

Intensive Foster Care (IFC) Program Considerations

****To be considered as private agencies and/or counties make a decision on who would license.**

Foster parents licensed for Intensive Foster Care (IFC) are typically licensed as a level 4 foster parent. Many counties only license levels 1 and 2, with private CPAs typically licensing levels 3 and 4. Counties or agencies considering IFC programming need to become familiar with differences between levels of care that include applicant qualifications, foster parent requirements and agency requirements.

1. Review agency policies to potentially include:

- a. Requirements for level 4 licensure and case management ([Levels of Care Desk Guide.](#))
- b. Recognizing the foster parent as a formal member of the child's treatment team
- c. Establish a formal evaluation process
- d. Establish a plan for being able to provide respite
- e. Is a goal set for length of placement?
- f. Establish foster parent qualifications above and beyond DCF 56 requirements; give consideration to:
 - i. At least one parent does not work outside of the home; their full time job would be providing care.
 - ii. Cannot provide regular childcare (formal or informal) for other children or family members
 - iii. Demonstrated ability to manage finances
 - iv. Identification of natural informal supports
 - v. Household composition and Location:
 1. Other children in the home?
 2. Indoor or outdoor pets and/or farm animals
 3. Location and nature of the home?
 - a. Rural vs. Urban
 - b. House vs. Apartment
 - c. Household hazards (firearms, heavy machinery, etc.)
- g. Nonrelative Applicants
 - i. Past fostering experience and training to be considered
 1. Recommend two years of experience working with or parenting youth with complex needs.
- h. Child Specific Applicants
 - i. Demonstrated relationship with the child needing care
 - ii. Willingness to participate in child specific training

2. Is a specific job description needed for advertising becoming a foster parent in an IFC program?

- a. If the foster parent will be an employee of the agency, an exception to DCF 56.04(2). Note: The intent of this requirement is to prevent possible conflicts of interest with respect to the terms of the rate paid to the foster parent, the situation that may result if an allegation of abuse or neglect is made against the foster parent, etc. The agency should consider such situations in granting a license to an employee of the agency. These should be clarified in the agreement/contract established and/or in agency policy.

- b. If the foster parent will be an independent contractor, the agency will need to develop an agreement or contract that clearly articulates the nature of the relationship between the PFP and the public/private child placing agency.
 - c. *Most agencies in WI who have worked with 'professional foster parents' have not employed them, but established independent contractor agreements. (see compensation folder)*
- 3. Give consideration to the monthly payment that will be provided to the foster parent in addition to the uniform foster care rate.**
- a. Payment should be equivalent to a full-time professional position
 - i. Give consideration to benefits packages to include reimbursement amounts for health insurance, potential for retirement savings, etc.



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