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**HB 906**  
**Caregiver**  
**Passport**



# What does the law require?

## Providing caregivers with the following information AT THE TIME OF PLACEMENT:

- An explanation for enrolling the child into school and any information to complete the process
- A description of financial assistance available for the caregiver, including assistance for childcare
- A description of RPPS
- Contact information for the County or District DFCS

## At the time of placement if available, a copy of or the recommendations from:

- Child's most recent medical and dental exam
- Child's developmental, trauma, and psychological exam
- Court scheduling or dates and times for any scheduled hearings
- Health Insurance information for the child, including the child's Medicaid Number

**NOTE:** *If this information is not available at the time of placement, DFCS shall request the information no later than 15 days after the child enters foster care and provide the information to the placement resource within five business days of receipt.*



## What did we do?

The Division developed a tangible document titled the “Caregiver Placement Passport” that contains most of the information that the law requires caregivers to be provided at the time of placement.

*Does not contain instructions for school enrollment as that may vary by area/district.*



## Who Must Receive It?

- Foster Parents
- Adoptive Parents
- Relative Placements
- Non-Relative Placements



## Where can you find it?

Policy updates can be found at [www.odis.dhs.ga.gov](http://www.odis.dhs.ga.gov) – in sections 10.1, 10.3, and 10.4.

# SHINES Updates....

The Division is currently working to draft a Child Health Passport that can be launched from the Georgia SHINES system.

It will contain much of the child's health information and other data that the law requires be provided to caregivers.

This document will collect information that has been inputted into the system into one document that can be launched at anytime.

Projected execution date of April 2019!







# Proposed Foster Home Licensure Standards Crosswalk

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Candis L. Jones, LAPC

Caregiver Recruitment and Retention Unit Director



My COMPLETE  
reaction when  
the proposed  
standards were  
published!



Model Licensing Standards Title	Model Licensing Standards Rule Content	Current Division Standard	State Standard Source - Indicate the citation for all (Law/Policy)	Changes Needed	Plan to address Alignment (Law/Policy)
<b>Foster Home Eligibility</b>	Applicants must be age 18 or older.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must be at least 10 years older than the child to be placed, if married;</li> <li>Must at least 25 years of age, if unmarried;</li> </ul>	14.1 <i>Recent legislative change for relative adoptions not effective until 09/01/18</i>	Determine if want to lower the age to 18 for unmarried individuals	
	Applicants must have income or resources to make timely payments for shelter, food, utility costs, clothing, and other household expenses prior to the addition of a child or children in foster care.	Have sufficient income to maintain their family excluding the amount of the per diem received for any child(ren) in foster care	14.1	Policy language to align with standards	Update Policy
	Applicants must be able to communicate with the child in the child's own language and applicants must be able to communicate with the title IV-E agency, health care providers, and other service providers	No comparable standard	14.1	Addition to Policy	Add to Policy
	At least one applicant in the home must have functional literacy, such as having the ability to read medication labels.	No comparable standard	14.1	Addition to Policy	Add to policy
<b>Foster Home Eligibility</b> <i>Physical/Mental Health</i>	All applicants must have recent (conducted within the prior 12 months) physical exams from a licensed health care professional that indicate that the applicants are capable of caring for an additional child or children.	<p>Ensure a medical evaluation is completed for all applicants and their current household members, including current immunizations for household members under 18 years of age.</p> <p>The medical evaluation must be conducted and signed by a licensed physician, physician's assistant, or public health department within 12 months of the date of approval of the Family Evaluation</p>	14.1; 14.10	No change needed  1	Currently Aligned

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	All household members must disclose current mental health and/or substance abuse issues.	<p>Abstain from the use of illegal drugs and misuse of prescription drugs and alcohol</p> <p>The primary and secondary caregiver, as applicable, must be drug screened</p>	14.1; 14.10	No policy reference regarding the Disclosure of Mental Health	Add mental health disclosure language to policy
	All household members must provide information on their physical and mental health history, including any history of drug or alcohol abuse or treatment	<p>Medical screening required on additional household members – medical provider is asked if the individual has history of alcohol/illicit substance misuse – however additional HH members are not required to be drug screened</p>	14.1; 14.10	<p>Household members must provide verification of physical health in form of completion of Medical Statement from Medical provider</p> <p>No current language regarding disclosure of mental health history or drug and alcohol treatment</p>	Update policy to align with standard

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	<p>All children who are household members must be up to date on immunizations consistent with the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the American Academy of Family Physicians, unless the immunization is contrary to the child's health as documented by a licensed health care professional</p>	<p>Ensure a medical evaluation is completed for all applicants and their current household members, including current immunizations for household members under 18 years of age.</p> <p>If a household member is under 18 years of age, he/she must be current with regard to immunizations</p>	<p>14.1;14.10</p>	<p>Although there is current alignment in policy with this requirement – it is recommended that the language therein reflect what is in the standard</p>	<p>Update policy to align with standard</p>
<p><b>Foster Home Eligibility</b> <i>Background Checks</i></p>	<p>Applicants must submit to criminal record and child abuse and neglect registry checks as required in section 471(a)(20) of the Social Security Act (the Act).</p>	<p>Conduct a state (Georgia Crime Information Center (GCIC) and national (National Crime Information Center (NCIC)) Live Scan criminal records check for all relatives/non-relatives and adults, 18 and older, residing temporarily or permanently in the relative's/non-relative's home and having access to the child.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prior to an emergency placement with a relative/non-relative, review and approve the initial Home Safety Check and preliminary Criminal Records Checks (CRC) and Child Protective Services (CPS) screenings.</li> <li>Complete an emergency NCIC check with OIG if an immediate placement is needed (see policy <b>19.8 Case Management: Criminal Records Checks</b>).</li> </ul> <p><b>NOTE:</b> A Live Scan GCIC/NCIC CRC is required within five (5) business days of the completion of the emergency check. If the</p>	<p>14.2</p>	<p>Standards only state that applicants submit to criminal record check – does not indicate that it must be both a state and national screening.</p> <p>1 2</p>	<p>Determine if Georgia desires to maintain assessment of state and national screenings</p>

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<b>Foster Home Eligibility</b> <i>Background Checks (cont'd)</i>	<p><b>The state or tribe must not grant final approval to the applicant if a record check reveals a felony conviction for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Child abuse or neglect;</li> <li>-Spousal abuse;</li> <li>-A crime against children (including child pornography);</li> <li>-A crime involving violence, including rape, sexual assault, or homicide, but not including other physical assault or battery;</li> <li>-Physical assault, battery, or a drug-related offense within the last five (5) years;</li> </ul>	<p>agency fails to obtain the Live GCIC/NCIC CRC within the required timeframes, the child may have to be moved, per state law.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>14.2</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">No Changes Needed</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Policy Aligns</p>
		<p>DFCS shall not approve any prospective foster or adoptive parent that has been convicted of a felony involving:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Child abuse or neglect;</li> <li>2. Spousal abuse;</li> <li>3. A crime against a child or children (including child pornography); or</li> <li>4. A crime involving violence, including rape, sexual assault, or homicide (but not including other physical assault or battery).</li> </ol> <p>DFCS shall not approve any prospective foster or adoptive parent that has been convicted within the last five (5) of the following felonies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Physical assault;</li> <li>2. Battery; or</li> <li>3. A drug or alcohol related offense</li> </ol>			
	<p>Title IV–E agencies must check any child abuse and neglect registry maintained by the state or tribe for information on any applicant and on any other adult living in the prospective foster home.</p>	<p>Have no substantiated Child Protective Services (CPS) history;</p> <p><b>EXCEPTION:</b> Relative or non-relative (fictive kin) caregivers should not be disqualified based solely on their DFCS history, history should be analyzed prior to making a placement decision. In addition, at re-evaluation an existing caregiver may have substantiated CPS history where a waiver has been granted from the State</p>			

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<b>Foster Home Eligibility</b> <i>Home Health Safety</i>	<p><b>Living Space:</b></p> <p>The home must be a house, mobile home, housing unit or apartment occupied by an individual or a family. The home, grounds, and all structures on the grounds of the property must in a reasonable state of repair within community standards.</p>	<p>Have a home environment that is clean, free of environmental hazards, and provides a livable atmosphere</p>	<p><b>14.1</b></p>		
	<p><b>The home must have:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A continuous supply of safe drinking water.</li> <li>2. A properly operating kitchen with a sink, refrigerator, stove, and oven;</li> <li>3. At least one properly operating bathroom with a toilet, sink and tub or shower.</li> <li>4. Heating and/or cooling as required by the geographic area, consistent with accepted community standards and in safe operating condition.</li> <li>5. Must have a working phone or access to a working phone in close walking proximity.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. If a home is not on county/city water and/or sewage systems, a statement is required confirming that an approved environmental inspection has been completed within the preceding 12 months.</li> <li>2. If an environmental inspection is not applicable, a statement that the utility bills were viewed and that the home is on county/city water and/or sewage system is required.</li> <li>3. Homes with water wells must comply with the Water Well Standards Act.</li> <li>4. The upper terminal of the well is to be protected by a sanitary seal or cover to prevent entrance of pollutants to the well.</li> <li>5. Negative reports from sampling of the wells without the upgrade can be construed as "safe" with an advisory that the upper well terminus should be upgraded into compliance as soon as possible.</li> <li>6. Annual re-testing is required until the well is brought into full compliance with the Act.</li> <li>7. Gas heaters in the home must be vented.</li> </ol>	<p><b>14.10</b></p>	<p>Georgia standards exceed model standards with some exceptions.</p> <p>-</p> <p>1 4</p>	<p><b>Include in policy those measures outlined by HHS Model standards that are not currently comparable.</b></p>

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<b>Foster Home Eligibility</b> <i>Home Health Safety (cont'd)</i>	<p><b>Condition of the Home:</b></p> <p>The applicants' home, grounds, and all structures on the grounds of the property must be properly maintained in a clean, safe, and sanitary condition and in a reasonable state of repair within community standards. The interior and exterior must be free from dangerous objects and conditions, and from hazardous materials.</p>	<p>Have a home environment that is clean, free of environmental hazards, and provides a livable atmosphere</p>	<p><b>14.10</b></p>	<p>Policy language to align with standard</p> <p>1 5</p>	<p><b>Update Policy</b></p>



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	<p>Have adequate lighting, ventilation and proper trash and recycling disposal.</p> <p>Be free from rodents and insect infestation</p>	<p>The approved home and surrounding property must be kept reasonably clean and uncluttered, properly maintained, free of safety and health hazards, and free of uncontrolled rodents and insects</p>	<p><b>14.19</b></p>	<p>Policy Language needs to include provisions in standards</p>	<p><b>Update Policy</b></p>
	<p>Proper water heater temperature.</p>	<p>No comparable standard</p>		<p>Policy language to align with standard</p>	<p><b>Update Policy</b></p>
	<p>Weapons and ammunition (separately) stored, locked, unloaded, and inaccessible to children</p>	<p>All firearms in the home must be kept under lock and key and inaccessible to children at all times. As an added safety measure, any commercially available, reliable gun-safety mechanisms (e.g., trigger guard lock.) may also be used.</p> <p>All ammunition is to be locked away and stored in a separate location from firearms in the home.</p>	<p><b>14.19</b></p>	<p>Aligns with proposed standard</p>	<p><b>No change in policy needed</b></p>
<p><b>Foster Home Eligibility</b> <i>Home Health Safety (cont'd)</i></p>	<p>Pets are vaccinated in accordance with state, tribal and/or local law</p>	<p>Comply with Georgia law requiring all dogs, cats, and ferrets be vaccinated for rabies.</p>	<p><b>14.19</b></p>	<p><sup>1</sup>/<sub>6</sub> Policy aligns</p>	<p><b>No change in policy needed</b></p>

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	Swimming pools must have a barrier on all sides	Ensure in-ground or above-ground swimming pools are inaccessible to children by isolating the pool from the home with a fence or using a pool safety cover	14.19	Policy aligns	No change in policy needed
	Swimming pools must have their methods of access through the barrier equipped with a safety device, such as a bolt lock.	<p>The fence must be at least four feet in height, surround all sides of the pool, and have a gate that locks. The fence must have no vertical or horizontal openings that are more than four inches wide and must be constructed in such a manner that a young child cannot climb through or under the fence</p> <p>An exterior wall of the home may be used as a barrier to the pool/body of water if there is an alarm on all exits from the home leading to the pool/body of water. The alarm must meet the standard of 85 decibels.</p>	14.19	Policy Aligns	No change in policy needed
	Swimming pools must be equipped with a life saving device, such as a ring buoy.	Equip the swimming pool with lifesaving and flotation devices, such as reaching poles and ring buoys	14.19	Policy aligns	No change in policy needed
	If the swimming pool cannot be emptied after each use, the pool must have a working pump and filtering system.	No comparable standard		Policy language to align with standards	Update Policy
	Hot tubs and spas must have safety covers that are locked when not in use.	Although this policy specifically refers to in-ground and above-ground pools and waterfront property, families with hot tubs and spas must take substantial safety measures to ensure the safety of children placed in the foster home.	14.19	Policy language to align with standards	Update Policy

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<b>Foster Home Eligibility</b> <i>Home Health Safety (cont'd)</i>	Prevent the child’s access, as appropriate for his or her age and development, to all medications, poisonous materials, cleaning supplies, other hazardous materials, and alcoholic beverages	All hazardous substances including, but not limited to, flammable and poisonous substances, medications, and industrial cleaning supplies must be stored out of the reach of children	<b>14.19</b>	Policy language to align with standards	Update Policy
<b>Foster Home Capacity</b>	<p>The total number of children in foster care in a family foster home, must not exceed six (6) consistent with section 472(c)(1)(A)(ii)(III) of the Act. Per section 472(c)(1)(B) of the Act, the number of foster children cared for in a foster family home may exceed this numerical limitation at the option of the title IV–E agency for any of the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To allow a parenting youth in foster care to remain with the child of the parenting youth.</li> <li>To allow siblings to remain together.</li> <li>To allow a child with an established meaningful relationship with the family to remain with the family.</li> <li>To allow a family with special training or skills to provide care to a child who has a severe disability.</li> </ul>	<p>Meet standards for appropriate utilization of the home;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No more than six children under the age of 16, including the children of the caregiver, shall be placed in a foster home. The parent-child ratio may never exceed 1:6 at any time.</li> <li>No more than two children under two years of age, including the children of the caregiver’s family, shall be placed in the home (Same for OPM)</li> </ul> <p>OPM – RBWO Minimum Standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No child in the custody of DFCS may be placed in a foster home if that placement will result in more than (3) foster children in that home or, a total of six (6) children in the home, including the foster family’s biological and/or adopted children without the written approval of the Placement and Permanency Services Director.</li> </ul>	<p>14.1</p> <p>RBWO Minimum Standards 11.14 b</p> <p>RBWO Minimum Standards 11.14 a</p>	Policy language to align with standards	<p>Update Policy</p> <p>A decision is needed to make the policy consistent for DFCS and RBWO Providers to reflect no more than 6 or 3 foster children being placed.</p> <p>18</p>

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<p><b>Foster Home Sleeping Arrangements</b></p>	<p>Applicants must provide a safe sleeping space including sleeping supplies, such as mattress and linens, for each individual child, as appropriate for the child's needs and age and similar to other household members.</p> <p>Foster parents must not co-sleep or bed- share with infants.</p>	<p>Only bedrooms shall be used as a sleeping space for children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each non-related child must sleep in a separate bed.</li> <li>• A maximum of two children may sleep in a double or larger bed. The children must be siblings and must be the same gender.</li> <li>• No child shall sleep in the bed with an adult. <i>Infants may not sleep in a bed with anyone.</i></li> <li>• A child over one year of age shall not sleep in the bedroom of an adult.</li> <li>• No more than three children shall share a bedroom. The suitability of children sharing a room should be assessed based on the background/history of the children.</li> <li>• Children five years of age and older shall not share a bedroom with a person of the opposite sex.</li> </ul> <p>OPM RBWO Minimum Standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any collapsible (pack and play), sofas, cots or other such temporary sleeping structures may not be used as the planned bed space for children.</li> <li>• Cameras should not be used in a manner that violates privacy of youth. Cameras in bedrooms and bathrooms are prohibited.</li> </ul>	<p>14.1</p> <p><b>RBWO Minimum Standards 11.15</b></p>	<p>Update the policy to also include the following ABA Models Standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All cribs in the home must be in compliance with Consumer Product Safety Commission standards.</li> <li>• All bunk beds in the home must not have more than two tiers.</li> <li>• <i>The upper tier must have railings on both sides to prevent falling.</i></li> <li>• <i>The top tier must not be used by a child under the age of 6.</i></li> </ul>	<p>Adjustment to Policy Needed</p>

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	Have a written emergency evacuation plan to be reviewed with the child and posted in a prominent place in the home.	No Comparable standard <b>See above OPM RBWO Minimum Standard</b>		Policy language to align with standard	<b>Update Policy</b>
	Maintain first aid supplies	No Comparable standard  OPM-RBWO Minimum Standards: Providers must maintain a first aid kit and instructions manual in each unit, cottage, and/or foster home. The first aid kit shall contain scissors, tweezers, gauze pads, adhesive tape, thermometer, assorted band-aids, antiseptic cleaning solution, and bandages.	<b>RBWO Minimum Standard 6.6</b>	Policy language to align with standard	<b>Update Policy</b>
<b>Transportation</b>	<p>Applicants must ensure that the family has reliable, legal and safe transportation with safety restraints, as appropriate for the child.</p> <p>Reliable transportation would include a properly maintained vehicle or access to reliable public transportation, if one is owned; legal transportation would include having a valid driving license, insurance and registration as appropriate and safe transportation would include safety restraints <b>and only adults in the home having a driving record in good standing transport the child.</b></p>	<p>Have reliable transportation</p> <p>Driver's License and Insurance (If applicable): The applicant has a valid State of Georgia driver's license and proof of insurance in order to transport children.</p>	<b>14.1; 14:10</b>	Policy language to align with standard	<b>Update Policy</b>

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Foster Parent Assurances	Applicants must agree to comply with their roles and responsibilities as discussed with the title IV–E agency once a child is placed in their care.				
	<p>The title IV–E agency must require assurances including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicants will not use corporal or degrading punishment</li> <li>• Applicants will not use any illegal substances, abuse alcohol by consuming it in excess amounts, or abuse legal prescription and/or nonprescription drugs by consuming them in excess amounts or using them contrary to as indicated.</li> <li>• Applicants and their guests will not smoke in the family foster home, in any vehicle used to transport the child, or in the presence of the child in foster care.</li> <li>• Applicants will adhere to the title IV–E agency’s reasonable and prudent parent standard per section 472(c)(1)(A)(ii)(I) of the Act.</li> </ul>	<p>Caregiver Safety Agreement includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To refrain from the use of any corporal or unusual punishment on a child placed in (my/our) home</li> </ul> <p><i>SQS Standards include the following – but is not on the Safety Agreement:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abstain from the use of illegal drugs and misuse of prescription drugs and alcohol</li> </ul>	14.1; 14.19	Policy and supportive documents need to align with proposes standards	Update policy and collateral documents



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<b>Foster Home Study</b>	Applicant must have completed an agency home study, which is a written comprehensive family assessment in collaboration with the applicants to include the following elements:	Initiate a comprehensive written Initial Family Evaluation (IFE) of each prospective caregiver upon receipt of their application to become a foster or adoptive parent	<b>14.10</b>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least one scheduled on-site visit to assess the home to ensure that it meets the state, tribal and/or local standards applicable to the safety and care of the home</li> <li>At least one scheduled in home interview for each household member to observe family functioning and assess the family's capacity to meet the needs of a child or children in foster care</li> <li>The title IV–E agency has discretion on whether to interview or observe each household member based on his or her age and development</li> <li>Multiple applicant references that attest to the capability of the applicant to care for the child, including at least one from a relative and one from a non-relative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current policy requires three (3) in-home consultations Conduct the first of three in-home consultations with applicants and do the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Answer questions applicants may have formulated since the Information Session;</li> <li>b. Discuss the remaining assessment process;</li> <li>c. Discuss the SAQ and Reasons for Foster Checklist;</li> <li>d. Develop a plan with the applicants to complete required documentation, criminal records checks, medical evaluations, drug screening, CPR/First Aid training, and pre- service training;</li> <li>e. Direct applicants to the online Foster Parent Manual;</li> <li>f. Schedule applicants for IMPACT Family Centered Practice (FCP).</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Assess information received, ensure all references have been requested, and create questions for the final in-home consultation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Obtain at least three character references either in writing, in person, or via telephone</li> </ul>	<b>14.10</b>	Update policy to include language in HHS standards that is currently not reflected	<b>Update to policy needed</b>