Plans	<p>E. Emergency Preparedness, Fire Safety, and Evacuation Plans: The applicant must have emergency preparedness plans and items in place as appropriate for the home’s geographic location. The applicant’s home must meet the following fire safety and emergency planning requirements:</p> <p>a. Have at least one smoke detector on each level of occupancy of the home and at least one near all sleeping areas;</p> <p>b. Have at least one carbon monoxide detector on each level of occupancy of the home and at least one near all sleeping areas.</p>	110-148-1460, 110-148-1465	Partial.	<p>b. WAC Change: Health and Safety— WAC 110-148-1465 <i>What other emergency fire and safety requirements must I follow to become licensed?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In between (6) and (7) include the following language: - You must have at least one carbon monoxide detector on each level of occupancy of the home and at least one near all sleeping areas. <p>b. Form Change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update DCYF 10-183 Foster Home Inspection Checklist to include CO2 requirement. <p>e. WAC Change:</p>	WAC and practice change will be needed as CO2 monitors in licensed foster homes are currently not required [unless in group care facilities] as well as posting and reviewing the emergency evacuation plan with the child placed.

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	<p>c. Have at least one operable fire extinguisher that is readily accessible;</p> <p>d. Be free of obvious fire hazards, such as defective heating equipment or improperly stored flammable materials;</p> <p>e. Have a written emergency evacuation plan to be reviewed with the child and posted in a prominent place in the home;</p> <p>f. Maintain a comprehensive list of emergency telephone numbers, including poison control, and post those numbers in a prominent place in the home; and</p> <p>g. Maintain first aid supplies.</p>			<p>Health and Safety— WAC 110-148-1460 <i>What other emergency fire and safety requirements must I follow to become licensed?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add subsection (e) to include the following language: - Have a written emergency evacuation plan to be reviewed with the child and posted in a prominent place in the home. <p>e. Form Change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update DCYF 10-183 Foster Home Inspection Checklist to include posted emergency evacuation plan. 	
Transportation	<p>F. Transportation: Applicants must ensure that the family has reliable, legal and safe transportation. Reliable transportation includes a properly maintained vehicle or access to reliable public transportation; if a privately-owned vehicle owned by the applicant’s family or friends is used to transport the child in foster care, legal transportation includes having a valid driving license, insurance and registration; and safe transportation includes safety restraints as appropriate for the child.</p>	110-148-1510	Partial	<p>F. WAC Change: Health and Safety— WAC 110-148-1510 <i>What requirements do I need to follow when I transport children?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 (c) add the additional requirement that the driver or owner of the vehicle must be covered under an automobile liability insurance policy and <u>show proof of registration</u>. <p>F. Form Change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update DCYF 10-183 Foster Home Inspection Checklist to include verification of vehicle registration. 	WAC update will be required as vehicle registration has not been required previously.
Training	<p>G. Training: Applicants must complete pre-licensing training on the</p>	110-148-1375	Partial.	<p>G. Practice Change:</p>	LD currently requires Orientation, Pre-Service, and CPR/First Aid/Blood borne

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	<p>following topics: rights, roles, responsibilities and expectations of foster parents; agency structure, purpose, policies, and services; laws and regulations; the impact of childhood trauma; managing child behaviors; first aid (including cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)xi for the ages of the children in placement) and medication administration; and the importance of maintaining meaningful connections between the child and parents, including regular visitation. Foster parents must participate in ongoing training to receive instruction to support their parental roles and ensure the parent is up to date with agency requirements. Further, this training may also include child-specific training and/or may address issues relevant to the general population of children in foster care.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on medication administration will be added to Foster Parent Orientation. This will cover information related to medication administration as outlined in WAC’s 110-148-1560 thru 110-148-1595. 	<p>Pathogens training prior to licensing. Medication administration is detailed in the WAC Book; however, specific training is not provided prior to licensing. Information on medication administration will now be included during the mandatory orientation training for both online and in-person applicants.</p>
Foster Parent Assurances	<p>H. Foster Parent Assurances: Applicants must agree to comply with their roles and responsibilities as discussed with the title IV-E agency once a child is placed in their care. The title IV-E agency must require assurances including:</p> <p>a. Applicants will not use corporal or degrading punishment.</p>	110-148-1365, 110-148-1495, 110-148-1615	Partial.	<p>c. WAC Change: Health and Safety— WAC 110-148-1495 <i>What are the requirements for smoking around children?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section (1) will be updated to reflect the following language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You may not smoke in motor vehicles used to transport children. 	<p>LD has not allowed caregivers to smoke in the vehicle with children present. However, WAC will be changed to reflect that caregivers cannot smoke in the vehicle used to transport a child whether they are present or not.</p> <p>Regarding the specification of not smoking <u>in the presence of the child in foster care</u>, LD has some concerns regarding the</p>

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	<p>b. Applicants will not use any illegal substances, abuse alcohol by consuming it in excess amounts, or abuse legal prescription and/or nonprescription drugs by consuming them in excess amounts or using them contrary to as indicated.</p> <p>c. Applicants and their guests will not smoke in the foster family home, in any vehicle used to transport the child, or in the presence of the child in foster care.</p> <p>d. Applicants will adhere to the title IV-E agency's reasonable and prudent parent standard per section 472(c)(1)(A)(ii)(I) of the Act.</p>				<p>cultural needs of Native Alaskan/Native American children. The model standard would prohibit children from participating during traditional or spiritual Native Alaskan/Native American or religious ceremonies that involve the use of tobacco. The Licensing Division would like to continue to allow for this exception.</p>