

200.3 Personal Qualifications/Home Study

1. In a two-parent home, the husband and wife shall be joint applicants, shall each participate in the approval process, and shall provide verification that they have been married at least two (2) years.
2. A minor may not be adopted or placed in a foster home if the individual seeking to adopt or to serve as a foster parent is cohabiting with a sexual partner outside of marriage which is valid under the constitution and laws of this state.

The prohibition of this section applies equally to cohabiting opposite-sex and same-sex individuals.

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300.2 Approval Process of Prospective Homes

1. In a two-parent home, the husband and wife shall be joint, applicants, shall each actively participate in the approval process, and shall provide verification that they have been married at least two (2) years to the social worker or agency conducting the home study that they have been married at least two (2) years.
2. A minor may not be adopted or placed in a foster home if the individual seeking to adopt or to serve as a foster parent is cohabiting with a sexual partner outside of marriage which is valid under the constitution and laws of this state.

The prohibition of this section applies equally to cohabiting opposite-sex and same-sex individuals.

3. The agency shall ensure there is a completed home study for each prospective adoptive family to determine if they should be approved as an adoptive home.

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The prohibition of this section applies equally to cohabiting opposite-sex and same-sex individuals.

3. The agency shall ensure there is a completed home study for each prospective adoptive family to determine if they should be approved as an adoptive home.

APPROVAL, TRAINING, AND SUPPORT OF FAMILY FOSTER HOMES AND RELATIVE FOSTER FAMILY HOMES

Family Foster Home and Relative Foster Home Approval Process

The process of preparing and evaluating prospective family foster parents is termed a family foster home assessment. An assessment will be conducted prior to the placement of a child in one's home.

(Text not affected has been removed for this excerpt)

There can be no roomers or boarders in the home. Family members are not considered roomers or boarders. Households will be assessed based on the caretaker(s) ability to parent a child in foster care. Other children and adults who are part of the household will be evaluated on the basis of how they will affect the successful development of a child in foster care. Households that contain an adult who is cohabiting with a sexual partner outside of a marriage which is valid under the constitution and laws of this state, may not participate in foster care. This prohibition applies equally to cohabiting opposite-sex and same-sex individuals. Additionally, there may not be any other adults in the home cohabiting with a sexual partner outside of a marriage which is valid under the constitution and laws of this state. Individual placement decisions will be made on a case by case basis in the best interests of the child.

Families that move to Arkansas from another state where they have been approved as a foster family must complete the entire approval procedure of the Arkansas DCFS.

Other standards include:

- **Age** - The minimum age is 21 years. Alternative compliance must be obtained if one or both applicants are age 65 or over or when one or both spouses of a currently opened family foster home reaches age 65;
- **Health** - All household family members must pass a medical exam (within six [6] months prior to the approval) and have a doctor's recommendation at the time the home is initially approved. Each foster parent and every family member must repeat the exam yearly to remain in compliance. All members of the household older than twelve (12) years shall receive a Mantoux skin test for tuberculosis and thereafter must repeat the test yearly to meet the standards for re-certification. Household members with a positive skin test must provide documentation every year certifying that they are free from communicable tuberculosis;
- **Physical Disabilities** - Physical disabilities of any of the family members will be evaluated to determine the effect, if any, the disability has on the family's ability to provide adequate care for a child and how the disability may affect a child's adjustment to the family;

Marriage and Divorce – Proof of marriage and evidence of stable marriage of at least two (2) years duration and stable family situation must be provided. Not only will an unstable marriage or family situation have a negative effect on children in foster care that have been placed in the home, but the special problems of some children in foster care could contribute to the break-up of an already unstable marriage or the permanent disruption of an already unstable family situation. If foster parents divorce, the Resource Worker will complete a re-evaluation of the home to determine if the family still meets all other licensing standards to ensure the health and safety of the children placed in the home.

APPROVAL, TRAINING, AND SUPPORT OF FAMILY FOSTER HOMES AND RELATIVE FOSTER FAMILY HOMES

Family Foster Home and Relative Foster Home Approval Process

The process of preparing and evaluating prospective family foster parents is termed a family foster home assessment. An assessment will be conducted prior to the placement of a child in one's home.

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Families that move to Arkansas from another state where they have been approved as a foster family must complete the entire approval procedure of the Arkansas DGFS.

Other standards include:

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- **Health** - All household family members must pass a medical exam (within six [6] months prior to the approval) and have a doctor's recommendation at the time the home is initially approved. Each foster parent and every family member must repeat the exam yearly to remain in compliance. All members of the household older than twelve (12) years shall receive a Mantoux skin test for tuberculosis and thereafter must repeat the test yearly to meet the standards for re-certification. Household members with a positive skin test must provide documentation every year certifying that they are free from communicable tuberculosis;
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Publication 22 Standards for Approval of Family Foster Homes (Excerpt)

6.0 FAMILY FOSTER HOME STANDARDS

Standards for family foster homes are established to assure good care and growth-producing living experiences in a safe home environment for every child in foster care under supervision of the child placing agency. These written standards are used to determine the suitability of applicants to be family foster parents.

Standards are categorized as Character, Suitability and Qualifications for the Family Members and Physical Standards for the home. Standards are to be met by the family for the duration of their service as a family foster home.

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5. **Family Composition:** The family should contain two parents, a mother and a father. Both parents are needed in order to provide maximum opportunities for personality development of children in foster care. Exceptions will be considered for single parent households on the basis of the applicant's special qualifications to fulfill the needs of a particular child in foster care. Use of a single parent household is acceptable for those children whose need for a two-parent household is not a crucial aspect of the care required. Single applicants with professional training, such as nurses, may be desirable for special needs children. Other children and adults (grandparents, aunts, etc.) who are a part of the household shall be assessed on the basis of how they might be affected by the presence of a child in foster care and also the effect they themselves might have on the child in care. Homes will not be approved if there are transient roomers or boarders. The family may not consist of two persons who are cohabiting as sexual partners outside of a marriage which is valid under the constitution and the laws of this state. This prohibition applies equally to cohabiting opposite and same-sex individuals. Additionally, there may not be any other adults in the home cohabiting with a sexual partner outside of a marriage which is valid under the constitution and laws of this state.
6. **Marriage Verification and Stability:** Marriages and divorces shall be verified. The pattern of marital stability shall be considered. Prospective foster parents must provide a copy of their marriage license to verify marriage for at least two years. Family foster parents must have a stable marriage. Not only will the unstable marriage have a negative effect on children in foster care placed in the home, but the special problems of some children in foster care could contribute to the break-up of an already unstable marriage. Requests for alternative compliance on the marriage requirement can only be made for relative placements; all other families must provide verification of two years of marriage.

In situations where existing foster families become divorced, a re-evaluation shall be conducted on the family to determine if the family still meets all other licensing standards to ensure the health and safety of the children placed in the home.

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~~Requests for alternative compliance on the divorce requirement may be made if the prospective family has been divorced for less than a year and meet all other licensing requirements.~~

~~In situations where existing foster families become divorced, a re-evaluation shall be conducted on the family to determine if the family still meets all other licensing standards to ensure the health and safety of the children placed in the home. If the family continues to comply with all standards, an alternative compliance is not needed, however, if there is an area of non-compliance, staff will determine a corrective action plan with deadlines. If a corrective action plan is not feasible the case will be referred for alternative compliance.~~

**POLICY VI-A
OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT CRITERIA (EXCERPT)**

06/2009

The state of Arkansas is not a voluntary placement state. The removal of a child from his home must occur pursuant to a judicial order placing custody of the child with the Department. When a child is in the custody of the Department of Human Services, DCFS shall ensure that the out-of-home placement is in the best interest of the child, is the least restrictive possible, is matched to the child's physical and therapeutic needs, **and is close in proximity to the child's parents and the child's school.** A child of a parent who is in DHS custody, is also considered a dependent juvenile and is eligible to receive foster care maintenance payments and is deemed to be a recipient of aid to families with dependent children. Titles XIX and XX services will be available to the child in the state in which the child resides.

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Placement shall be chosen:

- To ensure the health and safety of a child;
- To ensure that caretakers have the skills and training sufficient to deal with the child's special needs and any disabling condition; and
- To keep the child in close proximity to the family, if possible, to maintain enrollment in the school the child attended before placement.

A minor may not be adopted or placed in a foster home if the individual seeking to adopt or to serve as a foster parent is cohabiting with a sexual partner outside of marriage which is valid under the constitution and laws of this state; additionally, there may not be any other adults in the home cohabiting with a sexual partner outside of a marriage which is valid under the constitution and laws of this state.

The prohibition applies equally to cohabiting opposite-sex and same-sex individuals.

DCFS shall not place or permit a child in foster care to remain in any home where there are roomers or boarders. Family members are not considered roomers or boarders. An assessment must be conducted on each family member's impact on the child and the child's impact on each family member.

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PROCEDURE VI-A1
Out-of-Home Placement Criteria (EXCERPT)
06/2009

The Family Service Worker will:

- Consider placement with appropriate relatives in a licensed or approved foster home.
- Conduct a review of the home that will include:

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The child is in the custody of the department, therefore, the child shall remain in an approved foster home or licensed shelter or facility, until the relative's home is opened as a provisional home.

The FSW will:

1. Ensure that the applicant seeking to adopt or serve as a foster parent is not cohabiting with a sexual partner outside of marriage, which is valid under the laws of this state.

2. Ensure that there are no other adults in the home cohabiting with a sexual partner outside of a marriage which is valid under the constitution and laws of this state.

This applies equally to cohabiting opposite-sex and same-sex individuals.

3. Evaluate how the other children and adults in the home will affect the successful development of a child in foster care, and how the child in foster care will impact the other members of the home; and

3. Make individual placement decisions on a case by case basis in the best interest of the child.

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2. Ensure that there are no other adults in the home cohabiting with a sexual partner outside of a marriage which is valid under the constitution and laws of this state.

This applies equally to cohabiting opposite-sex and same-sex individuals.

3. Evaluate how the other children and adults in the home will affect the successful development of a child in foster care, and how the child in foster care will impact the other members of the home; and

3. Make individual placement decisions on a case by case basis in the best interest of the child.

POLICY VII-A: FOSTER PARENT RECRUITMENT, TRAINING, APPROVAL, RE-EVALUATION AND RETENTION (EXCERPT)

06/2009

Foster care is a team effort involving DCFS, the family foster parents, the foster child, and the custodial/non-custodial parents. When all those directly involved in the situation understand their own and each others' roles and cooperate as team members in a team effort, the quality of the experience for all is increased, and the effect on the child's future well-being is greatly influenced. See "Family Foster Parent Handbook" (PUB-30) for responsibilities of the Foster Care Team.)

(Text not affected has been removed for this excerpt)

The Division shall recruit a sufficient number of foster parents to ensure that all children are placed in the least restrictive, most family like setting that meets the child's individual needs. The Division shall diligently recruit potential foster families that reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in DHS custody for whom a foster home is needed. Recruitment of new foster families is an on-going activity for which Area and County staff are mainly responsible. Recruitment can be achieved by several means including participation from current foster parents, development of local and statewide media campaigns and through the use of contact with community organizations. The Division will employ the use of the Family Foster Home Needs Assessment to assist with specific county recruitment efforts. The Family Foster Home Needs Assessment will also be utilized in the development of the Foster Home Recruitment Plan. Targeted recruitment of specialized foster parents shall address the special needs of children needing placement.

Foster Parent Applicant Standards of Approval **Single Applicant**

- A single person may apply to become a foster parent.

Married Applicants

- In a two-parent home, the husband and wife shall be joint applicants, and each shall actively participate in the approval process.

Cohabiting Couples

- A minor may not be adopted or placed in a foster home if the individual seeking to adopt or to serve as a foster parent is cohabiting with a sexual partner outside of marriage which is valid under the constitution and laws of this state; additionally, there may not be any other adults in the home cohabiting with a sexual partner outside of a marriage which is valid under the constitution and laws of this state.

The prohibition applies equally to cohabiting opposite-sex and same-sex individuals.

Divorced Applicants

- An applicant who is divorced may apply to become a foster parent.

The Division shall place children in approved foster homes where the foster parents have satisfactorily completed the Division's pre-service training curriculum, have been cleared through the Central Registry and through a state criminal records background check.

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The prohibition applies equally to cohabiting opposite-sex and same-sex individuals.

Divorced Applicants

- An applicant who is divorced must have been divorced for at least one year from the date on the court order. may apply to become a foster parent.

The Division shall place children in approved foster homes where the foster parents have satisfactorily completed the Division's pre-service training curriculum, have been cleared through the Central Registry and through a state criminal records background check.

PROCEDURE VII A-1: Foster Parent Recruitment (EXCERPT)

6/2009

The purpose of foster parent recruitment is to increase the number of qualified, trained family foster parents in Arkansas through the recruitment process. Each Area will develop Recruiters to assist in the recruitment process. Each Area will develop an annual recruitment plan to be initiated at the beginning of each fiscal year. The Family Foster Home Needs Assessment (CFS-445) will be utilized in the development of the recruitment plan. The CFS-445 will be conducted at least annually. The plan will outline ongoing recruitment efforts for the Area.

(Text not affected has been removed for this excerpt)

- **Married Applicants Procedure:**
Check the date of the marriage license. Ensure that at least two years have passed from the date of the marriage on the marriage license. If the couple is applying to become a Relative Foster Home and the marriage is less than two years old, prepare a request for an alternative compliance. Submit the alternative compliance request for approval through the necessary chain of command. If the marriage is less than two (2) years old and the couple is not applying to become a Relative Foster Home, deny the application.
- **Divorced Applicants Procedure:**
In situations where existing foster families become divorced, a re-evaluation shall be conducted on the family to determine if the family still meets all other licensing standards to ensure the health and safety of the children placed in the home.
- **Cohabitation:**
A minor may not be placed in a foster home if the individual seeking to serve as foster parent is cohabiting with a sexual partner outside of a marriage, which is valid under the constitution and laws of this state. This prohibition applies equally to cohabiting opposite-sex and same-sex individuals. Additionally, there may not be any other adults in the home cohabiting with a sexual partner outside of a marriage which is valid under the constitution and laws of this state.

PROCEDURE VII A-1: Foster Parent Recruitment (EXCERPT)

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Check the date of the marriage license. Ensure that at least two years have passed from the date of the marriage on the marriage license. If the couple is applying to become a Relative Foster Home and the marriage is less than two years old, prepare a request for an alternative compliance. Submit the alternative compliance request for approval through the necessary chain of command. If the marriage is less than two (2) years old and the couple is not applying to become a Relative Foster Home, deny the application.
- **Divorced Applicants Procedure:**
Check the date of the divorce decree. Ensure that at least one year has passed from the date of the divorce decree. If the applicant has been divorced for less than one year and they meet all other licensing standards, the resource worker may request an alternative compliance and submit through the regular chain of command. In situations where existing foster families become divorced, a re-evaluation shall be conducted on the family to determine if the family still meets all other licensing standards to ensure the health and safety of the children placed in the home.
- **Cohabitation:**
A minor may not be placed in a foster home if the individual seeking to serve as foster parent is cohabiting with a sexual partner outside of a marriage, which is valid under the constitution and laws of this state. This prohibition applies equally to cohabiting opposite-sex and same-sex individuals. Additionally, there may not be any other adults in the home cohabiting with a sexual partner outside of a marriage which is valid under the constitution and laws of this state.

PROCEDURE VII-A3: Approval of Foster Home (EXCERPT)

6/2009

Prospective foster families must complete a home evaluation as part of the process to become an approved foster family. A family can be evaluated by designated Division staff or by staff contracted through the Mid South Training Academy.

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Single Applicant

A single person may apply to become a foster parent.

Married Applicants

In a two-parent home, the husband and wife shall be joint applicants, and each shall actively participate in the approval process. They shall provide verification of marriage of at least two years. The marriage shall be stable. Some examples of stability include the length of the relationship, where the couple lives, employment, and length of employment. Requests for alternative compliance on the two-year minimum marriage requirement may only be made for relative placements.

Divorced Applicants

A divorced person may apply to become a foster parent.

Cohabiting Applicants

Persons cohabiting with a sexual partner outside of a marriage, which is valid under the constitution and laws of this state, may not apply to become a foster parent. This prohibition applies equally to cohabiting opposite-sex and same-sex individuals. Additionally, there may not be any other adults in the home cohabiting with a sexual partner outside of a marriage which is valid under the constitution and laws of this state.

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Divorced Applicants

An applicant who is divorced must have been divorced for at least one year from the date on the court order. They must provide documentation of that divorce. A policy waiver may be requested if the prospective applicant has been divorced for less than one year and meet all other licensing standards. A divorced person may apply to become a foster parent.

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POLICY VIII-F: FOSTER PARENT, RELATIVE FOSTER PARENT, AND RELATIVE ADOPTION (EXCERPT)

06/2009

The Division supports adoption by a foster parent or relative foster parent, who has a well established relationship with the child in their care and who expresses an interest in adoption, without regard to any racial or ethnic differences if such a placement is in the best interest of the child. The Division also supports adoption by a relative, who is not presently caring for the child and who expresses an interest in adoption if such a placement is in the best interest of the child. Each family and child will be carefully assessed and prepared for adoption. The Division provides pre-placement services for relative adoptions to move children into adoptive families in a timely manner. A foster child placed in an adoptive home continues status as a foster child until finalization of the adoption and the adoption subsidy is initiated. Prior to the finalization of the adoption, post-placement services are provided and services to preserve adoptive families are offered after the adoption is finalized.

Before placement of a child in the home of the adoptive parent, a home study will be conducted. The home study shall address whether the adoptive home is a suitable home, and shall include a recommendation as to the approval of the petitioner as an adoptive parent.

A minor may not be adopted or placed in a foster home if the individual seeking to adopt or to serve as a foster parent is cohabiting with a sexual partner outside of marriage which is valid under the constitution and laws of this state; additionally, there may not be any other adults in the home cohabiting with a sexual partner outside of a marriage which is valid under the constitution and laws of this state.

The prohibition applies equally to cohabiting opposite-sex and same-sex individuals.

DCFS shall not place or permit a child in foster care to remain in any home where there are roomers or boarders. Family members are not considered roomers or boarders. An assessment must be conducted on each family member's impact on the child and the child's impact on each family member.

(Text not affected has been removed for this excerpt)

POLICY VIII-F: FOSTER PARENT, RELATIVE FOSTER PARENT, AND RELATIVE ADOPTION (EXCERPT)

06/2009

The Division supports adoption by a foster parent or relative foster parent, who has a well established relationship with the child in their care and who expresses an interest in adoption, without regard to any racial or ethnic differences if such a placement is in the best interest of the child. The Division also supports adoption by a relative, who is not presently caring for the child and who expresses an interest in adoption if such a placement is in the best interest of the child. Each family and child will be carefully assessed and prepared for adoption. The Division provides pre-placement services for relative adoptions to move children into adoptive families in a timely manner. A foster child placed in an adoptive home continues status as a foster child until finalization of the adoption and the adoption subsidy is initiated. Prior to the finalization of the adoption, post-placement services are provided and services to preserve adoptive families are offered after the adoption is finalized.

Before placement of a child in the home of the adoptive parent, a home study will be conducted. The home study shall address whether the adoptive home is a suitable home, and shall include a recommendation as to the approval of the petitioner as an adoptive parent.

A minor may not be adopted or placed in a foster home if the individual seeking to adopt or to serve as a foster parent is cohabiting with a sexual partner outside of marriage which is valid under the constitution and laws of this state; additionally, there may not be any other adults in the home cohabiting with a sexual partner outside of a marriage which is valid under the constitution and laws of this state.

The prohibition applies equally to cohabiting opposite-sex and same-sex individuals.

DCFS shall not place or permit a child in foster care to remain in any home where there are roomers or boarders. Family members are not considered roomers or boarders. An assessment must be conducted on each family member's impact on the child and the child's impact on each family member.

(Text not affected has been removed for this excerpt)

PROCEDURE VIII-F1: Staffing and Recommendations (EXCERPT)

06/2009

(Text not affected has been removed for this excerpt)

Residency to determine jurisdiction over an adoption may be established in accordance with one of the three following sets of criteria:

1. A child under the age of six (6) months is a resident of Arkansas if:
 - The biological mother resided in Arkansas for more than 4 months prior to the child's birth, and
 - The child was born in Arkansas or in any city which adjoins the state line or is separated only by a navigable river from an Arkansas city which adjoins the state line, and
 - The child remains in this state until the interlocutory decree has been entered. Or in the case of a nonresident adoptive family, upon receipt of Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (MCPC) approval, the child and the prospective adoptive parents may go back to their state of residence and subsequently may return to Arkansas for a hearing on the petition for adoption.
2. A child over the age of six (6) months is a resident of Arkansas if that child:
 - Has resided in this state for at least six (6) months, and
 - Currently resides in Arkansas, and
 - Is present in this state when the petition for adoption is filed and heard by a court of competent jurisdiction.
3. A person seeking to adopt is a resident of Arkansas if that person :
 - Occupies a dwelling within the state, and
 - Has a present intent to remain within the state for a period of time, and
 - Manifests the genuineness of that intent through an ongoing physical presence within the state together with indications that the person's presence is not merely transitory in nature.

Age:

Applicant is:

- At least twenty-one (21) years old.
- A primary caregiver that is at an age so that it can be anticipated that the caregiver can actively parent the child into adulthood. This assessment will be made by the Adoption Specialist when determining what is in the best interests of the child(ren) to be adopted.

Generally, at least a ten-year age difference and no more than a 45-year age difference between the child and adoptive applicant is preferred.

Marital Status:

Married Couples

- In a two-parent home, the husband and wife shall be joint applicants; each shall actively participate in the approval process, and shall provide verification that they have been married at least two years. The marriage shall be stable.

Cohabiting Couples

The FSW will:

1. Ensure that the applicant seeking to adopt or serve as a foster parent is not cohabiting with a sexual partner outside of marriage, which is valid under the laws of this state.
2. Ensure that there are no cohabiting adults in the home cohabiting with a sexual partner outside of a marriage which is valid under the constitution and laws of this state.

This applies equally to cohabiting opposite-sex and same-sex individuals.

Divorced

- A person, who is divorced, may apply to adopt.

Single

- A single person may apply to adopt.

PROCEDURE VIII-F1: Staffing and Recommendations (EXCERPT)

06/2009

(Text not affected has been removed for this excerpt)

Residency to determine jurisdiction over an adoption may be established in accordance with one of the three following sets of criteria:

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 - The child remains in this state until the interlocutory decree has been entered. Or in the case of a nonresident adoptive family, upon receipt of Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (MCPC) approval, the child and the prospective adoptive parents may go back to their state of residence and subsequently may return to Arkansas for a hearing on the petition for adoption.
2. A child over the age of six (6) months is a resident of Arkansas if that child:
 - Has resided in this state for at least six (6) months, and
 - Currently resides in Arkansas, and
 - Is present in this state when the petition for adoption is filed and heard by a court of competent jurisdiction.
3. A person seeking to adopt is a resident of Arkansas if that person :
 - Occupies a dwelling within the state, and
 - Has a present intent to remain within the state for a period of time, and
 - Manifests the genuineness of that intent through an ongoing physical presence within the state together with indications that the person's presence is not merely transitory in nature.

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Applicant is:

- At least twenty-one (21) years old.
- A primary caregiver that is at an age so that it can be anticipated that the caregiver can actively parent the child into adulthood. This assessment will be made by the Adoption Specialist when determining what is in the best interests of the child(ren) to be adopted.

Generally, at least a ten-year age difference and no more than a 45-year age difference between the child and adoptive applicant is preferred.

Marital Status:

Married Couples

- In a two-parent home, the husband and wife shall be joint applicants; each shall actively participate in the approval process, and shall provide verification that they have been married at least two years. The marriage shall be stable.

Cohabiting Couples

The FSW will:

1. Ensure that the applicant seeking to adopt or serve as a foster parent is not cohabiting with a sexual partner outside of marriage, which is valid under the laws of this state.
2. Ensure that there are no cohabiting adults in the home cohabiting with a sexual partner outside of a marriage which is valid under the constitution and laws of this state.

This applies equally to cohabiting opposite-sex and same-sex individuals.

Divorced

- A person, who is divorced ~~must provide verification of that divorce and must have been divorced for at least one year from the date on the court order~~ may apply to adopt.

Single

- A single person may apply to adopt.

00. Arkansas Department of Human Services

**Division of Children and Family Services
Adoption/Foster Home Study Application**

Applicants: Failure to supply complete and accurate information may result in a delay in processing the application.

For Central Office Use

Approved By: _____

Date: _____

Initials: _____

Instructions: Please provide the information requested on this application. Attach additional pages as necessary and reference the item to which you are responding.

Is this an application for Adoption Foster Care Both ? (Check one.)

Prospective Father's Name (Last, First, Middle) _____

Prospective Mother's Name (Last, First, Middle) _____

Street Address or P.O. Box _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Prospective Father's Work# _____ Cell# _____

Prospective Mother's Work# _____ Cell# _____

Directions to Home _____

Description of Home (Rent/own, type of home, # of rooms and use, yard, how long there, etc.) _____

Marital Status: (Married, Divorced, Widowed, Single) _____

(Prospective Father's status)

(Prospective Mother's status)

Applicant	Date of Birth (Month, day, year)	Place of Birth (City, State)	SSN	Race	Highest Grade Completed
Prospective Father					
Prospective Mother					

OTHERS IN HOME AND CHILDREN AWAY FROM HOME:

Last Name	First Name	Male/ Female	In Home? (Yes/No)	Date of Birth (Include year)	Place of Birth (City, State)	Relationship to Applicant(s)	Place of Employment or School & Grade

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS, CONTINUED

How do you and your family spend your leisure time? _____

How would you describe your housekeeping standards? _____

Does anyone help you with the housekeeping chores? Yes No (If yes, who and what do they do?) _____

How would you describe the upkeep or maintenance of your home? (yard, home repairs, etc.) _____

Is your home within easy driving distance of schools, churches, shopping, doctors, etc.? Yes No

Please list the kinds of pets you have and their names: _____

Is there anything unusual about your home and/or yard? (E.g., something that you think a child should know before coming to your home) Yes No

(If yes, please explain) _____

Do you have a swimming pool? Yes No (If yes, how do you or would you provide for the child's safety?) _____

Are you or any household member cohabiting with a sexual partner outside of a marriage? Yes No

(If yes, please explain) _____

Please describe the room where the adopted/foster child would sleep. _____

If the child would share a room, please describe the sleeping arrangements. _____

Do you, your children, and their friends enjoy your home? _____

Are you renting/leasing or buying your home?

If you rent /lease, has the landlord given permission for you to keep foster children? Yes No (If yes, attach written statement from the landlord.)

Do you often have trouble meeting your monthly bills? Yes No Where would you turn for help in a financial emergency? _____

Arkansas Department of Human Services
 Division of Children and Family Services
 Adoption/Foster Home Study Application

Applicants: Failure to supply complete and accurate information may result in a delay in processing the application.

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Prospective Mother's Name (Last, First, Middle) _____

Street Address or P.O. Box _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Prospective Father's Work# _____ Cell# _____

Prospective Mother's Work# _____ Cell# _____

Directions to Home _____

Description of Home (Rent/own, type of home, # of rooms and use, yard, how long there, etc.) _____

Marital Status: (Married, Divorced, Widowed, Single) _____

(Prospective Father's status)

(Prospective Mother's status)

Applicant	Date of Birth (Month, day, year)	Place of Birth (City, State)	SSN	Race	Highest Grade Completed
Prospective Father					
Prospective Mother					

OTHERS IN HOME AND CHILDREN AWAY FROM HOME:

Last Name	First Name	Male/ Female	In Home? (Yes/No)	Date of Birth (Include year)	Place of Birth (City, State)	Relationship to Applicant(s)	Place of Employment or School & Grade

Minimum Licensing Standards for Child Welfare Agencies do not allow a child to be placed in a home in which adults are cohabitating (two adults living together as a couple who are not married). Are you or any adult member in the household cohabitating? Yes No

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS, CONTINUED

How do you and your family spend your leisure time? _____

How would you describe your housekeeping standards? _____

Does anyone help you with the housekeeping chores? Yes No (If yes, who and what do they do?) _____

How would you describe the upkeep or maintenance of your home? (yard, home repairs, etc.) _____

Is your home within easy driving distance of schools, churches, shopping, doctors, etc.? Yes No

Please list the kinds of pets you have and their names: _____

Is there anything unusual about your home and/or yard? (E.g., something that you think a child should know before coming to your home) Yes No

(If yes, please explain) _____

Do you have a swimming pool? Yes No (If yes, how do you or would you provide for the child's safety?) _____

Are you or any household member cohabiting with a sexual partner outside of a marriage? Yes No

(If yes, please explain) _____

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Do you often have trouble meeting your monthly bills? Yes No Where would you turn for help in a financial emergency? _____

I. STANDARDS: Prospective foster and adoptive families must be informed of the following foster/adoptive home approval standards during the initial visit: Foster homes and adoptive homes must meet the same approval standards.

- 1) All applicants must attend pre-service training if selected into the program.
- 2) Age – Foster parent applicants must be age 21 to 65 years old See Policy VIII-F1 for current standards of age and parenting ability for prospective adoptive parents.
- 3) Health – Requirements: Physical examinations for each member of the household, including TB skin tests for all members of the household age 12 and older and copies of immunization records for children. The Division of Children and Family Services will not pay for the physicals nor reimburse families for the cost of the physicals.
- 4) Family composition - Two parent households, single parent households. A minor may not be adopted or placed in a foster home if the individual seeking to adopt or to serve as a foster parent is cohabiting with a sexual partner outside of marriage which is valid under the constitution and laws of this state. The prohibition applies equally to cohabiting opposite-sex and same-sex individuals. Additionally, there may not be any other adults in the home cohabiting with a sexual partner outside of a marriage which is valid under the constitution and laws of this state. There can be no roomers or boarders in the home. Family members are not considered roomers or boarders. Prospective foster or adoptive parents must provide copy of current marriage license and/or current divorce decree(s).
- 5) There will be no more than five (5) unrelated foster children in the foster home. The foster family home may care for more children if they are related to each other. The foster family home shall not have more than eight (8) children in their home, including their own children. Foster family homes shall not have more than two (2) children under the age of two (2) years, including the foster parents own children.
- 6) Religion - Foster and adoptive parents shall respect the religious preference of children in foster care.
- 7) Employment – Foster/Adoptive parent applicants may be employed outside of the home. In two-parent families, it is recommended that at least one parent remain home with the child after the initial placement to provide security and an initial adjustment period for the child. Arrangements for a caretaker must be made ahead of time. All childcare for children in foster care must be provided by a licensed childcare agency or approved as a DCFS visiting resource.
- 8) Background checks:
 - State criminal record checks must be completed on all members of the household age 14 and older. FBI fingerprint based checks must be completed on all members of the household age 16 and older.
 - Child Maltreatment Central Registry checks must be completed on all household members age 10 and older.
 - All licensed drivers in the household must have safe driving records, submit to a check of their Traffic Vehicle Report (TVR), and agree to report any accident or traffic violation within twenty-four (24) hours of occurrence or by the next working day after a weekend or holiday.
- 9) Family should have some knowledge of child growth and development. That knowledge should be applied to the following: daily activities, clothing and personal belongings, discipline and control, health care, education, religious and ethnic heritage.

I. STANDARDS: Prospective foster and adoptive families must be informed of the following foster/adoptive home approval standards during the initial visit: Foster homes and adoptive homes must meet the same approval standards.

- 1) All applicants must attend pre-service training if selected into the program.
- 2) Age – Foster parent applicants must be age 21 to 65 years old. ~~Adoptive parent applicants must be age 21 to 55 years old. To adopt children under the age of 3, applicants must be under the age of 40.~~ See Policy VIII-F1 for current standards of age and parenting ability for prospective adoptive parents.
- 3) Health – Requirements: Physical examinations for each member of the household, including TB skin tests for all members of the household age 12 and older and copies of immunization records for children. The Division of Children and Family Services will not pay for the physicals nor reimburse families for the cost of the physicals.
- 4) Family composition - Two parent households, single parent households. A minor may not be adopted or placed in a foster home if the individual seeking to adopt or to serve as a foster parent is cohabiting with a sexual partner outside of marriage which is valid under the constitution and laws of this state. The prohibition applies equally to cohabiting opposite-sex and same-sex individuals. Additionally, there may not be any other adults in the home cohabiting with a sexual partner outside of a marriage which is valid under the constitution and laws of this state. There can be no roomers or boarders in the home. Family members are not considered roomers or boarders. Prospective foster or adoptive parents must provide copy of current marriage license and/or current divorce decree(s).
- 5) There will be no more than five (5) unrelated foster children in the foster home. The foster family home may care for more children if they are related to each other. The foster family home shall not have more than eight (8) children in their home, including their own children. Foster family homes shall not have more than two (2) children under the age of two (2) years, including the foster parents own children.
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- 9) Family should have some knowledge of child growth and development. That knowledge should be applied to the following: daily activities, clothing and personal belongings, discipline and control, health care, education, religious and ethnic heritage.

This is an excerpt from CFS-475.

CFS-475(J) (R. 06/2009)
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- Yes No d. If applicable, other children and adults (grandparents, aunts, nieces, cousins, etc.) who are a part of the household have been taken into consideration in terms of how they might be affected by or have an affect upon another child?
- Yes No e. In your household, are you or any other adults cohabiting with a sexual partner outside of marriage which is valid under the constitution and laws of this state?

Marriage Stability:

- Yes No a. Record documents that marriage(s) and/or divorce(s) have been verified?
- Yes No b. Applicants have been married at least two years and demonstrate a stable marriage?
- Yes No c. Approved family foster parents have demonstrated a continued stable marriage?
- Yes No d. An approved single family foster parent who marries has had a request submitted to the Assistant Director of Community Services for review and forwarded to the Division Director. (The request will include training completed, Criminal Record and Central Registry checks on the new spouse, personal references, upcoming wedding date or marriage certificate.) Upon approval, the Division Director will forward the request to the Child Welfare Licensing Board for alternative compliance.

Children:

- Yes No a. There are no more than eight (8) children in the home, including the foster parent's own children. (There must be no more than eight children physically in the home. There may be no more than five unrelated children in care. Up to eight children from the same sibling group may be placed in the same home. If a sibling group of more than five (5) children are placed together, that foster home shall not have more than eight children including the foster parent's own children.) Yes No
- b. There are no more than two children under age two in the home. There are no more than three children under the age of six in the home. (This count includes children who normally reside in the home of the foster family and foster children)?
- Yes No c. Applicant(s) or approved family foster parent(s) has legal custody or guardianship of any children in his/her home that are not his/her birth/legal children or relatives?
- Yes No d. Family foster parent(s) is not keeping children for more than one child placing agency?
- Yes No e. Family foster parent(s) is not providing day care services on a regular basis in their home?

Religion:

- Yes No a. Family foster parent(s) respect religious preferences of the foster child and his/her birth/legal family?

This is an excerpt from CFS-475.

CFS-475(J) (R. 06/2009)

Page 2 of 7

Yes No d. If applicable, other children and adults (grandparents, aunts, nieces, cousins, etc.) who are a part of the household have been taken into consideration in terms of how they might be affected by or have an affect upon another child?

Yes No e. In your household, are you or any other adults cohabiting with a sexual partner outside of marriage which is valid under the constitution and laws of this state? ~~(two adults living together as a couple who are not married)?~~

Marriage Stability:

Yes No a. Record documents that marriage(s) and/or divorce(s) have been verified?

Yes No b. Applicants have been married at least two years and demonstrate a stable marriage?

Yes No c. Approved family foster parents have demonstrated a continued stable marriage?

Yes No d. ~~A family foster parent couple who is separating or divorcing, must have a written alternative compliance approved by the DCFS Director and/or the Child Welfare Licensing Board?~~

Yes No e. An approved single family foster parent who marries has had a request submitted to the Assistant Director of Community Services for review, and forwarded to the Division Director. (The request will include training completed, Criminal Record and Central Registry checks on the new spouse, personal references, upcoming wedding date or marriage certificate.) Upon approval, the Division Director will forward the request to the Child Welfare Licensing Board for alternative compliance.

Children:

Yes No a. There are no more than eight (8) children in the home, including the foster parent's own children. (There must be no more than eight children physically in the home. There may be no more than five unrelated children in care. Up to eight children from the same sibling group may be placed in the same home. If a sibling group of more than five (5) children are placed together, that foster home shall not have more than eight children including the foster parent's own children.) Yes No

b. There are no more than two children under age two in the home. There are no more than three children under the age of six in the home. (This count includes children who normally reside in the home of the foster family and foster children)?

Yes No c. Applicant(s) or approved family foster parent(s) has legal custody or guardianship of any children in his/her home that are not his/her birth/legal children or relatives?

Yes No d. Family foster parent(s) is not keeping children for more than one child placing agency?

Yes No e. Family foster parent(s) is not providing day care services on a regular basis in their home?

Religion:

Yes No a. Family foster parent(s) respect religious preferences of the foster child and his/her birth/legal family?



Department of Human Services
Division of Children and Family Services
- ICPC FOSTER CARE HOME STUDY CHECK LIST -

EACH FOSTER CARE HOME STUDY MUST CONTAIN THE FOLLOWING ITEMS

NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

- 1: All of the household members must be present at the same time during at least one of the home visits made to each prospective foster home.
- 2: In a two-parent home, the husband and wife shall be joint applicants and each will participate in the approval process.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Verification that the couple have been married at least two (2) years or divorced one (1) year.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Physical exams that were conducted within the prior 6 months (copies of exam or physician's statement required)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Evaluation and determination that the foster family is stable
<input type="checkbox"/>	Documentation that the prospective foster parents are both at least twenty-one (21) years old
<input type="checkbox"/>	Medical documentation that all members of the household over twelve (12) years old have received a Mantoux skin test for tuberculosis.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Medical documentation that all preschool age children in the household have all current health immunizations
<input type="checkbox"/>	Evidence that the foster parents are physically, mentally, and emotionally capable of caring for children
<input type="checkbox"/>	Documentation of sufficient financial resources to meet the child's needs.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Written plans for childcare if both parents are employed outside the home.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Acceptable methods of discipline were discussed
<input type="checkbox"/>	Copies of at least three (3) references
<input type="checkbox"/>	Central Registry Checks are required for all household members age ten (10) and over. The check may not be older than twelve (12) months from date of ICPC approval. NOTE: If a proposed placement resource and their family has resided or worked in Arkansas for less than five (5) years, a check for child abuse and neglect will be conducted in those other states of residency or work during that 5 year period
<input type="checkbox"/>	State Criminal Record Checks are required for all household members age fourteen (14) and over. The check may not be older than twelve (12) months from date of ICPC approval.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Department of Motor Vehicles Record Check
<input type="checkbox"/>	FBI fingerprint check is required on all residents of a household over sixteen (16) years of age
<input type="checkbox"/>	Foster Parent Training documentation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Description of the home, its location and environment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Assessment of home safety, including water hazards, firearm safety and dangerous pets
<input type="checkbox"/>	Proof that all firearms are maintained in a secure locked location.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Smoke Detector(s) are present in the home
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fire Extinguisher(s) are present in the home
<input type="checkbox"/>	CPR Certification is documented
<input type="checkbox"/>	First Aid Certification is documented

DISTRIBUTION: Submit the original and two copies of the completed home study to your local liaison, county supervisor or adoption supervisor as appropriate.



**Department of Human Services
Division of Children and Family Services**

- ICPC FOSTER CARE HOME STUDY CHECK LIST -

EACH FOSTER CARE HOME STUDY MUST CONTAIN THE FOLLOWING ITEMS

NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

- 1: All of the household members must be present at the same time during at least one of the home visits made to each prospective foster home.
- 2: In a two-parent home, the husband and wife shall be joint applicants and each will participate in the approval process.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Verification that the couple have been married at least two (2) years.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Physical exams that were conducted within the prior 6 months (copies of exam or physician's statement required)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Evaluation and determination that the foster family is stable
<input type="checkbox"/>	Documentation that the prospective foster parents are both at least twenty-one (21) years old
<input type="checkbox"/>	Medical documentation that all members of the household over twelve (12) years old have received a Mantoux skin test for tuberculosis.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Medical documentation that all preschool age children in the household have all current health immunizations
<input type="checkbox"/>	Evidence that the foster parents are physically, mentally, and emotionally capable of caring for children
<input type="checkbox"/>	Documentation of sufficient financial resources to meet the child's needs.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Written plans for childcare if both parents are employed outside the home.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Acceptable methods of discipline were discussed
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<input type="checkbox"/>	Central Registry Checks are required for all household members age ten (10) and over. The check may not be older than twelve (12) months from date of ICPC approval. NOTE: If a proposed placement resource and their family has resided or worked in Arkansas for less than five (5) years, a check for child abuse and neglect will be conducted in those other states of residency or work during that 5 year period
<input type="checkbox"/>	State Criminal Record Checks are required for all household members age fourteen (14) and over. The check may not be older than twelve (12) months from date of ICPC approval.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Department of Motor Vehicles Record Check
<input type="checkbox"/>	FBI fingerprint check is required on all residents of a household over sixteen (16) years of age
<input type="checkbox"/>	Foster Parent Training documentation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Description of the home, its location and environment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Assessment of home safety, including water hazards, firearm safety and dangerous pets
<input type="checkbox"/>	Proof that all firearms are maintained in a secure locked location.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Smoke Detector(s) are present in the home
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fire Extinguisher(s) are present in the home
<input type="checkbox"/>	CPR Certification is documented
<input type="checkbox"/>	First Aid Certification is documented

DISTRIBUTION: Submit the original and two copies of the completed home study to your local liaison, county supervisor or adoption supervisor as appropriate.



**Department of Human Services
Division of Children and Family Services**

- ICPC ADOPTIVE HOME STUDY CHECK LIST -

EACH ADOPTIVE HOME STUDY MUST CONTAIN THE FOLLOWING ITEMS

* In a two (2) parent home, the husband and wife shall be joint applicants and shall each actively participate in the approval process. **NOTE: Provide verification the couple has been married at least two years.** * See Foster Home Study Checklist

<input type="checkbox"/>	The agency caseworker shall have at least two (2) visits with the prospective adoptive family during the approval process. One (1) of the visits shall be in the home of the adoptive applicant.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The worker shall have a separate, face-to-face interview with each prospective adoptive parent.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The caseworker shall interview each age appropriate member of the household in person
<input type="checkbox"/>	Each member of the adoptive household shall have a physical exam within six (6) months prior to approval for placement and annually thereafter until final placement. A copy of the Physical Exam or Physician's Statement is required.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Statement regarding the physical health of all household members.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The family's motivation for adoption and the desired characteristics of the child or children to be adopted.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Each family member's attitude toward adoption.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Attitudes of the applicant's toward the birth parents, including parent search issues.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Resolution of any infertility issues.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The mental health, emotional stability and maturity of the applicants.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The financial status and stability of the family, including verification of income and employment.
<input type="checkbox"/>	At least three (3) confidential, personal references on the family (copies of the reference letters to be included with the home study.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	The family's ability to cope with stress, loss and crisis.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The family's child-caring skills and willingness to acquire additional skills.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The family's discipline practices.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Religious affiliation.
<input type="checkbox"/>	A description of the home, its location and its environment.
<input type="checkbox"/>	An assessment of the safety of the home including water hazards, firearm safety and dangerous pets. All firearms shall be maintained in a secure, locked location.
<input type="checkbox"/>	A statement from the adoptive parents that they have or have not been denied approval as an adoptive home in the past, and if so, why.
<input type="checkbox"/>	A statement regarding the results from criminal record checks and child maltreatment central registry checks. NOTE: Each record check in the home study packet must be within the last twelve (12) months.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Central Registry Checks are required for all household members age ten (10) and over. The check may not be older than twelve (12) months from date of ICPC approval. NOTE: If a proposed placement resource and their family has resided or worked in Arkansas for less than five (5) years, a check for child abuse and neglect will be conducted in those other states of residency or work during that 5 year period.
<input type="checkbox"/>	State Criminal Record Checks are required for all household members age fourteen (14) and over. The check may not be older than twelve (12) months from date of ICPC approval.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Department of Motor Vehicle Record Checks for all adults of the household
<input type="checkbox"/>	FBI fingerprint check is required on all residents of a household over the age of sixteen (16). NOTE: Send the results to the requesting agency (Arkansas DHS/DCFS)
<input type="checkbox"/>	The stability of the adoptive family and their marriage, if applicable, shall be discussed and determined to be appropriate. Any divorce must have been final for at least one year.
<input type="checkbox"/>	A recommendation regarding adoption, including the age, sex, characteristics, and special needs of children best served by this family.
<input type="checkbox"/>	CPR certificate – Current or updated to current
<input type="checkbox"/>	First Aid Certification
<input type="checkbox"/>	Foster / Adopt Pride Certificate – Current or updated to current

DISTRIBUTION: Submit the original and two copies of the completed home study to your local liaison, county supervisor or adoption supervisor as appropriate.



**Department of Human Services
Division of Children and Family Services**

- ICPC ADOPTIVE HOME STUDY CHECK LIST -

EACH ADOPTIVE HOME STUDY MUST CONTAIN THE FOLLOWING ITEMS

* In a two (2) parent home, the husband and wife shall be joint applicants and shall each actively participate in the approval process. **NOTE: Provide verification the couple has been married at least two years.** * See Foster Home Study Checklist

<input type="checkbox"/>	The agency caseworker shall have at least two (2) visits with the prospective adoptive family during the approval process. One (1) of the visits shall be in the home of the adoptive applicant.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The worker shall have a separate, face-to-face interview with each prospective adoptive parent.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The caseworker shall interview each age appropriate member of the household in person
<input type="checkbox"/>	Each member of the adoptive household shall have a physical exam within six (6) months prior to approval for placement and annually thereafter until final placement. A copy of the Physical Exam or Physician's Statement is required.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Statement regarding the physical health of all household members.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The family's motivation for adoption and the desired characteristics of the child or children to be adopted.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Each family member's attitude toward adoption.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Attitudes of the applicant's toward the birth parents, including parent search issues
<input type="checkbox"/>	Resolution of any infertility issues.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The mental health, emotional stability and maturity of the applicants.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The financial status and stability of the family, including verification of income and employment.
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