

Kansas Administrative Regulations

Kansas Department for Children and Families

Article 47.—Foster Care Licensing

30-47-916. Family assessments for foster placement families and adoptive families.

Each licensee shall develop and implement policies and procedures for the completion of family assessments. Each family assessment shall determine the fitness, ability, and suitability of a family to meet the needs and to provide for the health, safety, and well-being of any child who would be placed in the family home.

(a) Requirements for all family assessments.

(1) Each licensee shall designate a child welfare worker to complete an initial family assessment of each potential foster placement family and each potential adoptive family that is being considered for sponsorship and services by the child-placement agency.

(2) Each licensee shall ensure that an assessment of each potential placement family and each potential adoptive family is completed and the family has been approved for placement before placement of any child in a family home sponsored by the child-placement agency. In any case involving placement of a child with a non-related kinship family or an agency-approved family, the child may be placed with the family before completion of the family assessment. In this case the assessment shall be completed within 30 calendar days after the placement.

(3) Each licensee shall ensure that the process for completing each family assessment includes the following steps:

(A) At least one individual interview with each household member and at least one visit in the family home. The sponsoring child placement agency shall have discretion for either an interview or observation of family members based on age and developmental ability;

(B) a review of information obtained from other agencies, a relative reference, a non-relative reference, the preparatory training program assessment and recommendations,

the department's child care licensing and registration information system, and other applicable sources; and

(C) completion of the background checks required in K.A.R. 30-47-805 and 30-47-905.

(4) Each licensee shall ensure that a written family assessment report is completed with the date, the signature and credentials of the designated child welfare worker or child welfare supervisor who is completing the assessment report. Each family assessment shall include a discussion and documentation of the following:

(A) Social history and background information for each parent, including the following:

- (i) Parenting and child-rearing methods used;
 - (ii) history of violence or abuse;
 - (iii) relationships within the family;
 - (iv) marital history;
 - (v) extended family relationships;
 - (vi) family strengths;
 - (vii) functional literacy and communication;
 - (viii) life history of each parent, including significant life events;
 - (ix) residence history for the previous 5 years;
 - (x) employment history for the previous 5 years of each potential parent;
 - (xi) physical health, including chronic illnesses, physical limitations, substance use, and use of medications; and
 - (xii) mental health history of each family member;
- (B) the manner that the family has coped with significant life events and life changes, including the following:
- (i) Emotional problems or mental illness;
 - (ii) substance use, substance abuse and treatment for each family member;
 - (iii) legal issues or contacts with law enforcement;
 - (iv) marital or other significant relationship problems;
 - (v) history of violence or abuse;
 - (vi) medical problems;

- (vii) financial problems, including bankruptcy;
- (viii) family moves or changes in household composition; and
- (ix) births and deaths;

(C) the family's experience, perception, and attitude about the foster care or adoption process, including the following:

(i) Experiences of each potential parent, including whether the parent has been disapproved as a prospective foster or adoptive parent or has been the subject of an unfavorable family assessment, including the reasons and any resolution of the disapproval or the unfavorable assessment; and

(ii) experiences, perceptions, and attitudes of extended family members;

(D) the current family composition and description of family life, including the following:

(i) A description of each family member, including age, gender, and racial, ethnic, and cultural background; functional literacy and communication skills;

(ii) relationships and interactions with individuals outside the family, including the neighborhood and community and the availability of support systems;

(iii) religious affiliation and practice;

(iv) financial stability and resources needed to maintain the family;

(v) assessment of the individual and family strengths and needs;

(vi) the manner in which each family member expresses emotions and feelings with the other family members, including the ability to express empathy and compassion;

(vii) skills in coping with feelings of anger or frustration and with provocation from children; and

(viii) ability of the family and of each member of the family to adapt to changes;

(E) information on each child currently in the family home, including the following:

(i) Interests, activities, and peer relationships;

(ii) typical behaviors and manner of expressing emotions and feelings;

(iii) the relationships between each parent and the child;

(iv) the parenting practices of each parent with the child; and

(v) the ability of each parent to see positive uniqueness of the child and to celebrate the child's achievements;

(F) each parent's capacity for the following:

(i) Providing for the basic needs of a child;

(ii) expressing sensitivity and concern for a child, including giving and receiving affection;

(iii) expressing the parent's own emotions and feelings;

(iv) setting boundaries and providing guidance to a child;

(v) being involved with the child's school and social activities; and

(vi) discussing decision-making, parenting, and child-rearing methods;

(G) each parent's motivation and the family's willingness and ability to accept a new child in the family and to meet the needs of a new child, including the following:

(i) Documenting expectations of each family member of the impact of a new child coming into the home;

(ii) understanding how to address the new child's own feelings of grief and loss and to assist the child with obtaining and participating in counseling if needed;

(iii) discussing the ability to evaluate and adjust expectations of a child's behavior;

(iv) assessing the ability to adapt to changes, to be flexible, and to use coping skills;

(v) discussing the parent's stated preferences or requests for specific characteristics in a child to be placed with the family, including age, sex, and the family's willingness to accept any special needs, child's history, and birth family background;

(vi) evaluating the family's interest and ability to meet the individual needs of a child, including a child with disabilities, special needs, or specific medical needs;

(vii) evaluating the way a child's individual needs will impact each member of the family, including extended family members;

(viii) assessing the family's interest, preparation, and willingness to accept a child of a different ethnic, cultural, or religious background, including sensitivity to and plans for dealing with the difference in background and the impact on the family's extended family; including the following:

(a) preserving the ethnic and cultural identity in a positive manner;

(b) considering the child's family, community, neighborhood, faith, or religious beliefs;

(c) considering the child's school activities and friends;

(d) considering the child's or the child's family's primary language; and

(e) assessing the family's openness toward contact with the child's birth family, understanding of the child's circumstances, and plans for discussion of the birth family and history with the child;

(H) each parent's willingness and ability to work with the child-placing agency, the child's birth family, and with others in the child's life; and

(I) a health and safety inspection of all parts of the family foster home conducted by the designated child welfare worker or social service staff member operating under the direction of the child welfare worker to review and discuss with the parents the following health and safety issues:

(i) Safe storage of medications, alcoholic beverages, household chemicals, personal care products, tools, and sharp instruments;

(ii) safe and secure storage of firearms, weapons, and ammunition;

(iii) fire or storm safety;

(iv) safety for swimming pools, hot tubs, bodies of water, or other hazards;

(v) vaccinations for pets and maintenance of the pet area in a safe and sanitary manner;

(vi) safe access and interactions between children and pets;

(vii) adequate sleeping arrangements for all residents of the home and for each potential child to be placed in the family home;

(viii) any structural hazards and the upkeep of the home; and

(ix) use of smoking products.

(5) The report shall include a summary of the assessment, the strengths and needs of the family, and supporting documentation, and a recommendation for placement. The written report shall include a recommendation for one of the following:

(A) Approval of the family for foster care or adoption, or for both, and for sponsorship by the child-placement agency, including a recommendation for the number, age range, sex, racial or ethnic background, and any special needs of a child whose needs would be best met by the family; or

(B) disapproval of the family's application for foster care or adoption and sponsorship by the child-placement agency;

(6) Each licensee shall ensure that the results of the written family assessment and any updates are reviewed with the family, including the recommendation for placement of a child with the family or the recommendation not to place a child. Documentation of the review shall be maintained in the family record at the child-placement agency.

(7) Each licensee shall ensure that each family assessment is updated by a designated child welfare worker at least one time every 12 months following completion of the original family assessment or the most recent update.

(A) An update to a family assessment shall also be completed when any of the following occurs:

- (i) a family amends a license; or
- (ii) a family has moved to a new home; or
- (iii) the sponsorship of the family transfers from one child-placement agency to another.

(B) If the adoptive family lives in another state, each licensee shall document compliance with the statutes of the other state that govern the credentials of the individuals authorized to complete family assessments for adoptive families in that state.

(8) To complete an update, the designated child welfare worker shall conduct at least one interview with the parents and family members in the family home. The sponsoring child-placement agency shall have discretion for either an interview or observation of family members based on age and developmental ability.

(9) As part of the update, a designated child welfare worker or a designated social service staff member operating under the direction of the child welfare worker shall conduct at least one health and safety inspection of the family foster home.

(10) The update of each family assessment shall include the following:

- (A) A review of changes in the family or the home since the original family assessment or the most recent assessment update;
- (B) a review of the care and progress of each child currently placed with the family;
- (C) a list of all children placed with the family since the most recent assessment, including for each child the date of admission, date of move from the family, and the reason for the move. The list shall be reviewed for any trends and shall be maintained in the family record at the child-placement agency; and

(D) an updated summary and recommendation by the child welfare worker completing the family assessment.

(b) Required for adoption assessments. In addition to the requirements in subsection (a), each licensee shall ensure that the following requirements are met for conducting family assessments for each family that is applying to adopt a child:

(1) Each licensee shall ensure that there is a recent photograph of the family in the family record.

(2) Each licensee shall ensure that requirements of the other state are met when a family is applying to adopt a child from another state, and the requirements of the other country are met when a family is applying to adopt a child from another country.

(3) The assessment shall include health insurance coverage for each potential parent.

(4) The assessment shall assess willingness and ability to meet the financial responsibility for a child.

(5) The assessment shall include health care coverage of any adoptive child upon the child's placement in the adoptive family home.

(6) The assessment shall assess each parent's willingness and ability to accept a legal risk adoption placement.

(7) The assessment shall include each parent's plan for discussing adoption with an adopted child, including discussion of the birth family of the child.

(8) The assessment shall assess each parent's attitude about adoption search, including the possibility of location and reunification of the child with the child's birth family or the child obtaining non-identifying information about the child's birth family.

(Authorized by K.S.A. 65-508, 75-3084, and 75-3085; implementing K.S.A. 65-508; effective June 7, 2024.)

***** Authenticated Kansas Administrative Regulation *****