

Kansas Department for Children and Families
Foster Care and Residential Facility Licensing Division

Policy Advisory

2016-2

I. Summary

- 1) Policy Advisory 2016-2 informs Child Placing Agencies and Division staff of a change in policy concerning assessment of whether a foster family has sufficient income or resources.
- 2) The financial assessment will be conducted by Division surveyors when at the initial licensing survey and at annual renewal.
- 3) The change in policy is effective immediately.

II. Discussion

- 4) K.A.R. § 28-4-802(c) requires that a foster family have sufficient income or resources to provide for the basic needs and financial obligations of the foster family and to maintain compliance with all regulations governing family foster homes.
- 5) The Secretary has determined that a foster family does not meet the standard set forth by K.A.R. § 28-4-802(c) unless they are financially independent and especially prior to receiving any foster care reimbursement payments.
- 6) Past practices effectually delegated to child placing agencies significant discretion to assess and determine whether a potential foster family met the standard. Historically, the Division was not provided with adequate information to determine if available income covered expenses prior to receipt of foster care reimbursement payments.
- 7) Policy Advisory 2016-2 communicates the fact that the Division will now assess whether foster parents are financially independent and especially prior to receiving any foster care reimbursement payments.

III. Policy Summary

- 8) For **Applicants**, effective immediately, the Division will send out a Financial Assessment form upon receipt of a complete application.
 - a. Applicants will complete the form and have it ready for Division surveyors to collect and assess at the time of the initial survey. The form will gather information on all sources of income for all applicants, and also all monthly household expenses, in addition to bankruptcy history, pending tax liens, child support expenses and financial settlement agreements.
 - b. All entries on the form must be supported by independent, verifiable documentation satisfactory to the surveyor.
 - c. After the survey is completed, the Division surveyor will collect the financial assessment form and submit it to Administration along with the initial survey packet, for review by the Deputy Director.
 - d. If the Deputy Director determines that the potential foster family is not financially independent without additional foster care reimbursement payments, the Deputy Director will inform the sponsoring child placing agency that the Division intends to deny the application for licensure.
- 9) For **Renewals**, effective immediately, the Division will include the Financial Assessment form in the renewal letter sent to the foster parents.
 - a. Renewing foster parents will complete the form. The form will gather information on all sources of income for all licensees, and also all monthly household expenses, in addition to bankruptcy history, pending tax liens, child support expenses and financial settlement agreements.
 - b. Renewing foster parents will submit documentation of any income or expense figure that amounts to more than 10% of the household's gross monthly income. The Division may request further documentation of income or expense items in its discretion.
 - c. The Deputy Director will review the information and if the Deputy Director determines that the potential foster family is not financially independent without additional foster care reimbursement payments, will refer the matter for further

investigation as to whether the foster family has sufficient income or resources to provide for the basic needs and financial obligations of the foster family and to maintain compliance with all regulations governing family foster homes pursuant to K.A.R. § 28-4-802(c).

IV. Further Information

10) To facilitate transition from the current policy, the Foster Care and Residential Facility Licensing Division will be providing further detailed explanation, information, and guidance materials as follows:

Online information related to this change of policy will be accessible at:

<http://www.dcf.ks.gov/Agency/GC/FCRFL/Pages/default.aspx>