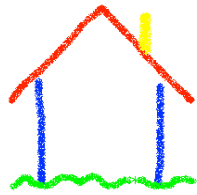


Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio



Adoption Policies, Plans and Procedures

Revised (3/3/2018)

Agency Administrative and Adoption Policies

Policy and Procedure Name

Section Number

5101:2-5-08

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5101:2-5-13

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Section Number

5101:2-48-05 Adoption Policy

Section I (1)-Geographic Region Served

Section II (2) Adoption Application Process, Home Study, Home Study Updates and Amendments

(a) AHS does not impose any eligibility requirements beyond those required by Ohio Administrative Code.

(b) Timeframe for Commencing and completing an adoption home study:

(c) Process for simultaneously certifying an applicant for foster care placement and approving an applicant for adoption.

(d) Preservice training requirements for an adoptive applicant(s).

(e) Criminal Records Check

(f) Additional Assessment Activities

(g and h) Multiple Children/Large Family Assessment

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Section IV-Procedure to Provide Access

Section V-Procedure for Receipt and Maintenance of Approved Adoptive Home studies from other agencies or states

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Section XIV-Provision of prefinalization and post finalization services.

Section XV- Notification of Availability of a State Hearing

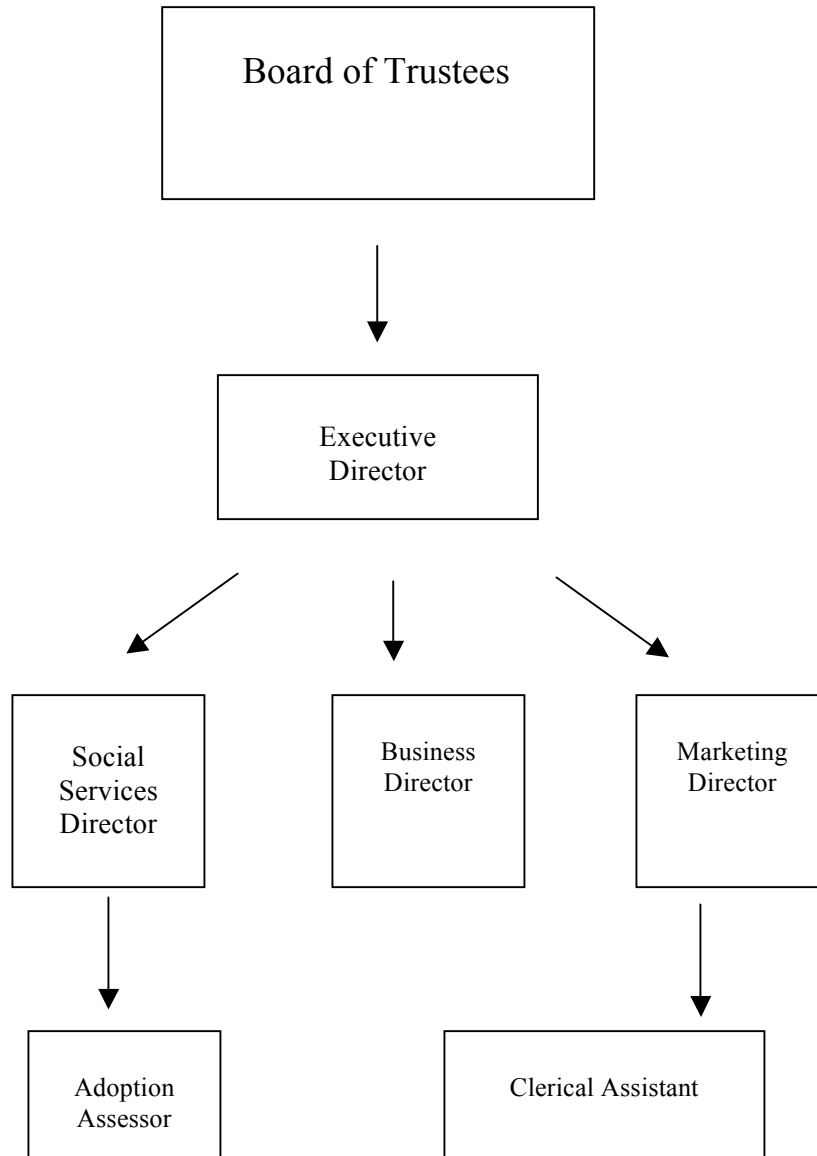
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Section XVIII - Inquiry Policy Response

Section XIX - Adoption recruitment plan Approved May 1, 14

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3-01-07	5-01-10	5-01-10	5-10-10



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5.35	Children's Rights'	5101:2-5-35	1 of 1
Original Effective Date	Revision Date	Approval Date	Effective Date
3-01-07	1-25-10	3-13-16	3-13-16

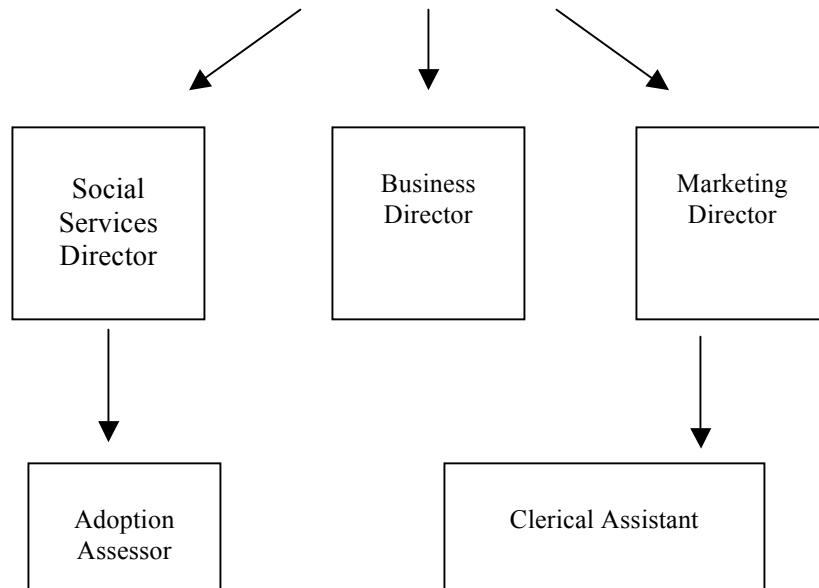
Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio acknowledges the rights of all children. The agency: all employees, adoptive parents, shall not in any way violate the following rights of children.

1. The right to enjoy freedom of thought, conscience and religion or to abstain from the practice of religion.
2. The right to reasonable enjoyment of privacy.
3. The right to have his or her opinions heard and be included, to the greatest extent possible, when any decisions are being made affecting his/her life.
4. The right to receive appropriate and reasonable adult guidance, support and supervision.
5. The right to be free from physical abuse and inhumane treatment.
6. The right to be protected from all forms of sexual exploitation.
7. The right to receive adequate and appropriate medical care.
8. The right to receive adequate and appropriate food, clothing and housing.
9. The right to his/her own money and personal property in accordance with the child's service or case plan.
10. The right to live in clean, safe surroundings.
11. The right to participate in an appropriate educational program.
12. The right to communicate with family, friends, and significant others from whom he/she is living apart, in accordance with the child's service or case plan.

13. The right to be taught to fulfill appropriate responsibilities to himself and to

Policy Number	Policy Name	OAC
08	Organizational Structure	5101:2-5-08
Original Effective Date	Revision Date	Approval Date
01-07	5-01-10	5-1-10

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio			
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Original Effective Date	Revision Date	Approval Date	Effective Date
3-01-07	3-01-07	3-01-07	3-01-07



Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio			
Policy Number	Policy Name	OAC	Page
5.08	Mission Statement	5101:2-5-08	1 of 1
Original Effective Date	Revision Date	Approval Date	Effective Date
3-01-07	3-01-07	3-01-07	3-01-07

The mission of Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio is to recruit, educate and prepare Ohio prospective adoptive families for the adoption of waiting children. Is committed to providing informative, supportive and timely adoption services and to educating prospective adoptive parents regarding their range of adoption opportunities. Embraces the belief that every child deserves a safe, loving permanent family and that time is of the essence. Consistent with its dedication to provide timely, efficient services, is supportive of the creation of innovative efforts to facilitate the timely adoption of waiting children across county and state jurisdictions.

While Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio is not a child placing agency, is committed to working cooperatively in linking adoptive applicants with an adoptive child placing agency that is best suited to meet the needs of prospective adoptive parents and to fulfill the primary goal of facilitating the adoption process for children in need of permanent homes.

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio			
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5. 08	Description of Program	5101:2-5-08	1 of 1
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3-01-07	5-01-10	5-01-10	5-01-10

Specific services provided by Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio include:

- **Recruitment of Prospective Adoptive Families**

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio will use a variety of tools to recruit prospective adoptive families including but not limited to the use of newspaper, radio and Internet advertisements. AHS believes that the most effective recruitment tool will be the informal referrals from satisfied adoptive parents.

- **Education & Training of Prospective Adoptive Families:**

AHS will train prospective adoptive parents in compliance with ODJFS curriculum and training regulations.

- **Informing Prospective Adoptive Families Regarding Their Adoption Options:**

AHS will inform all prospective adoptive parents regarding their range of adoption opportunities including information regarding Ohio’s waiting children, county child welfare agencies, foster to adopt options, private state adoption agencies, and international adoption opportunities. AHS will work to prepare all prospective adoptive parents to understand their options and to make informed adoption decisions.

- **Completion of Comprehensive, Domestic and International Adoption Home Studies:**

AHS believes that time is of the essence for children waiting for permanent families. is dedicated to working to complete comprehensive adoption home studies in compliance with ODJFS regulations and in a time efficient manner.

- **Provision of Post Adoption Services:**

AHS is not a child placing agency. AHS will provide post placement services as requested by the child placement agency. Fees for post placement services will be negotiated with the child placement agency and not the direct responsibility of the prospective adoptive parent.

**** All Services provided by Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio will be in compliance with Ohio State Law and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services Rules & Regulations.***

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio			
Policy Number	Policy Name	OAC	Page
5.1	Discipline	5101:2-5-13 (A)(1)	1 of 1
Original Effective Date	Revision Date	Approval Date	Effective Date
5-01-10	5-24-10	6-01-10	6-01-10

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio maintains a discipline policy that allows for only the use of non-physical discipline. AHS works only with adoptive parents seeking adoption. AHS advises all prospective adoptive parents that the use of physical discipline is not an option and prohibits the use of any type of restraint.

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio			
Policy Number	Policy Name	OAC	Page
5.13.1	Disaster Preparedness Plan	5101:2-5-13.1	1 of 1
Original Effective Date	Revision Date	Approval Date	Effective Date
1-20-10	5-24-10	6-01-10	6-01-10

The following Disaster Plan shall be enacted in case of an emergency that interferes with Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio’s ability to function in its current location.

- (1) The agency director is considered the only essential personnel needed for the operation of this agency.
- (2) Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio has an alternative physical work location which is located at 771 West Main Street, Alliance, Ohio 44601. This is office space owned and operated by AHS’ Board President’s business named LPH Mechanical. LPH Mechanical will provide free work space for AHS if needed. This work space is a currently functioning office location with working internet, computers and office space that can easily accommodate the agency’s needs for a private, secure, and functional work space if necessary.
- (3) The Director will continue to communicate with adoptive families/clients, agency staff, through any working communication sources available such as e-mail, internet, SACWIS, cell phone, or land line phone services. If those services are not available the Director will contact adoptive families through services such as UPS, Fed Ex and US Postal Service. The Director will also maintain required in-person visits with families if/when possible. This agency works primarily with families prior to the placement of a child in their home. At any given time very few pre-finalized adoptive children are in placement in an adoptive home. [International adoptions are typically finalized in the foreign country prior to the placement in the family’s home.] .
- (4) This agency does not hold custody of children. In case of a disaster, families beginning the paperwork process, or families with approved home studies awaiting placement, can have their home study services delayed without endangering children. Essential agency work activities that must continue would be limited to providing post placement supervision to families with children already placed and prior to finalization of their adoption. AHS will maintain contact with and provide support to those newly adoptive parents and work to ensure the safety of the children placed and continuity of services to children through the methods listed in # 3.
- (5) AHS maintains files of all clients in compliance with Ohio law and ODJFS rules and regulations. Current methods for tracking and contacting clients includes the use of information contained in the family’s paper files. Clients’ contact information is also maintained in electronic format on the Director’s laptop computer and also maintained on an office desk top computer. In case of a disaster the Director’s laptop computer would easily be moved to the alternative work location. It would continue to provide access to the client’s contact information for tracking purposes.

(6) Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio does not hold custody of children and does not place children in substitute care. This agency will work, as described above to maintain supportive contact with clients who have pre-finalized children placed in their home and to provide continuity of services to adoptive families and newly placed children.

(7) AHS provides for the maintenance and security of agency records in compliance with Ohio law and ODJFS rules and regulations. In case of a disaster, the agency records and files will continue to be stored in a locked secured building. All computers that hold agency files are password protected and will continue to provide security. All copies of documents printed in the alternative work location will also be maintained in locked, secured filing cabinets and in a locked secured building.

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio			
Policy Number	Policy Name	OAC	Page
5.17	Discharge Policy	5101:2-5-13 (A)(16)	1 of 1
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3-01-07	5-24-10	6-01-10	6-01-10

Discharge of Children from an Out-of- home Care Setting

Adoption Home Study of Ohio is not a child placing agency. When an adoptive placement disrupts, Adoption Home Study Services will contact the local county children services agency to intervene to take custody of the child and place the child in a safe placement. Adoption Home Study of Ohio will assist the child placing agency in the provision of services to prepare the child, and to refer the adoptive parent to appropriate counseling services.

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio			
Policy Number	Policy Name	OAC	Page
5.18	Accessibility of the Administrator	5101:2-5-13 (A)(18)	1 of 1
Original Effective Date	Revision Date	Approval Date	Effective Date
1-12-10	5-24-10	6-01-10	6-01-10

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio ensures that ODJFS representatives and agency staff shall have accessibility to the administrator, Brenda Lare or the administrator’s designee, Jennifer Lare at all times. The administrator or designee may be contacted in person, by phone at 330-829-9400 or 330-206-2218, fax at 330-823-1755, mail at 358 Edna St. Alliance, Ohio 44601 or e-mail at homestudyohio@hotmail.com Adoption Home Study Services has 24 hour voice mail that will provide an emergency 24 hour contact phone number for the administrator.

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio			
Policy Number	Policy Name	OAC	Page
5.19	Maintenance of Records	5101:2-5-13 (A)(19) 5101:2-48-05 (K)	1 of 1
Original Effective Date	Revision Date	Approval Date	Effective Date
3-01-07	3-13-15	3-13-15	3-13-15

Adoption Parent Records

All adoptive applicant or approved home study related records including, but not limited to: inquires, home studies and collaborative information obtained by Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio shall be maintained in hard copy form in the applicant's file until closure. All adoption applicant and approved adoption files shall be maintained in a locked, secure filing cabinet.

AHS will maintain approved Adoption home studies received from other agencies or states in the same manner and timeframe. Adoption files are incorporated with all other files in alphabetical order.

Home studies received from other agencies are for transfer purposes as AHS is a non custodial agency.

The home study document [JFS 1673] and the homestudy update document [JFS 1385] and complaints will be saved in hard copy or electronic format on a disc, flash drive, or CD until closure.

All closed adoption JFS 1673 homestudy and JFS 1385 homestudy update and complaints will be maintained for 10 years. All supporting documents will be shredded upon closure.

Case Record per 5101:2-48-05 (K)

AHS shall maintain case records per agency policy 5.19 in a consistent and organized manner maintaining any required information set forth in this rule which includes but not limited to for the purpose of: preservation of agency records, searching for potential placement/adoptive resources, providing needed or requested services and/or screening/assessing families.

Administrative Records

All administrative related records including but not limited to personnel, board meetings minutes, training payments invoices, financial, etc. will be maintained in hard copy form in a locked, secure filing cabinet.

All records will be maintained in compliance with Ohio State Law and ODJFS Regulation. All information contained in agency records is considered confidential. Only staff with direct case, support, or supervisory responsibility shall have access to records.

These discs, flash drives, and/ or CDs will be maintained in a secured, locked filing cabinet for ten (10) years. After ten years they will be destroyed by shredding.

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio			
Policy Number	Policy Name	OAC	Page
5.20	Confidentiality Policy	5101:2-5-13 (A)(20)	1 of 1
Original Effective Date	Revision Date	Approval Date	Effective Date
3-01-07	5-24-10	6-01-10	6-01-10

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio will respect the confidentiality of all adoption related records in compliance with Ohio State Law. All Adoption Home Study Services Staff will sign confidentially statements which explain the importance of maintaining confidentiality.

Request for information from the Child Fatality Review Board is to be directed to the Executive Director and will be promptly and completely honored in compliance with Ohio State Law. Adoption Home Study Services will prepare and make available for inspection all requested records, and within a reasonable period of time will make copies available for inspection and copying. Adoption Home Study Services will permit the person requesting the record to have it duplicated on paper, upon the same medium on which it is kept, and will mail all documents by US mail within a reasonable period of time.

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio			
Policy Number	Policy Name	OAC	Page
5.21	Human Research Projects, Fund Raising and Publicity Activities	5101:2-5-13 (A)(21)	1 of 1
Original Effective Date	Revision Date	Approval Date	Effective Date
3-01-07	5-24-10	6-01-10	6-01-10

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio respects the confidentiality of all information obtained regarding an applicant's family and all children placed for adoption. Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio will not involve a child in any human research project, fund raising and, or publicity activity without the prior, informed, written consent of the parent, guardian, or legal custodian, and the child, according to the child's age and functioning.

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio			
Policy Number	Policy Name	OAC	Page
5.22	Personnel Policies/Job Description	5101:2-5-13 (A)(22)	1 of 1
Original Effective Date	Revision Date	Approval Date	Effective Date
3-01-07	5-24-10	6-01-10	6-01-10

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio recruits, trains, promotes, and administers all personnel practices without regard to race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, marital status, political belief, disability or veteran status.

All employees are hired in accordance with OAC 5101:2-5-9 and 5101:2-5-9.01.

Recruitment: recruits qualified staff through general and professional newspaper, radio, and or internet advertisements.

Screening: All staff shall meet the educational, licensing and employment requirements of their position in compliance with Ohio State Law, ODJFS Regulations and agency policies. Pursuant to 5101:2-5-09 (I), a criminal records check shall be conducted pursuant to rule 5101:2-5-09.1 of the Administrative Code.

Criminal Offense Notification

All employees are required to notify Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio’s Agency Director when the following occur:

A requirement for an employee that he shall notify the agency within twenty-four hours of any charge of any criminal offense that is brought against him. This policy shall also contain a provision that:

- (i) Failure to notify the agency within twenty-four hours of any charge of any of the crimes listed in rule 5101:2-5-09 of the Administrative Code shall result in immediate dismissal from employment.
- (ii) If the charges result in a conviction, the employee shall notify the agency within twenty-four hours of the conviction. Failure to notify the employer of any conviction of any criminal offense shall result in the employee's immediate dismissal from employment.
- (iii) Conviction of any of the crimes listed in rule 5101:2-5-09 of the Administrative Code while in the employ of the agency shall result in immediate dismissal from employment with the agency.

Probationary period: All newly hired employees must serve a 180 day probationary period. The probationary period allows the supervisor the opportunity to assess the employee’s ability to adjust to the responsibilities of the position.

Orientation: All employees will participate in an agency orientation process. During orientation, the employee will meet directly with administrative director or the administrative director’s designee. Information discussed will include but not be limited to: review of agency personnel policies, agency structure, job description, specific job tasks, and physical work space (as appropriate).

Assignment & Supervision: All assignments to clerical and adoption assessor staff will be issued by the administrative director or the administrative director's designee. The administrative director is responsible for the supervision all agency staff.

Promotion: It is the policy of this agency to fill position vacancies by promoting or transferring employees from within the agency whenever possible. As with all appointments, selection for transfer or promotion is conducted without regard to race, color, religion, age, national origin, disability, veteran status or sex. Employees interested in a vacant position should send a written letter of interest to the administrative director.

Training: All adoption assessors are required to maintain their social work license and their adoption assessor certification in compliance with Ohio State Law and ODJFS Rules and Regulations. Updated copies of training and licensing verifications are required to be sent to the administrative director at the time of relicensing or recertification.

Annual Evaluation: Annual evaluations regarding job performance will be completed on each employee's anniversary hire date.

Personnel Files: Personnel files for each employee shall include but are not limited to containing the following documents: employee's application, copies of references, job description, job evaluations, medical records obtained, training documentation, professional credentials, licenses, certification, and copies of disciplinary actions, date of hire, and date of termination if applicable, BCII and FBI criminal record check, if applicable. (Personnel files shall be maintained for at least five years after the date of employment termination).

Discipline: Employees of Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio are required to maintain a professional, positive attitude and to conduct themselves accordingly while on Agency business.

If an employees' personal conduct in any way jeopardizes the welfare of a client or co worker and/ or violated Agency Policies or procedures, the agency may take appropriate disciplinary action, such as warnings, suspensions or discharges.

The agency views a clear, effective corrective action program as a positive means of maintaining a fair, productive environment for all employees. These written policies are intended to minimize misunderstandings and help prevent disciplinary problems from developing or growing into serious proportions.

In recognition of the fact that each instance differs in many respects from somewhat similar situations, the Agency retains the sole and exclusive right to treat each occurrence upon its individual merit. The agency's general course of action shall be to:

First Offense:	Provide supervisor's Record of Instruction & Cautioning
Second Offense:	Written warning
Third Offense:	Removal

Offenses of concern include but are not limited to:

- 1.) The use of abusive language or threatening language toward any Agency staff or client.
- 2.) Failure to act in compliance with compliance with the Multiethnic Placement Act of 1994 as amended by Section 1808 of the Small Business Job Protection Act of 1996, 42 U.S.C.

622(b)(9),671(a)(18),674(d) and 1996(b) (1/2/06) (MEPA) (1/2/06) and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C.2000d,et seq., as they apply to the foster care and adoption process (Title VI).

- 3.) Failure to maintain Agency required State of Ohio Social Work Licensure and/or Professional Licensure required to perform job duties.
- 4.) Violation of Confidentiality of Information.
- 5.) Willful and or deliberate neglect in the performance of assigned duties.
- 6.) Falsifying time cards, billing statements, personnel records, or clients files.
- 7.) Possession, use or sale of alcohol or other intoxicating substances while on agency time.
- 8.) Possession or use of firearms, explosives, or other weapons on agency property or on agency time.
- 9.) Dishonesty or dishonest actions.
- 10.) Insubordination, such as refusal to perform work assignment.
- 11.) Excessive absenteeism

Grievances: Agency employees have the opportunity to use the following grievance procedures:

Informal Procedure: An important purpose of the grievance procedure is to encourage employees and supervisors to first discuss and resolve any issues, prior to taking any formal grievance procedures. At the informal step, the employee must give verbal notification to his/her supervisor within two (2) working days after the occurrence which gave rise to the grievance. Following the verbal notification, the immediate supervisor shall arrange a meeting with the employee within two (2) working days to discuss the circumstances which resulted in the grievance. The supervisor shall respond to the employee's allegations, giving a verbal decision to the employee within two (2) working days following the meeting.

Formal Procedure: If the grievance is not resolved through the informal procedure, the employee may pursue the grievance with his/her next level supervisor. At this point the grievance must be presented in writing within 2 days of the informal decision from the immediate supervisor. A copy of the written grievance must be sent to the immediate supervisor.

The written grievance must include:

- 1.) A description of the incident
- 2.) The date the incident occurred
- 3.) The policy alleged to have been violated
- 4.) The relief or remedy requested
- 5.) The signature of the employee and the date submitted

This supervisor shall meet together with the employee and immediate supervisor within one week following the receipt of the written grievance to discuss the circumstances of the events.

Within the one week from that meeting, this supervisor will give a written response to the employee. The response shall include a clear indication of approval or denial of the grievance; the reason for approval or denial; and that supervisor's signature and date of response.

If the employee is not satisfied with the decision of the second level supervisor, he/she may request a written review of the documentation by the board of directors.

The board of directors will conduct a review of the documentation and submit to the employee a written response. The written response of the board shall be final.

Automobile Insurance: The agency does not provide insurance to cover accidents that occur in an employee's privately owned vehicle. An employee who uses his/her vehicle while on Agency business is urged to carry adequate liability insurance coverage.

Health /Medical Benefits: The agency does not provide health or medical benefits.

Salary: All clerical and management positions are contracted on an hourly rate and determined based on employee's level of skill, education, and experience. Salaries are reviewed and considered for increase at the annual evaluation period. All Adoption Assessors are contracted positions with payment determined through a contract agreement with each individual Adoption Assessor. Contract are reviewed and renegotiated annually.

Job Descriptions

All employees associated with Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio shall complete all the requirements of OAC 5101:2-5-09 as applicable.

Executive Director shall:

- 1.) possess a bachelor's degree from a college or university by a nationally recognized accrediting organization
- 2.) maintain an Ohio Adoption Assessor Certification
- 3.) maintain Ohio State Social Work License

Adoption Assessors shall:

- 1.) possess a bachelor's degree
- 2.) maintain an Ohio Adoption Assessor Certification
- 3.) maintain Ohio State Social Work License
- 4.) maintain a valid Ohio driver's license

Clerical Assistant shall:

- 1.) demonstrate basic computer and typing skills
- 2.) demonstrate positive communication skills
- 3.) maintain a valid driver's license

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio

Job Description

effective date: 3-01-07
most recent prior effective date 5-01-00

Position Title: Executive Director

Position Description: Responsible for daily operations of the agency. Supervises all staff. Directs agency functions in compliance with Ohio State Law, ODJFS regulations and agency policy.

Immediate Supervisor: Reports to the Board of Trustees

Job Task, Duties and Responsibilities:

- 1.) Hires and supervises all staff.
- 2.) Manages agency's budget.
- 3.) Compiles and maintains monthly statistics regarding all home studies completed.
- 4.) Meets monthly with the Board of Trustees to report the monthly functioning of the agency.
- 5.) Performs other related duties as assigned by Board of Trustees.

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio

Job Description

effective date: 3-01-07
most recent prior effective date 5-01-00

Position Title: Social Services Director:

Position Description: Responsible for supervising all social service activities including, but not limited to managing all case files and supervising all adoption assessors. Assist the Business Director and Marketing Director as requested by Executive Director.

Immediate Supervisor: Reports to Executive Director

Job Tasks, Duties, Responsibilities:

- 1.) Supervises the work of all adoption assessors and signs off on home studies and adoption documents.
- 2.) Manages all client files to ensure compliance with Ohio law and ODJFS requirements
- 3.) Perform other related duties as assigned by the executive director.

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio

Job Description

effective date: 3-01-07
most recent prior effective date 5-01-00

Position Title: Business Director:

Position Description: Responsible for supervising all business-related activities including, but not limited to managing all bank accounts, and tax records. Maintaining a working relationship with accounts and attorney. Assist the Social Service Director and Marketing Director as requested by Executive Director.

Immediate Supervisor: Reports to Executive Director

Job Tasks, Duties, Responsibilities:

- 1.) Maintains all financial records in compliance with Federal and State Law.
- 2.) Manages all tax filings with the assistant of agency accountants and attorney.
- 3.) Perform other related duties as assigned by the executive director.

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio

Job Description

effective date: 3-01-07
most recent prior effective date 5-01-00

Position Title: Marketing Director:

Position Description: Responsible for primary marketing contacts with adoption agencies and adoption attorneys for the purpose of informing those adoption professionals about this agency's adoption services. Coordinating direct mailings and advertising efforts. Assist the Business Director and Social Service Director as requested by Executive Director.

Immediate Supervisor: Reports to Executive Director

Job Tasks, Duties, Responsibilities:

- 1.) Supervise all marketing projects.
- 2.) Manages all marketing contacts with other adoption agencies and adoption attorneys
- 3.) Perform other related duties as assigned by the executive director.

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio

Job Description

effective date: 3-01-07
most recent prior effective date 5-01-00

Position Title: Adoption Assessor

Position Description: Completes adoption home studies as signed by Social Services Director and in compliance with Ohio State Law, ODJFS regulations and agency policy.

Immediate Supervisor: Reports to Social Services Director

Job Tasks, Duties, Responsibilities:

- 1.) Completed adoption home studies as assigned by the administrative director
- 2.) Completes home studies, updates and post placement reports in compliance with Ohio state law, ODJFS regulations and agency policies. Monitors adoption home studies for correctness, compliance and timeliness.
- 3.) Maintains social worker license and adoption certification in compliance with Ohio state law and ODJFS regulations
- 4.) Perform other related duties as assigned by the Social Services Director

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio

Job Description

effective date: 3-01-07
most recent prior effective date 5-01-00

Position Title: Clerical Assistant:

Position Description: Responsible for managing, ordering and organizing all clerical supplies. Responsible for completing clerical tasks as requested by all directors.

Immediate Supervisor: Reports to Marketing Director

Job Tasks, Duties, Responsibilities:

- 1.) Orders and organizes all clerical supplies.
- 2.) Completes clerical tasks as requested by all directors.
- 3.) Perform other related duties as assigned by the executive director.

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio			
Policy Number	Policy Name	OAC	Page
5.23	Volunteer and College Interns	5101:2-5-13 (A)(23)	1 of 1
Original Effective Date	Revision Date	Approval Date	Effective Date
5-01-00	n/a	5-01-00	5-01-00

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio shall not engage the use of volunteers or student interns.

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio			
Policy Number	Policy Name	OAC	Page
5.24	Civil Rights	5101:2-5-13 (A)(24)	1 of 1
Original Effective Date	Revision Date	Approval Date	Effective Date
3-01-07	5-01-10	5-01-10	5-01-10

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio shall work to protect the civil rights of all involved persons including but not limited to biological parents, birth children, teenage mothers, adoptive parents, and adoptive children. Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio will only knowingly associate with child placing agencies that assure the protection of the civil rights of all involved persons. Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio will not participate in the unlawful discrimination of children on the basis of race, color, religion, disability, age, gender and/or national origin.

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio			
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5.35	Children's Rights'	5101:2-5-35	1 of 1
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3-01-07	1-25-10	4-05-16	4-05-16

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio acknowledges the rights of all children. The agency: all employees, adoptive parents, shall not in any way violate the following rights of children.

1. The right to enjoy freedom of thought, conscience and religion or to abstain from the practice of religion.
2. The right to reasonable enjoyment of privacy.
3. The right to have his or her opinions heard and be included, to the greatest extent possible, when any decisions are being made affecting his/her life.
4. The right to receive appropriate and reasonable adult guidance, support and supervision.
5. The right to be free from physical abuse and inhumane treatment.
6. The right to be protected from all forms of sexual exploitation.
7. The right to receive adequate and appropriate medical care.
8. The right to receive adequate and appropriate food, clothing and housing.
9. The right to his/her own money and personal property in accordance with the child's service or case plan.
10. The right to live in clean, safe surroundings.
11. The right to participate in an appropriate educational program.
12. The right to communicate with family, friends, and significant others from whom he/she is living apart, in accordance with the child's service or case plan.
13. The right to be taught to fulfill appropriate responsibilities to himself and to others.

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3-01-07	7-28-09	8-01-09	8-01-09
	1-25-10	2-01-10	2-01-10
	5-24-10	6-01-10	6-01-10
	3-13-16	3-13-16	3-13-16
	4-05-16	4-05-16	4-05-16
	3-03-18	3-03-18	3-03-18

Section I

(1) Geographic Region Served:

AHS provides adoption home study services for domestic and international home studies to applicants throughout the state of Ohio and shall not deny services to prospective applicants based on geographic location.

Section II

(2) Adoption Application Process, Home Study, Home Study Updates and Amendments all follow the requirements of 5101:2-48-05; 5101:2-48-06; 5101:2-48-08; 5101:2-48-09; 5101:2-48-10; 5101:2-48-12; 5101:2-48-12.1; 5101:2-48-12.2; 5101:2-48-13; 5101:2-48-18; 5101:2-48-19; 5101:2-48-22; 5101:2-48-24; 5101:2-52-06

Adoption Home Study Process

a) AHS does not impose any eligibility requirements beyond those required by Ohio Administrative Code.

b) Timeframe for Commencing and Completing an adoption home study:

The assessment required by this rule and as documented through the completion of the JFS 01673 will be commenced within thirty days of the date the agency receives the fully completed JFS 01691 "Application for Child Placement" (rev. 12/2014). The assessment shall be completed within one hundred eighty days of the date that the agency received the application.

IF AHS fails to commence a home study within thirty days of receiving the application or fails to complete a home study within one hundred eighty days shall document in the applicant's record the reason(s) the agency was unable to meet one or both of these requirements. Commencement of a home study means, at a minimum, scheduling an appointment to interview the applicant or assuring that the applicant has been informed of the necessary materials required for the assessor to complete the home study.

The assessor shall provide written notification to the applicant(s) of approval or denial of the adoption homestudy. The written notification shall be provided within ten days after the homestudy is approved or disapproved. An agency shall not continue with the homestudy process if all required documentation is not submitted within one year of the receipt of the

initial or revised JFS 01691 unless the agency makes a determination that the homestudy should not be terminated.

Upon request, Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio will assist the applicant in completing the application and provide assistance to the applicant in securing all required documents and information.

(c) Process for simultaneously certifying an applicant for foster care placement and approving an applicant for adoption.

AHS is a private non-custodial agency who only provides home study services for adoption applicants. Inquiries and applicants who desire to be simultaneously recommended for foster care and adoption will be informed of their options. AHS will provide inquiries and applicant with referral information to their local PSCA and/or to the ODJFS website for foster care and adoption agencies. AHS approved adoption homes who desire to obtain foster care licensure will be provided referral information and explained their options.

(d) Preservice training requirements for an adoptive applicant(s).

AHS provides adoption training per OAC 5101:2-48-09 and includes international requirements. Each person seeking adoption approval successfully completes preservice training, prior to approval of the homestudy and successful completion is documented. AHS provides access to adoption training through individual training, online courses, independent reading and on the agency website Homestudyohio.com.

Preservice training shall address the following components:

- (1) The legal rights and responsibilities of adoptive parents.
- (2) The recommending agency's policies and procedures.
- (3) ODJFS requirements for approving adoptive applicants.
- (4) The effects placement, separation and attachment issues have on children and their families.
- (5) Caregivers' involvement in permanency planning for children and their families and post adoptive issues for children and families including availability of adoption subsidies.
- (6) The dynamics of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, and substance abuse on human growth and development.
- (7) Behavior management techniques.
- (8) Effects of caregiving on children's families.
- (9) Prevention, recognition, and management of communicable diseases.
- (10) Community health and social services available to children and their families.
- (11) At least three hours of training on cultural issues including cultural diversity training and an overview of the Multiethnic Placement Act, Oct. 20, 1994, P.L. 103-382, as amended by Section 1808 of the Small Business Job Protection Act of 1996, Aug. 20,

1996, P.L. 104-188 (MEPA), and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), as it applies to the foster care and adoption process.

(12) The substance of section 2152.72 of the Revised Code which deals with the information required to be shared with a prospective adoptive parent before a child who has been adjudicated a delinquent child for the commission of certain violent crimes is placed with a prospective adoptive parent. A course addressing section 2152.72 of the Revised Code shall not be less than one hour long.

Components of the training may be waived if the assessor determines that the family has received training previously or the family has the skills to care for the needs of the child that will be placed in the home. The three (3) hour requirement for cultural issues shall not be waived. When a waiver has been granted by the agency, it shall document the waiver in the case record pursuant to rule 5101:2-48-22 of the Administrative Code.

(e) Criminal Records Check

Adoptive applicants and other adult household members, if applicable are required to obtain BCII and FBI criminal records check per 5101:2-48-10 with “Reason For Fingerprint Code 2151.86” prior to adoption approval. BCII and FBI results are to be sent directly to AHS by the agency conducting the criminal record checks.

Fees associated with obtaining a criminal records check are the responsibility of the applicant to pay directly to the agency conducting the requested criminal records check.

Completed copy(ies) of the bureau of criminal identification and investigation (BCII) and federal bureau of investigation (FBI) prescribed criminal records check form for the applicant. An agency shall not recommend a person to be approved as an adoptive parent if the person has been convicted of any crime listed in rule 5101:2-48-10 of the Administrative Code and has not met the rehabilitation requirements outlined in rule 5101:2-48-10 of the Administrative Code; and

Proof that the applicant and all adult members of the household, if applicable, have been residents of the state of Ohio for the five year period immediately prior to the date upon which the criminal records check is requested. Proof of residence may include tax records, school attendance records, bank records, rent or mortgage payment receipts or other documentation presented by the applicant. Documents presented by the applicant do not need to be maintained in the case record.

(f) Additional Assessment Activities

In addition to the requirements of Chapter 5101:2-48-12 (S) of the Administrative Code, the agency requires a personal autobiography and guardianship forms for each applicant which is found on the agency web site. The agency shall not approve an adoption homestudy prior to the completion of those requirements, in addition to all requirements of Chapter 5101:2-48 of the Administrative Code that are applicable to the approval of the adoption homestudy.

Approved Adoptive Parents at time of update are required to acknowledge by signature the agency service agreement, current fee schedule and agency policies. Also if

applicable a Multiple Children/Family Assessment JFS 01530 at the time of the update if the family circumstances have changed substantially or if a JFS 01530 was not completed at the time of the homestudy but is required at the time of the update.

(g and h) Multiple Children/Large Family Assessment

The adoption assessor shall complete and or update the JFS 01530 Multiple Children/Large Family Assessment as required by OAC when;

- (i) A family has a total of five or more children residing in the home at the time of the homestudy, including foster children and children in kinship care, or;
- (ii) A family will have a total of five or more children residing in the home based upon the number of children residing in the home at the time of the homestudy, including foster children and children in kinship care and the number of children the family will be approved to adopt.
- (h) The requirement that an assessor shall complete a new JFS 01530 at the time of the update if the family circumstances have changed substantially or if a JFS 01530 was not completed at the time of the homestudy but is required at the time of the update.

Section III-Notification Procedures

(a) The requirements that an adoptive applicant(s) or approved adoptive parent(s) shall notify the agency in writing if a person residing in the home who is twelve years old, but under eighteen years old, has been convicted or pleaded guilty to any offense listed in appendix A of rule 5101:2-48-10 of the Administrative Code or has been adjudicated to be a delinquent child for committing an act that if committed by an adult, would constitute one of those offenses.

If Adoption Home Services of Ohio arranging an adoption initiates an adoptive home study with an applicant, notifying the PCSA in the county the applicant resides (Note: This requirement does not apply to an adoption by a step-parent whose spouse is the biological or adoptive parent of the minor to be adopted or an adoption where the PCSA in the county the adoptive parent resides is contacted with the PCPA or PNA to complete the adoptive applicant's home study)

(b) Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio shall notify in writing the public children services agency in the county in which the prospective adoptive parents reside within ten days after the initiation of a home study pursuant to rule 5101:2-48-12 of the Administrative Code which shall include:

1.) a letter shall be sent to the PCSA containing relevant information about the adoptive applicant(s) to the PCSA in the county in which the adoptive applicant resides when the adoptive home study is initiated. Relevant information includes, but is not limited to all of the following:

- (a) Confirmation of household members as determined by a review of agency records.
- (b) Information relating to any previous foster care or adoption applications and/or placements, such as:

- (i) Past or present functioning of the prospective adoptive parent and household members.
- (ii) Rule violations.
- (iii) Information on the events leading to a removal of any child from the prospective adoptive family home.

(c) The requirements that AHS shall notify in writing the PCSA in the county in which the adoptive parent(s) resides, of an impending adoptive placement no later than ten days prior to the placement of the child pursuant to rule 5101:2-48-16 of the Administrative Code.

If a child is placed with an Ohio adoptive family by an Ohio agency, the PCSA in the county in which the child is to be placed shall be notified, in writing, of the impending placement by the placing agency no later than ten days prior to the placement. In the case of an infant placement, the notification may be made prior to the birth of the child.

If a child from outside Ohio is placed with an Ohio adoptive family, the Ohio agency recommending the adoptive family, or approving the adoptive family homestudy, shall notify, in writing, the PCSA in the county where the adoptive family resides of the impending placement no later than ten days prior to the placement. In the case of an infant placement, the notification may be made prior to the birth of the child. In the case of an infant placement, the notification may be made prior to the birth of the child.

Section IV-Procedure to Provide Access

(4) AHS shall release approved adoption homestudies and other related documents to another PCSA, PCPA that requests a copy of the adoption homestudy for purposes of matching a child pursuant to rule 5101:2-48-19 of the Administrative Code.

If the approved adoptive family signed an authorization for release of info AHS shall make the home study available to any other agency requesting a copy. The agency shall release the home study and related materials within 15 days after the request has been received if all requirements have been met.

AHS does not charge a fee to release copies of the home study or copies of individual home study documents for matching.

Section V-Procedure for Receipt and Maintenance of Approved Adoptive Home studies from other agencies or states

(5) AHS will maintain approved adoption home studies received from other adoption agencies in the following manner: All active home study files are maintained in a secure, locked filing cabinet.

All closed adoption files will be maintained for five (5) years. After five (5) years the homestudy document [JFS 1673] and the homestudy update document [JFS 1385] will be saved in electronic

format on a disc, flash drive, or CD. These discs, flash drives, and/ or CDs will be maintained in a secured, locked filing cabinet for ten (10) years. After ten years they will be destroyed in accordance with maintenance 5.19

Section VI-Procedure for grievances or complaints

AHS shall follow written procedures pursuant to OAC **5101:2-48-24** to review grievance and complaints from adoptive applicants, prospective adoptive families and adoptive families. The procedures include the following:

The agency review shall occur within thirty days of receipt of a request for an agency review and shall include a face-to-face meeting with the adoptive applicant, prospective adoptive families and adoptive families requesting an agency review, the adoptive family caseworker and the administrator, any other individual with information regarding the complaint, as deemed appropriate by the agency administrator or designee.

A written decision, including the reason for the decision, shall be rendered by the administrator or his designee. The decision shall be based upon the evidence presented at the review. A copy of the decision shall be provided to all parties to the agency review within fifteen days of the review.

A review will occur by the highest administrative employee of the agency or designee for any unresolved grievance within thirty calendar days of the filing of the grievance.

All documentation related to notification regarding rights to an agency review and written decisions of the agency review required by this rule shall be maintained in the child and family case record.

When an approved adoptive family requests an agency review because the family believes an adoptive placement was denied or will be denied solely on the basis of geographic location, the PCSA or PCPA shall provide the family with notices and copies of all materials related to requesting a state hearing.

For complaints involving alleged discriminatory acts, policies, or practices pertaining to the foster care and adoption process that involve race, color or national origin, the procedures contained in rule 5101:2-33-03 of the Administrative Code supersede the requirements of this rule.

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio shall follow procedures as outlined in rule 5101:2-33-13 of the Administrative Code when an agency determines there may knowingly be falsification on an adoptive application or home study, or any document submitted during the homestudy process.

Section VII- RCNO Grievance or Complaint

The requirements contained in rule 5101:2-33-03 of the Administrative Code supersedes the requirements of this 5101:2-48-24 when the grievance or complaint involve alleged discriminatory acts, policies, or practices pertaining to the foster care and adoption process that involve race, color or national origin (RCNO).

Section VIII - Procedure for Matching

AHS is a Private Non-Custodial Agency. Matching conferences are the responsibility of the PCSA or PCPA .

Section IX -Open Adoptions

AHS is a private Non-Custodial agency which does not work with birth families.

Section X -Reporting Procedure Regarding Falsification in accordance with 5101:2-33-13

(A) If the agency working with the family suspects that a false statement or false document was knowingly made or submitted during the homestudy process or after the homestudy was approved, the worker shall report the information to the agency administrator or designee within three days of the initial determination of possible falsification. The written statement shall include, but is not limited to:

(1) The original document completed by the applicant, or written documentation of the false statement provided by the applicant or adoptive parent.

(2) Documentation verifying the information or document is knowingly false.

(B) If there is a child placed in the home who has not yet finalized an adoption, then the agency shall, within twenty-four hours of the administrator or designee receiving the written statement mentioned in paragraph (A) of this rule, determine if there is probable cause related to the adoptive child's safety and well-being to warrant the removal of the child from the home until the investigation is completed.

(C) If the agency conducting the investigation is not the agency with custody of the child, the agency shall notify the custodial agency within twenty-four hours of administrator or designee receiving the written statement mentioned in paragraph (A) of this rule of the concerns related to the falsification.

(D) Within ten days of the administrator or designee receiving the written statement described in paragraph (A) of this rule, the agency shall send a notification letter to the adoptive applicant or approved adoptive family, via certified mail, indicating that the information submitted to the agency has been determined to be knowingly false. The notice shall include the following:

(1) Date the notice was mailed.

(2) A copy of the documentation alleged to be knowingly falsified, as well as a written explanation of the falsification.

(3) A statement that the agency is required to notify the county prosecutor in cases in which it has been determined the applicant or family made knowingly false statements, pursuant to section 2921.13 of the Revised Code.

(4) A statement indicating the homestudy process will discontinue because the agency has probable cause to believe a false statement or document was knowingly provided.

(5) If the homestudy process has already been completed, then the agency shall include a statement that includes the following:

(a) The agency will not present the family at a matching conference, pursuant to rule 5101:2-48-16 of the Administrative Code if it is determined a false statement or document was knowingly provided.

- (b) The agency will not release a homestudy for sharing or transferring, pursuant to rule 5101:2-48-19 of the Administrative Code if it is determined a false statement or document was knowingly provided.
- (c) A homestudy will not be filed with the court for finalization purposes pursuant to section 3107.031 of the Revised Code if it is determined a false statement or document was knowingly provided.
- (6) A statement that the adoptive applicant or adoptive parent has the right to respond to the allegation of falsification.
- (7) A statement that the adoptive applicant or adoptive parent has ten days from the date they receive the notification letter to respond to the agency with documentation that the allegation is unfounded and that the statements or documents were not knowingly falsified.
- (8) If the adoptive homestudy is in the process, a statement that if the applicant fails to respond to the agency within ten days of the receipt of the notification letter then the application to adopt is considered withdrawn and the refusal to respond to the allegation has resulted in the termination of the homestudy process by voluntary withdrawal.
- (9) If the adoptive homestudy has been approved, a statement that if the adoptive parent fails to respond to the agency within ten days of the receipt of the notification letter then the refusal to respond to the allegation will result in the expiration of the adoption homestudy approval at the end of the current approval span.
- (E) If the applicant or adoptive parent fails to respond to the agency within ten days of the date of receipt pursuant to paragraph (D) of this rule, the agency shall close the adoption homestudy as if the adoptive applicant or adoptive parent has voluntarily withdrawn from the homestudy process.
- (F) If the applicant or adoptive family responds within the ten day timeframe with the documentation required in paragraph (D)(7) of this rule, then the agency shall conduct an internal investigation that includes the following:
- (1) A review of the information received from the adoptive applicant or family.
 - (2) A face to face visit with the adoptive applicant(s) or adoptive family.
 - (3) An interview with any other relevant witnesses, if applicable.
- (G) The final investigative report shall be completed and mailed to the adoptive applicant no later than thirty days after the receipt of the adoptive applicant's or adoptive family's response to the allegation.
- (1) If unanticipated circumstances require additional time to complete the investigation or issue the report, the agency shall notify the applicant or adoptive family of the need for more time and that an extension of an additional fourteen days is needed.
 - (2) The extension shall be documented in the adoptive family's record.
- (H) The investigative report shall include the following:
- (1) An explanation of the allegation.
 - (2) Any background information deemed relevant by the agency.

- (3) The results of the investigation, including whether probable cause was found to indicate the applicant or adoptive parent made knowingly false statements.
- (4) Any action steps to be taken by the applicant, adoptive parent, or the agency as a result of the investigation.
 - (I) If the final investigative report concludes that the information or documentation was knowingly falsified, the agency shall do the following:
 - (1) Forward a copy of the investigative report to the county prosecutor's office where the adoptive applicant or adoptive parent lives.
 - (2) If the adoptive applicant was still in the homestudy process, the agency shall close the adoption homestudy as if the applicant has voluntarily withdrawn from the homestudy process.
 - (3) If the adoptive homestudy was approved prior to the investigation of falsification, then the following limitations are in place:
 - (a) The adoption homestudy shall not be presented at any matching conference, pursuant to rule 5101:2-48-16 of the Administrative Code.
 - (b) The adoption homestudy shall not be released to another agency for sharing or transferring purposes, pursuant to rule 5101:2-48-19 of the Administrative Code.
 - (c) The adoption homestudy shall not be filed with the court for finalization purposes pursuant to section 3107.031 of the Revised Code.
 - (d) The adoption homestudy approval shall expire at the end of the current approval span.
 - (J) If the final investigative report concludes that there was no falsification made by the applicant, the agency shall:
 - (1) Resume the homestudy process if the applicant chooses to proceed.
 - (2) Complete the homestudy within one hundred eighty days from the date the investigative report was completed.
- (K) Any documentation resulting from the requirements of this rule shall be maintained in the record of the adoptive applicant or adoptive parent.

Section XI -Adoption Assistance

All state and federal adoption assistance including eligibility and the application requirements are provided to applicants. Adoption Subsidy Guide JFS 01985 is provided to all adoptive applicants which discusses adoption assistance, eligibility and adoption requirements.

Section XII - Schedule of Fees for Services

Original Home Study: \$ 1,500.
Home Study Update: \$ 800.

Document Preparation for ICPC	\$ 350.
File Transfer/Release Fee	\$ 300.
File Transfer/Acceptance Fee	\$ 500.
Post Placement Fee (per visit)	\$ 300.
Addendum Fee	\$ 150.
Court Appearance	\$ 250
Large Family Assessment	\$ 400
JFS 1699 Pre Finalization	\$ 350

All fees are same for every adoptive applicant and the same whether single or multiple children.

Adoptive applicants and other adult household members, if applicable are required to obtain BCII and FBI criminal records check per 5101:2-48-10 with “Reason For Fingerprint Code 2151.86” prior to adoption approval. BCII and FBI results are to be sent directly to AHS by the agency conducting the criminal record checks.

Fees associated with obtaining a criminal records check are the responsibility of the applicant to pay directly to the agency conducting the requested criminal records check.

Section XIII - Religious Affiliation

AHS is not associated with any specific religious affiliation. Services shall be provided to prospective adoptive applicants regardless of religious affiliation.

Section XIV-Provision of prefinalization and postfinalization services.

Prefinalization Services

Prefinalization Services are provided in accordance with OAC 5101:2-48-17 as follows:

Visits and contacts shall be conducted by the assessor within the agency who is responsible for the child's case, or another assessor employed or contracted by the PCSA or PCPA who has been delegated to act on behalf of the assigned assessor in his or her absence.

The frequency of visits with the child and the adoptive parent(s) shall be as follows:

- (1) At a minimum, one face-to-face visit with the child and adoptive parent(s) in the adoptive home shall be made during the first seven days of the placement, not including the date of placement.
- (2) At a minimum, one face-to-face visit with the child and adoptive parent(s) in the adoptive home shall be made during the first thirty days of placement, not including the visit during the first seven days of placement.
- (3) After the first thirty days, at a minimum of one face-to-face visit with the child and adoptive parent(s) in the adoptive home shall be made monthly.

The frequency of visits with any other household member shall be as follows:

- (1) At a minimum, one face-to-face visit in the home with any household member whose permanent residence is the adoptive home shall be made every sixty days.

(2) At a minimum, two face-to-face visits in the home prior to finalization with any household member whose permanent residence is the adoptive home although he or she may temporarily reside elsewhere. No less than sixty days between visits.

During each visit, the assessor shall gather information on how the placement is progressing from the child, as appropriate to his or her ability to communicate, the adoptive parent(s) and other household members, in applicable visits. All contacts and visits shall be documented in the child's case record.

For a child who is placed through the "Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children" into an approved adoptive home outside of Ohio, the agency shall follow procedures pursuant to Chapter 5101:2-52 of the Administrative Code and the regulations of the interstate compact, located at <http://icpc.aphsa.org/content/AAICPC/en/ICPCRegulations.html>.

Post Finalization Services

Upon request by any birth parent, adoptive parent or adoptee, AHS shall provide a referral for post finalization adoption services in accordance with OAC 5101-2-48-18 as follows:

- (1) Refer each person who requests postfinalization adoption services to an agency that provides such services.
- (2) Upon written request of a parent, legal custodian, or guardian, provide consultation on adoption-related issues to professionals who are working with the family.
- (3) Provide information regarding the procedures for releasing identifying information pursuant to rule [5101:2-48-20](#) of the Administrative Code.

Section XV- Notification of Availability of a State Hearing

Prospective applicants have the availability of a state hearing, as described in section 5101.35 of the Revised Code, if a prospective applicant(s) believes that an adoptive placement was denied or will be denied solely for the reason of geographic location of the family.

When an approved adoptive family requests an agency review because the family believes an adoptive placement was denied or will be denied solely on the basis of geographic location, the agency shall provide the family with notices and copies of all materials related to requesting a state hearing.

Section XVI-Complaint process in accordance with OAC 5101:2-33-03

AHS complies with the complaint process pursuant to rule **5101:2-33-03** of the Administrative Code regarding complaints of alleged discriminatory acts in the foster care or adoptive process that involve race, color, or national origin.

(A) Each public children services agency (PCSA), private child placing agency (PCPA), and private noncustodial agency (PNA) shall provide a written notice of the procedure for any complaints of discrimination in the foster care or adoption process that involve race, color or national origin (RCNO) to all individuals inquiring about or

applying to be a foster caregiver or adoptive parent. Such notice shall be provided within seven days of the individual's first contact with the agency.

(B) Any individual may file a complaint alleging a discriminatory act, policy or practice involving RCNO in the foster care or adoption process of a PCSA, PCPA, PNA or the Ohio department of job and family services (ODJFS).

Any person, including but not limited to, an employee or former employee of a PCSA, PCPA, or PNA or a member of a family which has sought to become a foster caregiver or adoptive parent, may also file a complaint alleging that he or she was intimidated, threatened, coerced, discriminated against or otherwise retaliated against in some way by a PCSA, PCPA, PNA or by ODJFS, due to the individual making a complaint, testifying, assisting, or participating in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing in connection with an allegation that a PCSA, PCPA, PNA or ODJFS engaged in discriminatory acts, policies, or practices as it applies in the foster care or adoption process.

(C) The individual filing a complaint shall use the JFS 02333 "Discrimination Complaint" (rev. 1/2015). The complaint shall be filed within two years from the date of the occurrence of the alleged discriminatory act; or two years from the date upon which the complainant learned or should have known of a discriminatory act, policy or practice. The complaint may be filed with:

- (1) Any PCSA, PCPA or PNA; or,
- (2) The ODJFS - bureau of civil rights (BCR) .

(D) When any complaint alleging discrimination involving RCNO in the foster care or adoption process is received by:

- (1) A PCSA, PCPA or PNA, the agency shall forward the complaint to ODJFS -BCR within three working days of date of receipt of the complaint.
- (2) ODJFS -BCR , the department shall notify the PCSA, PCPA, PNA that is the subject of the complaint within three working days of the receipt of the complaint.

(E) ODJFS -BCR shall conduct an investigation of the complaint. The PCSA, PCPA or PNA that is the subject of the complaint shall not initiate, conduct, or run concurrent investigations surrounding the complaint or take any further action regarding the complainant or the subject of the complaint until the issuance of the final investigation report by ODJFS -BCR , unless approved by ODJFS -BCR .

(F) The PCSA, PCPA or PNA that is the subject of the complaint shall cooperate fully with ODJFS -BCR during the course of the investigation and shall submit any information requested by ODJFS -BCR not later than fourteen days from the date of the request, unless otherwise agreed upon.

(G) ODJFS -BCR shall conduct an investigation that shall include, but is not limited to:

- (1) Face-to-face interviews with the complainant, the respondent and all relevant witnesses.
- (2) Issuance of a final investigation report to the complainant and the PCSA, PCPA or PNA that is the subject of the complaint. The report shall include the allegations, background information, analysis, determination and recommendations and shall be issued within one hundred twenty days of the receipt of the initial complaint.

If unanticipated circumstances require additional time to complete the investigation or to issue the final report, ODJFS will notify the complainant and the PCSA, PCPA, or PNA that is the subject of the complaint of the need for additional time.

(H) Upon completion of the final investigation report, ODJFS shall determine if any action against a PCSA, PCPA or PNA is warranted. For noncompliance by a PCSA, ODJFS may take any action permitted under section 5101.24 of the Revised Code. For noncompliance by a PCPA or PNA, ODJFS may take action concerning the agency's certificate pursuant to Chapter 5101:2-5 of the Administrative Code.

(I) No person who has filed a complaint alleging a discriminatory act, policy or practice involving RCNO in the foster care or adoption process of a PCSA, PCPA or PNA or who has testified, assisted or participated in any manner in the investigation of a complaint shall be intimidated, threatened, coerced, or retaliated against by any employee or contractor of the PCSA, PCPA, PNA or ODJFS.

(J) Nothing in this rule or in an agency's policy shall prohibit an individual from filing a complaint with the United States department of health and human services (HHS), office for civil rights (OCR) alleging discrimination that involves RCNO in the foster care or adoption process of a PCSA, PCPA, PNA or ODJFS.

(K) The requirements of rules 5101:2-33-20 and 5101:2-48-24 of the Administrative Code do not apply to complaints of discrimination in the foster care or adoption process that involve RCNO.

(L) Each PCSA, PCPA or PNA shall provide a written notice of the procedures for any complaints of discrimination in the foster care or adoption process that involve RCNO within thirty days of the effective date to all foster caregivers certified or in the process of certification and to all individuals who have approved adoptive homestudies or who are participating in the adoptive homestudy process on the effective date of this rule.

Section XVII -Standard of Conduct Re: MEPA and Title VI in accordance with 5101:2-33-11 of OAC.

Standards of conduct regarding the Multiethnic Placement Act of 1994 as amended by section 1808 of the Small Business Job Protection Act of 1996, 42 U.S.C. 622(b)(9) (9/2014) , 671(a)(18) (9/2014) , 674(d) (10/2008) and 1996(b)(9) (MEPA) (1/2/06) (8/1978) and the Title VI of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000d, (1/2/06) (7/1964) as they apply to the adoption process (Title VI) , do not supersede the provisions of the ICWA Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978, 25 U.S.C. 1901 (11/1987) .

- (1) Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio (AHS)'s is a PNA operating an adoption program

shall adopt written standards of conduct that will govern the performance of its employees or contractors, as that performance relates to compliance with MEPA and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI) as they apply to the foster care and adoption process. The written standards of conduct shall:

- (2) Prohibit denying any person the opportunity to become a foster caregiver or an adoptive parent on the basis of race, color or national origin of that person, or of the child involved; or delaying or denying any placement of a child in foster care or for adoption on the basis of the race, color or national origin of the foster caregiver(s), of the adoptive parent(s) or of the child involved.
- (3) Include enforcement requirements to be used whenever an agency employee or contractor engages in discriminatory acts, policies, or practices involving race, color, or national origin in the foster care or adoption process as determined by ODJFS upon completion of the investigation conducted pursuant to rule 5101:2-33-03 of the Administrative Code.
 - (a) The enforcement requirements shall include standards governing penalties, sanctions, and other disciplinary actions, which may include suspension and/or removal, to be applied in accordance with applicable employment law and union contracts.
 - (b) The standards shall provide for the submission of a corrective action plan whenever an investigation conducted by ODJFS, pursuant to rule 5101:2-33-03 of the Administrative Code, results in a finding that an agency employee or contractor engaged in discriminatory acts, policies, or practices.
 - (c) The standards require that the corrective action plan will address how the agency will prevent future violation by that employee or contractor and shall require that the corrective action plan be submitted to ODJFS within thirty days of notification of the findings of the investigation.
 - (d) The agency shall provide a copy of the written standards of conduct to each employee or contractor who is engaged in the placement of children into foster care or for adoption, or engaged in the recruitment, assessment, approval, or selection of a foster caregiver(s) or adoptive family. New employees or contractors shall receive a copy of the written standards of conduct within thirty days of their hire date or the effective date of their contract.

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio is a Private Non-Custodial agency, shall not require an ongoing, adoption worker to justify a proposed placement for the reason that the race, color or national origin of the child is different from that of the family whom the worker is proposing as the child's foster caregiver or adoptive parent.

Section XVIII - Inquiry Policy Response

AHS provides agency policies to inquiry responses by directing them to the agency website Homestudyohio.com. pursuant to rule 5101:2-48-08 of the Administrative Code.

- 1) A written notice of the procedure for any complaints of discrimination in the adoption process that involve race, color or national origin (RCNO) , pursuant to rule 5101:2-33-03 of the Administrative Code .
- (2) The JFS 01611 "Non-discrimination Requirements for Foster Care and Adoptive Placements" (rev. 1/2009). No additional language regarding non-discrimination in the adoptive placement process based upon RCNO shall be included in the agency's policy or other recruitment materials.

Section XIX - ADOPTION RECRUITMENT PLAN

Strategies to Reach All Parts of the Community

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio utilizes a variety of strategies to reach the entire community in which we provide service. In the geographic sense, this includes the state of Ohio.

Methods of Disseminating General, Targeted and Child Specific Information

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio utilizes a variety of general recruitment techniques in order to disseminate general information regarding adoption and the adoption process in Ohio. These methods include, but are not limited to, use of print materials such as brochures and introduction letters, maintaining a web site, speaking engagements in churches and other community settings, information booths at social events, and posting notices in churches.

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio works with families seeking completion of an adoption home study for international adoption placement of private placement of an infant or relative. AHS on rare occasion may consider the request of a PCSA to complete an adoption home study for a family seeking to adopt an identified waiting child, but does not actively recruit families for this population and does not maintain contracts with PCSAs for this purpose.

Pre-service training for prospective adoptive parents is offered on a rolling basis as needed. Orientation is the first segment of the first pre-service training session. All sessions are held in the clients' home or on line, and are also offered elsewhere in Northeast Ohio or on a group basis if necessary to accommodate interested families. Prospective adoptive caregivers who are being studied by another agency may participate in Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio pre-service training, if requested.

All prospective foster caregivers and adoptive parents will receive information from Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio regarding adoption procedures within seven days of inquiry. This information includes a summary of Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio adoption policy, a description of the characteristics and approximate number of waiting children in Ohio, a description of all state and federal adoption assistance including eligibility requirements and the application process, the OAPL web page address (www.jfs.ohio.gov/oapl), the JFS 01675 "Ohio Adoption Guide", how to obtain an application for adoption, the requirement of a criminal records check for all adult residents of the household, information regarding the foster care/adoption homestudy assessment process, and pre-service training requirements.

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio will make the homestudies of any of its approved adoptive families available to any other PCSA, PCPA or PNA which requests a copy of the homestudy and will release all requested information contained in the adoption homestudy, except references, within 15 days after the request to the designated agency if the authorization to release the information has been submitted to Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio.

Access to the Homestudy Process for All Prospective Caregivers

The application/homestudy process is made available to all prospective caregivers who are at least 21 years of age and who reside within the state of Ohio. Access to information regarding the home study process is assured to all prospective applicants through an internet website that can be accessed 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. Families without internet access can contact AHS through phone contact that also allows 24 hour access 7 days a week. The phone voice mail provides callers with the director’s cell phone number. The director is available via cell phone to answer any questions, manage any emergency situations 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

Staff Training for Work with Diverse Communities

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio recognizes the need for training of staff to work with diverse cultural, racial, ethnic and economic communities. Adoption Home Study Services staff receive formal training through attending agency-paid staff development training and professional workshops, in addition to the State required Adoption Assessor Training which includes sessions on cultural issues in permanency planning.

Linguistic Barriers

In the case of a linguistic barrier, the Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio will arrange for an interpreter to assist in communication with the family. For the hearing impaired, Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio will also arrange for an interpreter to facilitate communication with Adoptive parents. The Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio has a TDD available for telephone contact. The Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio will be responsible for any fees associated with these services.

Fee Structures

Original Home Study:	\$ 1,500.
Home Study Update:	\$ 800.
Document Preparation for ICPC	\$ 350.
File Transfer/Release Fee	\$ 300.
File Transfer/Acceptance Fee	\$ 500.
Post Placement Fee (per visit)	\$ 300.
Addendum Fee	\$ 150.
Court Appearance	\$ 250.
Large Family Assessment	\$ 400.
JFS 1699 Pre Finalization	\$ 350.

Adoptive applicants and other adult household members, if applicable are required to obtain BCII and FBI criminal records check per 5101:2-48-10 with “Reason For Fingerprint Code 2151.86” prior to adoption approval. BCII and FBI results are to be sent directly to AHS by the agency conducting the criminal record checks.

Fees associated with obtaining a criminal records check are the responsibility of the applicant to pay directly to the agency conducting the requested criminal records check.

All fees are same for every adoptive applicant and the same whether single or multiple

children..

Statement of Assurance Multiethnic Placement Act (MEPA) Requirements

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio does not deny or delay any applicant the opportunity to become an adoptive parent based on race, color, creed, religion, ethnicity, geographic location within Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio service area, national origin, handicap or age of the foster caregiver, adoptive parent or the child involved.

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio does not delay or deny the placement of a child for adoption or in foster care on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, ethnicity, national origin, handicap or age of the foster caregiver, adoptive parent or the child involved.

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio does not deny or delay the placement of a child based on geographic boundaries within Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio s' service area.

Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio assures that all recruitment activities and materials are in compliance with the Multiethnic Placement Act (MEPA) of 1994 as amended by Section 1808 of the Small Business Job Protection Act of 1996, 42 U.S.C. 622(b)(9), 671 (a)(18), 674(d) and 1996(b); Title VI of the Civil Rights Action of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000d, et. seq., as it applies to the adoption process; the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978, 25 U.S.C.A. 1901, et. seq. as amended; and 42 U.S.C. 671 (a) the "Adoptions and Safe Families Act of 1997."

As a non-custodial Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio, does not make final placement decisions. Decision-making authority is held by the public children services or other entity holding legal custody of the child. Adoption Home Study Services of Ohio works with custodial agencies to assure compliance with the "Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978" and nothing in this recruitment plan will be in conflict with this act.

The placement of children will not be delayed or denied based on geographic location of the neighborhood of the prospective caregiver whenever geography is being used as a proxy for the racial composition of the neighborhood, the demographics of the neighborhood, the presence or lack of presence of a significant number of persons of a particular race, color or national origin in the neighborhood or any similar purpose.