

## Managing Certified Homes

The Department is responsible for managing substitute care resources. These responsibilities include:

- Ongoing assessment to ensure the certified family follows certification standards and is providing safe and protective care;
- Support for continued professional development through ongoing training;
- Support for individual certified families who need additional support;
- Providing information and guidance to certified families regarding their role and responsibilities for the child placed in their home and their rights as a certified family.

## Contact Requirements

### Procedure

- The certifier must conduct a home visit with the certified family at the following points in time:
  1. At least once every 180 days to support the relationship with the certified family, confirm a safe environment is provided, and assure compliance with certification standards.
    - a. The visit occurs whether a child is placed in the home at the time.
    - b. If a two-parent certified home, the certifier must see both certified parents at 180-day home visit contacts. At renewal, the certifier must see all members of the household.

### NOTE:

Although not required to see each child (including foster children/young adults) and adults living in the household at 90- and 180-day home visit contacts, it is always good practice to do so.

Seeing children and adults who live in the home provides the certifier with a greater understanding of family dynamics and ability to confirm safe environments.

- c. Document in the Provider Record of OR-Kids, the certified family's compliance with certification standards and confirmation that conditions in the home appear to provide for the safety, health and well-being of the children in the home.
  2. At least once every 90 days whenever a Temporary Certificate of Approval is effective.
    - a. If a two-parent certified home, the certifier may see only one of the certified parents at 90-day home visit contacts.
  3. At least once every 90 days whenever a certified family has been approved to exceed the maximum number of children in a home.
    - a. The visit occurs to ensure the certified family continues to demonstrate the skill and ability to provide safe and protective care for every child placed in the home.
    - b. The visit occurs whether the number of children in the home exceeds maximum capacity at the 90-day point in time. In other words, contact is required because of approval, not because of the number of children in the home at the time.
    - c. If a two-parent certified home, the certifier may see only one of the certified parents at 90-day home visit contacts.

- The 90-day contact requirement ends when the approval to exceed maximum capacity is rescinded.
- 4. When assessing a certified family for renewal.
- 5. When the composition of the certified family's household changes.
  - a. If the change is due to an addition to the household, not including children placed by DHS or another agency, the certification worker has contact with the new member of the household. Consider the age of the new person of the household when determining the need for contact. For example, if the new member of the household is the result of a birth, it is not necessary to have contact with the new baby.
  - b. When a new adult has moved into the household, discuss with the certified family the role he/she has within the family and contact he/she will have with the foster child. Obtain authorization to conduct the criminal history and child abuse and neglect history background checks and move through the background check process swiftly.

NOTE:

Talk to certified families about their obligation to notify the Department when someone joins or leaves the household. Whenever possible, the certified family should notify the certification worker in advance of a new household member. Certified families have up to one business day to notify their certification worker (or the certification worker's supervisor) of anyone joining or leaving the household.

- c. When making contact with the family, assess the ability of the certified family to maintain conditions that provide for the safety, health and well-being of children with the new addition to the household.
6. At the completion of an assessment of child abuse or neglect when it has been determined that a Placement Support Plan is necessary for the certified family to maintain conditions that provide safety and well-being in the home.
7. If at any time it becomes known that a member of the certified family or member of the household is arrested or has a conviction that was not previously assessed, complete criminal records checks and make contact with the certified family.
8. After the completion of a home visit, document in OR-Kids, provider notes, information gathered and assessed regarding the visit, the certified family's compliance with certification standards, and confirmation that conditions in the home appear to provide for the safety, health and well-being of the children in the home. Be sure to document any changes in the family dynamics and if/when respite is being utilized.
9. When developing a Placement Support Plan.
- Certifier contact with a certified family is advised:
  1. Whenever necessary to support the certified family in the difficult task of caring for a child or young adult placed in the home.
  2. Whenever a change occurs at the certified family's physical home that could impact the safety of the environment or the health or well-being of the children in the home. This includes, but is not limited to, remodeling, adding a hot tub or pool as well as sustaining damage due to a natural disaster or fire.

3. During the assessment of a report of child abuse or neglect to describe the parameters of support available through the certifier during a CPS assessment.
- A certifier may also perform an unscheduled home visit with the certified family to confirm the safety of the home environment. When considering an unscheduled home visit, consider the family's and children's schedules.

## **Ongoing Assessment and Confirmation of the Safety of the Environment**

### **Procedure:**

For all casework staff, confirming safe environments is essential at each face-to-face contact with children and their caregivers. Use your experience and expertise to take into consideration the safety and well-being of the child(ren) in the foster home. Consider using Confirming Safe Environment tools to guide your assessment.

- Use every contact with a certified family as an opportunity for ongoing assessment of the family's ability to provide the conditions in the home that support the ongoing safety, health and well-being of children placed in the home, including:
  1. The certified family's adjustment to the children and the adjustment of the children placed in the home;
  2. The amount of care and supervision required for each child in the home;
  3. The certified family's contacts and connection with others in the community;
  4. The certified family's working relationship with the department;
  5. The certified family's follow-through on the ongoing training plan;
  6. When the certified family is a relative, how the other extended family members are understanding the family's role in protecting the child;
  7. Whether the children placed in the home match the preferences and skills of the certified family;
  8. The relationships between the certified family (both the adults and the children) and the children placed in the home; and
  9. The level of stress the responsibility of substitute caregiving adds to the home.
  10. When there were final desk guide ratings of 3, 4, or 5 in the initial or update home study, assess whether the factors that lead or didn't lead to a lower mitigation score are still true, and consider whether current functioning is impacted.
  11. The certified family's ability and willingness to provide the level of supervision required in a supervision plan, particularly when the child receives a Level of Care payment and therefore must have a supervision plan in place.
  12. The certified family's ability and willingness to provide the Personal Care services needed when a personal care services plan is in place for a child or children in the home.
  13. The certified family's ability to use positive forms of discipline and behavior management that are in compliance with the certification standards listed in OAR [413-200-0358](#) (1-5).

### **NOTE:**

What contributes to the makeup of a safe substitute care environment? Empathy \* Attachment and Bonding \* Reality Testing and Judgement \* Nature and Motivation to Provide Care \* Quality of Relationships and Interaction \* Protective Capacity\* Assess in your contacts with the certified family and the children placed in the home how the child(ren) live in an environment

that is supportive and if the child(ren) feel accepted. Look at the quality of the placement. Is the certified family attentive and understanding of the child's trauma and utilization of skills to parent the child? Assess the certified family's stress level, how they handle stress and if there are any circumstances in their own lives impacting how they parent children in their home. You must know how to confirm the safety of an environment before you can see, analyze, and act to confirm or address it.

- If one or more of the conditions in the home do not support ongoing safety, health and well-being of children placed in the home, work with the certified family to identify and implement strategies and resources to improve the conditions in the home.
  1. Share ideas and strategies that have worked with other certified families.
  2. Help the family understand changes that may need to be made in family schedules, routines, parenting or discipline techniques, understanding a child's behavior, etc.
  3. Connect with a child's caseworker if there are challenges with a particular child in the home.
  4. Encourage additional training or resources on a particular topic. Review upcoming training sessions in the local branch or other branches within traveling distance.
  5. Search for any resources available through the lending libraries.
  6. Check on training modules available through Foster Parent College.
  7. Encourage attendance at foster parent or relative caregiver support groups.
  8. Encourage the certified family members to take some time for themselves, even if it's an evening away from the responsibilities of caregiving.
- Document the contact, your assessment and any actions taken including but not limited to support provided to the certified family, training offered, placement changes, or certification actions in OR-Kids as a provider note.
- Schedule a home visit every 180 days.
  1. In your conversations with the certified family, assess the conditions that support ongoing safety, health and well-being of children placed in the home.
  2. Contact caseworkers of the children who have been placed in the home during the past six months for input on the care the certified family has provided to the children. Be sure to assess any areas of the certified family's caregiving that were raised as a concern.
  3. Review the Safety Assessment of the physical environment and walk through the entire home. Confirm continued compliance with certification standards.
  4. Review the certified family's follow-through on the training plan. Support and reinforce ongoing training and professional development.
  5. Seek input from the certified family members on additional supports or resources that would be helpful in their work as caregivers. Encourage involvement with other certified families.
  6. Work with the certified family to identify and implement strategies or resources to improve the conditions in the home when appropriate.

NOTE:

When documenting the result of the home visit, the certification worker should consider the following information:

- Who the certification worker met with, including all certified individuals as well as any children currently placed in the home.
  - Observations of the physical environment.
  - Any family changes or stressors that impact the certified home.
  - Any certification standards not in effect and the plan to assist the family in meeting the certification standards.
  - Any special circumstances such as a placement support plan, in-home services to assist the child, or the home is overfilled and the developed plan for these circumstances.
  - Certified family's relationship with the Department and other community partners.
  - If any children are on prescribed psychotropic medications and if these medications have changed since the last home visit.
  - If any children placed in the home receive and Enhanced Supervision or Personal Care rate, review of both of those plans.
  - How the certified family is applying the Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standard.
  - Review the family's training plan.
- 
- Schedule a home visit every 90 days when management has approved the certified family to exceed maximum capacity.
    1. In your conversations with the certified family, assess the conditions that support ongoing safety, health and well-being of children placed in the home.
    2. Consider contacting the caseworkers of the children who have been placed in the home during the past three months for input on the care the certified family has provided to the children. Be sure to assess any areas of the home or environment or the certified family's caregiving practices that were raised as a concern.
    3. Seek input from the certified family members on additional support or resources that would be helpful in their work as caregivers.
    4. Assess compliance with certification standards and the safety, health and well-being of all children placed in the home.
    5. Document the assessment and any actions taken as a provider note in the Department's information system.
  - When a caseworker or a screener reports a concern regarding the conditions in the home (a concern that is not a safety threat to a child).
    1. Follow the directions for the [Certification, Safety and Well-Being Protocol](#).
  - **Unscheduled Visits**
    1. There may be times when you are in a neighborhood, or for other reasons, you may want to visit the family at a time that has not been previously scheduled with the certified family.

2. When making an unscheduled visit, respectfully acknowledge your interruption of the certified family's schedule and routine, be specific on the reason for your visit, and ask if you can take a bit of the certified family's time for the visit.
3. Following the visit, document the contact and any observations or actions taken in the Department's information system as a provider note.

### **Contact considerations when an individual joins or leaves a household:**

- General Assessment of new members of the household
  1. Ensure completion of criminal background checks and child welfare checks for new adult members of the home. When history is found, the certifier conducts an assessment of the history as described in the Assessment section of this chapter. If appropriate and after the assessment is complete, the certifier requests the required management approvals for the background history.
  2. Consider whether there is reason to request a juvenile background check when the new member of the household is a minor.
  3. Assess the current functioning of the new member of the household via interviews with the new adult and the certified family.
  4. Assess whether the certified family can ensure that the new member of the household meets certification standards listed in [OAR413-200-0308\(3\)\(i\)\(A-D\)](#).
- There are other unique situations upon when an individual joins or leaves the household. Although these examples are not all-encompassing, they should provide the certification worker with an idea of how to assess the newly discovered information. The certification worker should always reach out to the certification supervisor to discuss the situation in detail before moving forward. Examples include:
  1. Divorce
  2. Married couple, separated and living in different residences
  3. Single certified person gets married
  4. Significant other moves into the home
  5. Single certified person adds adult child to certification

#### **Situation 1: Divorce**

A certified family that goes through the process of divorce cannot continue to have both adults certified for the care of the same child, unless they continue to live in the same residence. When one parent leaves the home, the certified family will need to decide which of the certified adults will continue to be the certified family for the child.

- Ask the adult who will continue to be certified to complete an Application for Renewal or Change of Status ([CF 1001](#)). Update the provider record in the Department's information system to reflect the new composition of the household, including deactivating the certified person who will no longer be on the Certificate of Approval. When deactivating the person leaving the home, select the reason of "Other," and document in a provider note why that member was deactivated.
- Reassess the individual's household, and assess the individual's capacity to provide safe and protective care in a safe environment.

- Inform each child’s caseworker of the divorce and the conclusions of the assessment in order that the caseworker can determine if continued contact with the previously certified divorced parent is in the best interest of the child.
- Update the home study or complete an addendum to the current study. If all certification standards can be met, recommend a new Certificate of Approval to the person who will continue to provide care to the child.
- Close the current certification of the two-parent certified family and create a new certification and Certificate of Approval.

**Situation 2: Married couple, separated and living in separate residences**

A certified family that goes through marriage separation is living at separate residences and has a foster child in their care. The certified family must notify their certifier of anyone leaving the household.

- Further conversation and assessment needs to be had with both certified members about the current situation around their separation and intentions. Ask the family:
  1. How long do they anticipate the separation?
  2. Are they pursuing divorce?
  3. Do they both want to continue to be certified?
  4. Do both members wish to have parenting time of the foster child?
  5. What does childcare look like if both certified members are living in other residences?
  6. Will the foster child be staying at both residents? If so, which residence should be the certified home?
- If the family is proceeding toward divorce, please follow the instructions for divorce above in situation 1.
- If the family members describe working on their marriage, the separation is temporary, and both members want to remain certified, the certifier should staff the assessment with the supervisor. The family could remain certified together but would need to continue training requirements for both certified members as well as be present for 180-day home visits. The certifier also needs to consider if the certifier member leaving the home results in an overfill that would necessitate a management approval.
- From the information gathered and assessment, the certifier should contact the child’s caseworker and discuss the appropriateness of the home, including if it is in the child’s best interest to remain with the certified family.
- The certifier should document the assessment in an OR-Kids provider note as well as the decision made.

**Situations 3 and 4: Single Certified Member gets married; significant other joins the home**

- The certified family member must notify the certifier of any individual joining the household. Married and cohabitating couples must both be applicants unless program manager approval is given for unique circumstances.
- When a single parent marries or a significant other moves into the home, the current certificate (single) should end. The couple would complete a new application and be assessed. If there are children in the home, and it is necessary to do so, a temporary certificate may be issued. The certified family should have notified the certifier of the intent to get married. At that point, the certifier should explain the Department’s requirement that married couples and romantic partners who reside together must both be

certified. If the new partner is unwilling to participate in the certification process, discuss the options of: voluntarily terminating the certificate or staffing the case for revocation.

**NOTE:**

Why a new application? This is considered a new family composition with the addition of the spouse/significant other, which means the certification worker needs to assess the new applicant and the couple as a whole. This is not considered a renewal or change of status, as it is a new family composition.

- The local branch has the decision to conduct its assessment of the home in an expedited process. If this is a child-specific certificate and the foster child is in the home, to continue with a valid certificate of approval, the branch can proceed with expedited assessment activities ([413-200-0274](tel:413-200-0274)) and issue a Temporary Certificate for up to 180 days.
- Close the previous certificate for the initial foster parent in OR-Kids; add the spouse/significant other to the provider record; issue a Temporary Certificate; and document expedited approval on the new home study, as this is the first time the couple is being assessed together.
- Continue to assess the new family composition, using the Questionnaire 1 and 2 for couple, gathering new references, conducting new criminal history checks, and new child welfare checks for both applicants.
- Complete a new home study regarding this couple. Reference the applicant's previous home study prior to the marriage/significant other joining the home.
- If the full assessment is completed and the branch is proceeding to approve this family, issue a full two-year Certificate of Approval.
- 

**Situation 5: A certified individual wants to add his/her adult child as a certified member**

*A single adult and his/her adult child applying to become a certified family.*

- Cohabiting couples must apply together. In this scenario, the adult child living in the home does not fall under the definition of cohabiting couple. The certifier should discuss with the parent/adult child the reasons both would like to be certified and consider ramifications of proceeding. What length of time do they anticipate they will live together? Is their permanency planning including complications that may occur? Are they both truly planning to co-parent? If the decision is to pursue joint certification, the certifier must:
  1. Provide an application and have them complete it as Applicant 1 and Applicant 2. All assessment activities with any new application should be done with both applicants. Initiate the necessary criminal and child abuse checks and criminal history for both applicants.
  2. Provide both Single Applicant Questionnaires 1 and 2 to applicants and follow certification process. Interview the applicants separately for questionnaire 2 as done for couples. Discuss with the applicants how they will handle disagreements regarding parenting, finances, or any other conflict that may arise.
- A currently certified single adult and their adult child would like to be certified together.

1. Discuss the reasons for wanting to be certified together as in a) above. If the decision is to pursue the certification of the adult child, the following process is completed:
2. Both adults would complete a new application as Applicant 1 and Applicant 2. If the current single certified adult parent has a certification open, keep the existing certificate open until the certification worker has completed the assessment process of both applicants. The adult child would not be considered certified until the entire home study process is completed and they are approved as co-applicants with a new certificate in both adults' names issued.

**NOTE:**

Why would a certification worker keep the current certificate open while assessing both applicants? Proceeding in this way prevents ending the current certificate and issuing a Temporary Certificate in the interim, a situation that would prevent the Department from utilizing Title IV-E funding during that expedited assessment period. Since an adult child living in the home isn't required to apply, the existing certificate can remain open while determining if a new certificate will be issued, with both individuals becoming certified.

- All assessment activities associated with a new application for foster care should be done. Initiate the necessary criminal and child abuse checks for the adult child as an "applicant" for the first time; update the criminal history and child abuse checks for adult as part of the new application process.
- For the adult child, complete Questionnaire 1 and Questionnaire 2. For the adult parent, complete an Update Questionnaire. The information gathered during interviews and information you knew previously regarding the adult parent can be reflected upon a new home study. Do not use the "Update Home Study" template as the adult daughter/applicant is new and has not been studied.
- When the assessment of the family is completed, and if this family has an approved home study, terminate the adult parent's single certificate, and issue a new two-year certificate for both applicants.
- Assessment of visitors to the household:
  1. When the certified family has guests staying in the home for a short period of time, no background checks are required or authorized.
  2. Ask the certified family how long the visitors will be staying, what the sleeping arrangements will be, and whether the visitors will be providing any babysitting or respite care. Complete the required background checks for respite care providers if the visitors will be providing respite care.
  3. When the visitors are staying for more than a few weeks or stay beyond the planned amount of time, consider them as additional members of the home and follow the procedure for assessing new members of the household. Examples might include but not be limited to:
    - a. A college student coming home for the summer
    - b. A friend or family member staying beyond a few weeks while looking for housing.

4. When the certified family has family or friends who frequently visit the home, no background checks are required. If the frequent visitors are staying the night on occasion, ask about sleeping arrangements and whether the visitors will be providing any care to the children in the home.
5. It is the responsibility of the certified family to ensure that all visitors to the home are safe and appropriate persons to be around foster children. When there is cause to be concerned about those frequenting the home or the certified family's ability to exercise sound judgment in this area comes into question, the Department has discretion to do background checks:
  - a. Consult with your supervisor.
  - b. Consider convening a Certification, Safety and Well-Being Review Committee to discuss concerns and form a plan to ensure the safety of the children placed in the home, which may include removal of the children in extreme situations.
  - c. Consider consulting with the Foster Care Coordinator.

### **The Supervisor's Role**

- Ensure the certifier is conducting the required contacts, ongoing assessment of the safety of the environment, assessment of the safety, health and well-being of the children, and completing required documentation.
- Staff cases with the certifier during regular supervision and when concerns arise.
- Advise the certifier on actions and resources for a certified family that needs support.

### **References and Forms**

#### **OAR**

[Division 200](#) Responsibilities for Certification and Supervision of Foster Parents, Relative Caregivers, and Approval of Potential Adoptive Resources

[Division 200](#) Department Responsibilities During Screening Assessment of a Child Abuse or Neglect Report Involving the Home of a Department Certified Foster Parent or Relative Caregiver

#### **Forms**

[CF 1267](#) Placement Support Plan

## **Respite Providers, Child Care and Babysitters**

### **Overview**

The Department supports foster parents' use of respite care, child care and babysitters. Respite care is a formal planned arrangement to relieve a certified family's responsibilities by an individual temporarily assuming responsibility for the care and supervision of the child or young adult and can range anywhere from part of a day up to 14 days. Child care is the supervision of a child by a licensed, approved or listed caregiver during the working hours of the foster parent or relative caregiver. Babysitting is the provision of temporary, occasional care for a child or young

adult that is not longer than 10 consecutive hours and not overnight. If the temporary care is longer than the 10 consecutive hours, is overnight, or is shorter but is a planned formal arrangement, it falls under the definition of respite care. The importance in this distinction lies in the difference in the level of assessment required by the Department for each of these types of care.

### **Procedure for Assessing Potential Respite Care Providers**

- When the foster family intends to use an individual for respite care, the assessment of potential respite care provider is the responsibility of both the certified family and their certifier. This is whether the respite provider was identified by the certified family, or if DHS provided the certified family with potential respite provider resources. The foster parent must assure that respite providers have the ability to meet the needs of the children they will be caring for. The certifier must conduct background checks and assess information from those checks.
  1. Check for criminal history using the signed consent for background check (1011F). If respite care will be provided in the respite caregiver's home, all adult members of the prospective respite caregiver's household must have criminal background and child welfare background checks completed as described in this section. Fingerprint results must be obtained if:
    - a. The individual has ever been arrested, charged, or convicted of a crime.
    - b. The individual has lived outside of Oregon in the previous 5 years.
  2. Check for child welfare history, including checking other states in which the individual has lived in the previous 5 years. The Background records unit will initiate these requests upon receiving the 1011F and fingerprint cards.
  3. Assess any criminal history or child welfare history and determine whether to seek management approval for the individual to provide respite care.
  4. If criminal or child welfare history is found, the certifier, in consultation with the certification supervisor, determines whether to continue the assessment or deny the request to use the individual for respite care.
  5. If the decision is made to continue the assessment of the individual, interview the potential respite care provider to assess the criminal or child welfare history and follow the procedures outlined in Section 3, *Assessing Criminal History and Child Abuse History*, of this chapter.
- When the certified family intends to use an individual who is a certified foster parent for the purpose of respite care, the certifier for the certified family who intends to provide the respite care is responsible for the assessment.
  1. Determine whether the certified family who is going to provide respite has the skills to meet the children's needs.
  2. Determine whether providing respite care to additional children would impact the certified family's ability to provide for the safety, health, and well-being of the children already placed in his/her home.

#### **NOTE:**

When assessing this information, take into consideration the needs of the current children in the home and needs of the children needing respite. Determine if providing respite would ultimately result in an overfill and if additional management approval is needed (documented on form 117).

The certification worker should staff with the certification supervisor about the unique needs of the children in the home and any impacts an overfill would place on the certified family.

- When the certified family intends to use a licensed, registered, or approved childcare center, no assessment is required by the certifier. However, ensure that the caseworker is aware of the plan and supports the plan.
- If the certified family intends to use an individual exempt from licensing requirements from the Office of Child Care and is not listed through SSP, the certifier must conduct the background checks described above for respite providers.
- The assessment of potential babysitters is the responsibility of the certified family. The foster parent must be reasonably sure that persons he/she chooses for babysitting do not have any child welfare or criminal history or any other behavior or circumstance that would pose a risk to the safety, health, or well-being of the child/children being babysat.
- When it becomes known to the certifier that a potential or current babysitter for a foster parent may have some child welfare or criminal history or some other behavior/circumstance that could pose a risk to the safety, health, and well-being of the child/children being babysat, the certifier has the discretion to require a background check be completed by the Department prior to further use of the babysitter. When unsure of what circumstances under which to exercise this discretion, consult with the certification supervisor who may also decide to consult with the Foster Care Coordinator.
- When alternative care is going to be used in a foster home in which the only access to a working telephone is the foster parent’s cell phone, the certifier ensures that there is a plan for the alternative care provider to have access to a working telephone while providing respite care or babysitting.

## Placement Support Plans

Placement support plans are designed as a process for child welfare to partner with a certified family in maintaining conditions that provide safety, health, and well-being for children placed in the home by the department. A placement support plan is developed when a certifier becomes aware that a certified family needs additional training or instruction to improve their care giving practices or the certified family is not in compliance with certification standards and the non-compliance does not compromise child safety. During a CPS Assessment of a Foster or Relative Caregiver home, Placement Support Plans should never be used in place of an Initial Safety Plan or Protective Action if there are Safety Threats Identified or present danger.

NOTE:

What is the difference between an Initial Safety Plan and a Placement Support Plan in a Department Certified Home?

Initial Safety Plan	Placement Support Plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial Safety Plans (ISPs) should never be used with a certified family if the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children are <i>safe</i> in the certified foster home.</li> </ul>

<p>impending danger safety threat/s are more likely than not to still be present at the conclusion of the CPS Assessment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When it's likely that more information may resolve an impending danger safety threat, the CPS supervisor may approve an ISP. ISPs should be time limited to allow for expedited information gathering.</li> <li>• Impending danger safety threats must be managed by safety actions/safety service providers that have been confirmed to be suitable. Never use a <i>caregiver</i> who is the alleged perpetrator to provide protection or any other adult who was aware of the threats to child safety and did not protect.</li> <li>• If at the conclusion of the CPS Assessment an impending danger safety threat remains, the ISP must be ended, and children must be removed. Ongoing Safety Plans can never be used to manage safety following the out-of-home care assessment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only used when the certified family needs additional support, training, services or resources to <i>maintain</i> safety and well-being of children in the home; or when certification standards are not being met.</li> <li>• Time limited agreement.</li> <li>• Plan outlines the supports the Department will provide to the certified family as well as any actions the certified family will participate in.</li> </ul>
--	--

**Procedure**

- When the certifier learns that a certified family needs additional support, either through routine contact with the certified family during visits, during training or support groups, when the certified family is transporting a child to a family visit, or other contact with the certified family, consult with the certification supervisor regarding the certified family's circumstances and need for support to develop ideas to support the certified family.
- Gather additional information from the certified family, from children placed in the home (when appropriate), from caseworkers of children placed in the home, and from other collateral contacts that may have information regarding the conditions in the home or the care provided for the children placed in the home.
- Contact the certified family and arrange a meeting to talk about the circumstances existing or occurring in the home and the need for additional support or services for the certified family.
- Work with the certified family and others to identify actions and/or services that will assist the certified family in skill development, caretaking ability, and/or compliance with certification standards or other administrative rules.
- Work collaboratively with the certified family either in person or phone conversation to plan the services or activities in which the certified family will participate and what the department will do to support the certified family.
- Develop the written placement support plan that specifies:
  1. The actions or services in which the certified family will participate;
  2. Any actions or services the Department will provide to support the family in maintaining conditions that provide safety and well-being for children placed in the home;

3. The agreement that the certified family will participate in the actions or services;
  4. An agreement that the placement support plan will be reviewed within 90 days; and
  5. An anticipated end date for the placement support plan.
- Obtain the supervisor's approval of the placement support plan.
  - Provide a copy of the placement support plan to the certified family, scan a copy and save to the file cabinet of the Provider Record in OR-Kids, and document a summary of the placement support plan as a provider note.
  - Send an email notice to caseworkers of each child placed in the home of the placement support plan in the certified family's home.
  - Maintain regular contact with the certified family to monitor effectiveness of the placement support plan and ensure the actions and activities outlined in the placement support plan are achieving the desired result.
  - Review the placement support plan on the designated review date. Ensure that the certified family can meet the needs of the children placed in the home and is in compliance with certification standards before ending the placement support plan.
  - When the placement support plan has ended, document the end of the placement support plan in the Department's information system provider notes and notify the caseworkers of each child placed in the home that the placement support plan has ended.

### **The Supervisor's Role**

- Consult with the certifier in the preparation of the Placement Support Plan.
- Review and approve the Placement Support Plan.

### **References and Forms**

#### **OAR**

Child Welfare OAR [Division 200](#): Foster Home Certification, Department Responsibilities for Certification and Supervision of Foster Parents, Relative Caregivers, and Approval of Potential Adoptive Resources

#### **Forms**

[CF 1267](#) Placement Support Plan

### **Sharing Information**

#### **About a child**

- Department staff must notify the certified family of information about a child to manage child safety, to keep the members of the certified family safe, and to provide services to the child.
  1. Child placement information is given to the certified family by the child's caseworker on the Child Placement Information for Foster Care and Residential Placements" form CF6713 for, DHS child welfare placement information. This is accessed through the Department's information systems in Create Case Work > Placement Services > Child Placement information.

2. The caseworker can also share information from evaluations completed on the child. This may include evaluations such as:
  - a. Psychological evaluation,
  - b. Mental health evaluation
  - c. Educational testing results, IEPs or 504 plans, and
  - d. Written reports from other professionals.

**NOTE:**

Copies of mental health and psychological evaluations should have information redacted that is not specific to the child. This includes any birth parent confidential information.

3. The child's family may also wish to share information regarding the child.

**A Child's Social Security Number**

- If requested, a certified family may have a child's social security number.

**NOTE:**

Each year, about tax time, certified families inquire whether or not foster children can be claimed on their personal income tax returns. Advise the certified family the Department does not provide tax advice on income tax laws. You may also refer them to the [IRS website](http://www.irs.gov/) at <http://www.irs.gov/> or the [National Foster Parent Association](#), which often provides reference materials.

**About a Certified Family**

- A certifier can disclose a foster parent's/relative caregiver's name, address, and phone number to the Oregon Foster Parent Association.
- A certifier can disclose foster parent/relative caregiver identifying information to a law enforcement agency for the purpose of a criminal investigation.
- A certifier can disclose information about a foster parent/relative caregiver when ordered by a court of competent jurisdiction.
- Other disclosures regarding a certified family's information cannot be disclosed without the certified family's permission or by court order.
- A certified family is given a copy of their SAFE home study and their SAFE Home Study Update. They can also have Medical Reports, and other documents they have completed and submitted to the department. The SAFE home study specifically states the sole purpose of the home study is for the assessment of the family for the purposes of certification to provide foster care or adoption in the State of Oregon.
- A certified individual can have a copy of the Medical Report B (CF 1257B) or Mental Health Information (CF 1258), because this information is related to an individual's right to his or her own medical information under HIPAA unless information must be withheld from the individual if the information could cause harm to the individual or someone else.

- A certifier cannot disclose any other third-party information in the family's certification file to the certified family.

## **When a Certified Family Moves**

Certification of a family is tied both to their family assessment, as well as to their physical residence. When a foster family moves to a new residence, the certifier must note any concerns regarding the certified family's ability to meet safety, health and well-being of the children during the assessment. The certifier completes the following actions and should issue the certificate for the date that the application and [CF 979](#) were signed by the certified family. As a certifier, encourage families to give the Department as much advanced notice as possible prior to a move.

### **When a certified family moves to a new home in the same county: Procedure**

In each situation where a certified family moves, it is required to change the family's address in the Department's information system. Each time the certified family's address is changed, the certificate of approval is closed, and a pending certificate is created. A new address is created through the Provider Work option and going to the Maintenance drop down to create physical address. For more information about changing or maintaining an address or changing the designated branch, refer to OR-Kids online.

- When the certified family moves to another residence in the state of Oregon, the Certificate of Approval automatically terminates. The Certifier has up to 10 business days to assess the new residence. The department may issue a new Certificate of Approval for the new residence after the activities described in this section have been completed.
- The certifier must:
  1. Provide the certified family a CF 1001 form, Application for Renewal or Change of Status.
  2. Communicate the move to all caseworkers involved in case planning for children in the home.
  3. Complete a home visit and Safety Assessment within 10 business days of the certified family's move, prior to recommending a Certificate of Approval for the family to the supervisor.
  4. Observe and assess the safety of the physical environment of the home and surroundings and document on form [CF 979](#).
  5. Walk through every room in the home and each surrounding building;
  6. Assess any concerns regarding the certified family's ability to meet safety, health, and well-being needs of a child or young adult, and document those assessment activities in the provider record.
  7. Document in OR-Kids, as a provider note, the circumstances of the family's relocation.
    - a. Issue a new certificate once all certification items have been completed.

#### **NOTE:**

If the new residence does not meet certification standards, the certificate of approval at the former address cannot remain in effect since it terminates with a move from the location. The certifier needs to take immediate steps to notify his/her supervisor and children's caseworkers

who have children placed in the home, that the certificate terminated and children cannot remain in this home.

8. Transfer the certification file to applicable child welfare branch according to District procedure, when there are multiple branches within a District.

### **Role of Supervisor**

- Review the certification file to confirm all steps of certification have been completed.
- Contact the supervisor of the certification unit of applicable child welfare office, if the file will be transferred.
- Issue a new certificate with new address, once certification is complete.

### **When a certified family moves to a new home in another county: Procedure**

When the certified family moves to a residence in another county in the State of Oregon, the Certificate of Approval automatically terminates. The department may issue a new Certificate of Approval for the new residence after the activities described in this section have been completed.

- The Program Manager, or designee, of the branch that last certified the family must:
  1. Coordinate with the Program Manager, or designee, of the district the certified family has moved to regarding the transfer of information, record, and any certification responsibilities. Any certification concerns should be discussed.
- After a certification file has been transferred to the receiving county, the sending certifier must:
  1. Communicate the move to all caseworkers involved in case planning for children in the home.
  2. Notify the local office responsible for certification in the area where the family has (or is) relocated.
  3. Arrange with the new local office the logistics of completing the requirements to certify the family.
- The receiving certifier must:
  1. Provide the certified family a CF 1001 form, Foster Home Certificate Renewal or Change of Status Request if it has not already been completed;
  2. Complete a home visit and Safety Assessment within 10 business days of the move, and assess the home to ensure it provides an environment that provides safety and well-being for a child in the home, prior to recommending a Certificate of Approval for the family to the supervisor.
  3. Document in Department's information system the circumstances of the family's relocation in provider notes.
  4. When the sending office (the area from which the family is moving) accepts the responsibility to complete the actions required in 2, the home provider record is not transferred until the required actions are complete.
  5. The receiving child welfare office issues a new certificate once certification is completed.

### **Role of the Supervisor**

- The issuing Child Welfare office’s certification supervisor must notify the certification supervisor in the Child Welfare office in the county to which the certified family is moving of a family’s move.
- Note: The certification file and ongoing Department responsibilities are transferred to the Child Welfare office in the county to which the certified family is moving, unless the district manager or designee in the county to which the certified family is moving has approved department certification responsibilities remaining in the Child Welfare office in the county from which the certified family is moving.
- Notify the certification supervisor in the receiving county to discuss the certification transfer.
- Review certification file, before transfer, to ensure file contains all necessary certification documents.

**When a certified family moves out of state: Procedure**

- When a certified family wishes to move out of the State of Oregon with a child in the department’s custody, refer to OAR [413-040-0200 to 413-040-0330](#), and to [Chapter 4, Section 13, Placement in Another State](#).
  1. The caseworker and certifier must work together to:
    - a. Assess whether it is in the best interest of the child or young adult to move out of state with the certified family.
    - b. Inform the court of the plan for the child or young adult to move out of state.
  2. The certifier:
    - a. Reviews the certified family’s certification to determine whether there are exceptions for criminal history records or management approval for any founded child abuse history, which could prevent the certified family being certified in another state. If so, contact central office ICPC staff or a Foster Care Coordinator and request additional information on whether or not the state to which the certified family will be moving has administrative rules that would prevent the family from being certified.
    - b. Notify the certified family regarding foster care reimbursement. Certified families who receive department approval to move out of state with a child in their home, may continue to receive foster care reimbursement for that child for up to 180 days or until licensed or certified in the receiving state, whichever is earlier per child welfare policy, I-E.5.1, Maintenance and Treatment Payments. In addition, if a family is receiving a level of care payment, the caseworker will need to work with the department for the annual CANS screening that determines the level of care payment. The annual CANS screening can be completed by phone.
    - c. Notify the family their reimbursement rate will continue to be based on Oregon’s rates.
- Note: Personal Care Services do not transfer to another state. The caseworker and the family will need to work with that state’s Medicaid providers to determine how personal care services are offered in that state.

**Role of the Supervisor**

- Ensure the certification file contains all necessary ICPC approvals and applicable paperwork.

**When a certified family moves out of state with a child in DHS custody with developmental disabilities child whose placement is paid through the Office of Developmental Disabilities (ODDS):**

- The ODDS program does not have an ICPC process. The best way to ensure a smooth transition is to have child welfare take responsibility for the family's certification, as soon as approval has been given for the certified family to move out to another state.
- Notify the certified family they will have to enroll the child in the receiving state's Developmental Disabilities program, as soon as possible after moving to the other state. The certified family will need to explore whether they need to become certified by the receiving state's Developmental Disabilities Program or through the state's Foster Care Program, as this differs from state to state.
- Contact central office ICPC staff or a Foster Care Coordinator and request additional information on administrative rules and the most appropriate program for the certified family in the state to which the certified family is moving.

**When a certified family moves out of state with a young adult, ages 18 through 20:**

- The caseworker and the certifier:
  1. Work with ICPC to determine whether or not the receiving state's child welfare program provides services to a child 18 years or older. Some states will issue a foster home license or certificate, but will not offer services such as face to face contacts or 90 day reports.
  2. Report this information to the court, to assist in determining whether or not it is in the child's best interest to move to another state.

**Legal References**

[OAR 407, division 14, Privacy and Confidentiality](#)

[DHS Privacy Policies and Procedures](#)

[Division 40, Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children](#)

[Division 90](#) Foster Care Payments for a Child or Young Adult Living with a Certified Family or Living Independently

[Division 200](#), Foster Care Certification: Standards for Certification of Foster Parents, Relative Caregivers, and Potential Adoptive Resources

**Forms**

[CF 117](#) Request for Management Approval of Specific Rules

[CF 100A](#) Interstate Compact Placement Request

[CF 100B](#) Report on Child's Placement Status

[CF 1044](#) Interstate Compact Financial/Medical Plan

## **Risk Management Claims**

The state of Oregon provides property and liability insurance for foster children through Risk Management Division. Claims should be made as soon after the loss or incident as possible, but generally must be made within 90 days of the incident. Payments do not exceed actual cash value for property losses or ‘economic’ losses for injury. Many factors determine payment reimbursement limits, such as the damage or injury being intentional or unintentional, A certified family’s own medical or disability insurance pays first for the injury claims. Risk management generally pays first for property claims. More information can be obtained from calling 503-373-7475 and at the Oregon Risk Management site [online](#).

### **Procedure: Role of the Certifier**

- The certifier:
  1. Educates and informs certified families of the risk management procedure during the certification process (refer to Appendix 7.5).
  2. Ensures risk management forms are available to certified families.
  3. Ensures the child’s caseworker is aware of the claim and process to ensure completion in a timely manner, when a family calls a certifier about a possible risk management claim,
  4. Promptly shares information in order for the claim to be processed within the reimbursement time frames when risk management calls the certifier to verify claim information.
  5. Staffs the case with the supervisor and risk management, if there are concerns about fraudulent claims.

### **Role of the Caseworker**

- The caseworker:
  1. Makes the risk management form, [CF 0003](#), available to the certified family upon request.
  2. Explains the process of risk management claims to the certified family.
  3. Notifies the certified family’s certifier of potential of a risk management claim.
  4. Promptly shares information in order for the claim to be processed within the reimbursement time frames when risk management calls the caseworker to verify claim information.
  5. Staffs the case with the supervisor and risk management, if there are concerns about fraudulent claims.

## **Legal References**

### **OAR**

Child Welfare Policy III – A.2.2 Tort and Foster Parent Liability  
[http://www.dhs.state.or.us/policy/childwelfare/manual\\_3/iii-a22.pdf](http://www.dhs.state.or.us/policy/childwelfare/manual_3/iii-a22.pdf)

[ORS 30.297 and 30.298](#)

## **Forms**

DRAFT