

The Licensing Process for Foster Care & the Approval Process for Adoption

1. INQUIRY

Prospective foster and/or adoptive family contacts Mahoning County Children Services for information and speaks with the Inquiry Specialist from the Placement Department. Within seven (7) days, an information packet containing information the foster care and adoption process is sent with a cover letter.

2. REGISTER FOR CLASSES

You may register for classes once you have received a letter from Mahoning County Children Services inviting to attend Pre-Service Training. Classes are free and are available at numerous sites across Northeast Ohio. Mahoning County Children Services hosts pre-service classes 3-4 times per year.

4. PRE-SERVICE TRAINING

Attendance at 36 hours of pre-service training is mandatory. Information about the date and time for classes will be provided to you and are also available on our website.

5. APPLICATION

Prospective foster and/or adoptive family completes an application and submits it to their assigned Licensing Worker. An autobiography will be provided during pre-service training. Once the agency receives the autobiography, you will be provided with an Application and other required paperwork.

6. HOME STUDY

After we receive your completed application, an assessor is assigned and will contact your family to begin the home study process. The home study process includes:

Interviews with and medical evaluations of all household members

Fire Inspection and home safety audit

Reference checks

Review of applicant's child care arrangements

Assessing applicant's discipline philosophy

Applicants self-assess what child they would want to parent

Credit check

Criminal background checks on all adult household members (BCI & FBI checks)

Copies of marriage and divorce certificates

Proof of vehicle insurance is required and a driving record check

Financial statement, verification of income, tax returns and copies of utility bills

7. DECISION

If you meet all foster care requirements, Mahoning County Children Services will send its recommendation to the State for licensing as a foster home. If you are seeking to be approved for adoption, Mahoning County Children Services makes the decision as to whether or not to approve your home for adoption. Should Mahoning County Children Services deny recommendation for receiving a foster license or for approval as an adoptive home; the applicant(s) can withdraw from the process, or appeal the agency's decision.