IOWA | Health and Human Services

Protocol For Home Study Updates to Add Foster Family Licensure or Adoption Approval

This protocol outlines the procedures to follow when families who are approved for adoption and want to become a licensed foster family home, or who are a licensed foster family home and want to be approved for adoption. It is considered an update to the existing initial home study and licensure/approval even though it is a new application. Many of the forms required for initial licensure or approval are not required in this protocol as the forms were previously completed and do not need to be repeated.

Once an initial home study is approved, any subsequent additions or changes are updates to the original study. Although an application to become licensed or approved is considered an initial application, a new initial home study does not need to be completed. An updated home study does have to meet all requirements in administrative rules.

For families that apply to add a license/approval to their current approval/license, the following is required:

- All record checks, including fingerprints, must be completed and the results included in the update packet. Federal policy considers this a new application and requires complete record checks on the prospective applicants and all other adult household members. Previous checks do not meet this requirement.
- The expiration dates for licensure and approval must align.
- One home visit is required if the update to add foster home licensing or adoption approval is not completed at renewal.

Pre-Service Training

- An approved pre-service waiver form stating when the family previously completed pre-service training or date previously waived.
- The dates of completion:
    - Mandatory reporting of child abuse (foster and dual only)

- Reasonable and prudent parenting standards (foster and dual only)
- Expanding Your Parenting Paradigm

Adding A Foster Family Home License to an Approved Adoptive Home

If the family is currently an adoptive home and wishes to become a licensed foster home the following must be completed and submitted:

- Date stamped Foster Family Home License Application (form 470-0689).
- Iowa Courts Online.
- www.iowasexoffender.gov
- State of Iowa Criminal History Record Check Request Form – Form DCI-77.
- Request for Child abuse Registry Check (form 470-0643).
- Sex Offender Registry check.
- Results of criminal, child abuse, dependent adult abuse and sex offender registry [SING] for all household members age 14 years and older (excluding children placed in the home for foster care).
- Out of state child abuse registry release forms when applicable.
- Results of out of state child abuse registry check for applicants and all adult household members who have lived in another state in the last five years when applicable.
- Results of fingerprint check for applicants and all other adults living in the home.
- Iowa Courts Online check
- Record Check Evaluation (form 470-2310), when applicable.
- Family registered for pre-service if they have not previously completed it.
- Foster Family Survey Report (form 470-0695).
- Current auto insurance for all vehicles – verification.
- Current driver's license for each applicant – verification.
- Assurances form.
- Provision for Alternate Water Supply (form 470-0699), when applicable.

- License Capacity Variance Request (form 470-3342), when applicable.
- 3 solicited and 3 unsolicited references.
- Health Report for Foster and Adoptive Parents (form 470-0720), when applicable.
  - If the form was completed within six months of the date of the foster family home application date, a new form is not required.
  - If the form was completed more than six months before the date of the foster family home application date, an exception to policy may be requested to 441-113.11(1) requirement that the health report be completed no longer than six months before the date of application.
  - If the form was completed more than 12 months before the date of application the family will need to have a new form completed.
  - Verification/exemption whooping cough vaccination adult caregivers, when applicable.
- Foster parent training plan to document the family's plan to meet training requirements:
  - Note training requirements that must be completed for timely foster family home licensure have been discussed.

The updated home study narrative must address:

- Any family assessment topics listed in 441—113.3(4)b if not addressed in the original home study. The interviews described in 441-113.3(4)a are not required.
- Reasons for adding foster care license: Explain motivation, give dates of original adoption approval, list date of foster care application, and describe previous pre-service training.
- Safety plans as required in 441-113.7(3).
- The applicants' ability to work with birth parents and concurrent planning.
- The applicants' ability to accept Iowa HHS supervision.
- Discuss any relevant changes in income, resources, and household composition that may impact licensure, or have occurred since the prior home study or update.
- A recommendation for the number, ages, and needs of children the applicants are able to parent.

Approval by Iowa HHS and issuance of a notice of action: Foster Family Home HHS (form 470-0709).

Adding Adoption to a Licensed Foster Family Home License

If the family is currently a licensed foster family and wishes to become an approved adoptive home the following must be completed and submitted:

- Date stamped Application for Adoption (form 470-0689)
- State of Iowa Criminal History Record Check Request Form – Form DCI-77
- Request for Child abuse Registry Check (form 470-0643)
- Sex Offender Registry check
- www.iowasexoffender.gov
- Results of criminal, child abuse, dependent adult abuse and sex offender registry [SING] for all household members age 14 years and older (excluding children placed in the home for foster care).
- Out of state child abuse registry release forms, when applicable.
- Results of out of state child abuse registry check for applicants and all adult household members who have lived in another state in the last five years, when applicable.
- Results of fingerprint check for applicants and all other adults living in the home.
- Iowa Courts Online check
- Record Check Evaluation –form 470-2310, when applicable.
- Health Report for Foster and Adoptive Parents HHS (form 470-0720), when applicable.
    - If completed within twelve months of the date the application for adoption was signed, a new form is not required.
    - If completed more than twelve months before the date the application for adoption was signed, a new form is required.
    - Verification/exemption of immunization for all children in the household.
    - Verification of whooping cough for adult caregivers.

The updated home study narrative must address:

- Reasons for adding adoption approval
  - Explain motivation for adoption.
  - Give dates of original foster family home licensure.
  - List date of Application for Adoption.
  - Describe previous pre-service training, or date and reason training was waived.
  - Describe family's ability to make a permanent commitment to a child.
  - Explain how family will explain adoption to their child.
- Adoption issues (if applicable)
  - Indicate this is an update to the original foster family home licensing study approving the applicants to adopt.

Approval by Iowa HHS and issuance of an Adoption Notice of Decision (form 470-0745).

This protocol is effective 8/1/2026.