
OVERVIEW

If a child must be removed from their home, preference must be given to placement with a relative. In addition to placement preference, when a child is removed from their home, federal and state laws allow for relatives to participate in the case and have contact with the child. Case managers must identify and provide notice to all adult relatives that a related child is in foster care. Ongoing efforts to identify, locate, and engage relatives is an expected part of case planning and permanency.

Note: For an Indian child, extended family members, as defined by the law or custom of the Indian child's tribe, may be included as relatives for placement purposes; see [NAA 215, Placement/Replacement Priorities for Indian Child\(ren\)](#).

SCOPE

The policy requirements described in this item apply to children's protective services, juvenile justice, foster care Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) and private child placing agency case managers) and licensing (MDHHS and private child placing agency certification workers). Multiple program types may overlap during the lifetime of a case; therefore, it is recommended the case manager with primary case management responsibility at the time the policy directive is required is responsible for completing the task unless otherwise specified or agreed upon by assigned program staff.

Within this policy, there are items that require director approval. Approval from the county director, designated child welfare director, or private agency child welfare director is required for all counties with the exception of Wayne County. In Wayne County, the district manager can approve in place of the county director.

DEFINITION OF RELATIVE

"Relative" means an individual who is at least 18 years of age and is any of the following:

1. Related to the child within the fifth degree by blood, marriage, or adoption, as grandparent, great-grandparent, great-great-grandparent, aunt or uncle, great-aunt or great-uncle, great-great-aunt or great-great-uncle, sibling, stepsibling, nephew or niece, first cousin or first cousin once removed, and the spouse

of any of the above, even after the marriage has ended by death or divorce.

Note: Step relationships for the relationship types listed above are included as relatives for placement purposes.

2. A stepparent, ex-stepparent, or the parent who shares custody of a half-sibling is considered a relative for the purpose of placement.
3. The parent of a man whom the court has found probable cause to believe is the putative father if there is no man with legally established rights to the child. A placement with the parent of a putative father is not to be construed as a finding of paternity or to confer legal standing on the putative father. MCL 712A.13a(1)(j).
4. Not related to a child within the fifth degree by blood, marriage, or adoption but who has a strong positive emotional tie or role in the child's life or the child's parents' life if the child is an infant, as determined by the department or, if the child is an Indian child, as determined solely by the Indian child's tribe. As used in this section, "Indian child" and "Indian child's tribe" mean those terms as defined in section 3 of chapter XIIB; see NAA 215, Placement/Replacement Priorities for Indian Child(ren).

Note: Placements made with an unrelated caregiver cannot be changed to a relative placement while the child is in their home.

- A putative or presumed father is not considered a relative and would be considered an *Unrelated Caregiver*, see [FOM 722-03 Placement Selection and Standards](#). The identification of a putative or presumed father goes beyond a strong positive emotional tie. Due diligence is required to establish an individual as the legal father.

DILIGENT SEARCH AND NOTIFICATION PROCESS

The relative search **must begin prior to the child's removal** from the home and **continues** until legal permanency for the child is achieved or case closure for a youth with a permanency goal of

another planned permanent living arrangement (APPLA). Case managers must pursue the identification and notification of relatives and document the initial and ongoing efforts in the investigation report and **each** case service plan.

Note: Adherence to deadlines and documentation requirements are crucial to fully implementing the preference for relative foster care placement in effect during the 90 days following removal of a child from parental custody; see [FOM 722-03 Placement Selection and Standards](#).

Relative Search Forms

[DHS-991, Diligent Search Checklist](#), must be used to ensure comprehensive search efforts.

[DHS-987, Relative Documentation](#), is a mandatory form used to document the name, address, telephone number, results of American Indian heritage inquiry, and relationship of every relative identified. Case managers must document all relative search contacts on the DHS-987, Relative Documentation.

Note: Children's protective services (CPS) case managers must upload the DHS-987, Relative Documentation, into the electronic case record prior to case transfer.

[DHS-990, Relative Notification Letter](#), must be sent to all relatives upon identification. The DHS-990 includes a Relative Response and Relative Information attachment. The Relative Response portion allows the relative to indicate whether they would like to be considered for placement and/or support for the child. The Relative Information attachment allows the relative to provide the contact information of other relatives who may have an interest in becoming a resource for the child. The case manager must contact any new relative that is identified, within five business days from receipt of this form (or any other form of contact).

Documentation

Upon receipt or completion, all relative search forms must be uploaded to the *Document* hyperlink under *Case Overview* in the electronic case record.

**RELATIVE
APPROVAL**

All relatives, who are unlicensed at the time of placement, must be approved. Initial approval occurs with the completion of the MDHHS-5770 Relative Approval & Placement Safety Screen. Final approval is achieved when the relative(s) fingerprint results are obtained, the case manager completes the fingerprint assessment, and the assessment is approved by the supervisor. The date final approval begins is when the fingerprint assessment is approved in the electronic case management system.

Note: If a relative caregiver is licensed at the time of placement but closes their license while a related child is in their care, they must become approved to maintain placement.

**American Indian/
Alaskan Native
Children**

For caregivers of American Indian/Alaskan Native children as defined by the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), the fingerprinting requirements needed for final approval are optional; see [NAA 200, Identification of an Indian Child](#) and [NAA 215, Placement Priorities for Indian Children](#).

Note: For tribal foster care homes to be eligible for Title IV-E funding, all caregivers must be licensed or approved with required fingerprinting documentation submitted on the MDHHS-5612 Verification of Tribal Foster Home Safety Requirements; See [NAA 305 Foster Home Licensing Requirements](#).

**RELATIVE
PLACEMENTS**

When children are placed in out-of-home care, preference must be given to placement with a relative. Relative preference should be followed unless there is good cause; see *Relative Placement Preference* in this item for more information. Safety assessments, safety planning (when appropriate), and background checks must occur for all unlicensed homes prior to placement. Case managers must discuss the items listed below with the prospective relative caregiver to help determine if the relative is willing and able to meet the child's needs.

- Case service plan for the child and parents.
- Permanency goal and concurrent permanency goal.
- Needs of the child.
- Safety plan (when appropriate).
- Financial benefits; see [FOM 722-12, Financial Supports](#).
- Expectations and process of foster home licensure.
- Liability protection under the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard; see [FOM 722-11, Prudent Parental Standard and Delegation of Parental Consent](#).
- Available support and resources; see [DHS-Pub-114, Relative Caregiving: What You Need to Know](#), in this item.
- [DHS-Pub-843, Foster Care Provider Handbook](#).

Case managers must complete a MDHHS-5770, Relative Approval & Placement Safety Screen for **all** adult relatives who express an interest in placement, within five business days of the relative's written or verbal request for placement consideration. Verbal requests must be documented in a social work contact.

Relative Placement Preference

When multiple relatives have been identified for placement, preference shall be given to an adult related to the child within the fifth degree by blood, marriage, or adoption provided they meet all relevant state child protection standards. Placement with a relative not related by blood, marriage, or adoption can be made if "good cause" is shown. "Good cause" means any of the following:

- A request by 1 or both of the child's parents to deviate from this preference.
- The child's request, if the child is of sufficient age and capacity to understand the decision that is being made.
- The presence of a sibling attachment that can be maintained through a particular placement.
- The child's physical, mental, or emotional needs, such as specialized treatment services that may be unavailable in the community where families who meet the placement preferences live.

- The distance between the child's home and the proposed family placement would frustrate the reunification goal or otherwise impede permanency.

Note: *Relative Placement Preference* does not apply to an Indian child as placement decisions are determined solely by the Indian child's tribe. "Indian child" and "Indian child's tribe" mean those terms as defined in section 3 of chapter XIIB; see [NAA 215, Placement/Replacement Priorities for Indian Child\(ren\)](#).

Relative Placements

An emergency relative placement is defined as an initial placement made by CPS, or a subsequent placement made by a supervising agency when a child has experienced an unplanned placement disruption **or** is placed in an unrelated home on an emergency basis and there is an **immediate** need for a placement resource.

Emergency relative placements are made based on the results of the MDHHS-5770 Relative Approval & Placement Safety Screen. The MDHHS-5770 **must be completed prior to an emergency placement**; see *Relative Placement Safety Screen* in this item for more information.

Prohibited Emergency Placements

Emergency placement is **prohibited** if:

- A caregiver or an adult household member has a **felony conviction** for any of the following:
 - Child abuse/neglect.
 - Spousal abuse.
 - A crime against a child or children including pornography.
 - A crime involving violence, including rape, sexual assault, or homicide.
 - Physical assault or battery in the last five years.
 - A drug-related offense in the last five years.

- A caregiver or any adult member of the household has been adjudicated or convicted of a sexual offense **and** is required to register as a sex offender.
- A caregiver or an adult household member is listed as a perpetrator of abuse or neglect on Central Registry.

Emergency Placement Denials

Relatives who meet all the requirements on the MDHHS-5770 except for Central Registry history are **not** disqualified from placement consideration. Placement may be made upon Central Registry removal, amendment, or expunction and director approval of the DHS-3130A Relative Placement Home Study; see *Central Registry Removal, Amendment, or Expunction*, and *Relative Placement Home Study*, in this item for more detail.

The DHS-3130A may be completed prior to a child's initial placement by CPS to ensure placement resources are available.

If CPS denies placement with a relative caregiver and the child is placed in an unrelated/licensed foster home, then the foster care case manager must review the denied MDHHS-5770 with their supervisor to determine if placement would be appropriate upon further assessment via the DHS-3130A. The result of this review must be documented in the initial case service plan.

If further assessment is warranted, the DHS-3130A must be completed within 45 calendar days of removal. **If the placement recommendation on the DHS-3130A is approved, the child must be placed with the relative.** All placement change criteria must be followed; see [FOM 722-03D, Placement Change](#).

Subsequent or Planned Placements

If the relative meets the requirements on the MDHHS-5770, then they must be fully assessed on the DHS-3130A **prior to placement**; see *Relative Placement Home Study* in this item, for timeframes for completion.

Relative Placement Priority

Priority must always be given to placing children with siblings and/or with relatives; see [FOM 722-03, Placement Selection and Standards](#). When a child is placed with a licensed/unrelated caregiver and an appropriate relative is available for placement, then consideration must be given to whether a placement change to the relative's home would be in the child's best interest. Case managers must review **all** placement selection criteria to make this determination. If placement with the relative is determined to be in the child's best interest, then the case manager must follow all placement change policy outlined in [FOM 722-03D, Placement Change](#).

Multiple Relatives Interested in Placement

If multiple relatives express an interest in placement, case managers are encouraged to hold a family team meeting (FTM) with the immediate family and all interested relatives to allow the group to determine who would be best suited for placement and to explore different ways in which the other members can provide support and remain actively involved.

If the group can come to a consensus, then only the agreed upon relative needs to be assessed on the MDHHS-5770 and the DHS-3130A. If the group is unable to come to a consensus and multiple relatives continue to request placement, then **all** interested relatives must be assessed on the MDHHS-5770 and, if approved, must also be assessed on the DHS-3130A.

Maintaining Contact when Placement is not an Option

Relatives who are not considered for placement are encouraged to maintain contact in other ways, which include but are not limited to:

- Supervising parenting time.
- Transporting the child to appointments, visitation, etc.
- Attending school programs, athletic events, etc.
- Visits, phone calls, and letters.

Out-of-State Relative Home Study Requests

- Providing childcare or respite.

If an out-of-state relative requests placement consideration, then the case manager **must** request a home study to be completed through Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children(ICPC); see [ICM 130, Interstate Foster Care Procedures](#).

The case manager must document the date the out-of-state home study was requested and any follow-up contacts in the case service plan until the home study is received.

If placement is denied by the agency with case management but approved or denied by the ICPC receiving state then a DHS-31, Foster Care Placement Decision Notice, must be provided to the relative, with a copy of the out-of-state assessment **within five business days of the denial**. Case managers must complete a social work contact in the electronic case record documenting the DHS-31, Foster Care Placement Decision Notice, and out of state assessment were provided to the relative.

CLEARANCES Identity

The identity of the prospective caregivers must be verified. Any document or collateral contact that reasonably establishes the caregiver's identity must be accepted. Examples of acceptable verification of identity include, but are not limited to:

- Driver's license.
- U.S. Passport.
- State-issued identification.
- School-issued identification.
- Birth certificate/record.
- Identification for health benefits.
- Voter registration card.
- Wage stub.

Collateral Contacts

If documentary evidence is not readily available, use a collateral contact to verify identity. A collateral contact is a direct contact with

a person, organization, or agency to verify information from the client.

Adult Household Member Definition

Any relative or non-relative age 18 or over who regularly lives, shares common areas, and sleeps in a home. An individual who is living, sharing common areas, and sleeping in a home temporarily for more than two consecutive weeks is considered a household member.

Note: A tenant with a separate entrance, who would have to leave their home to enter the caregivers' home or someone living in a mobile home on the property are not considered household members.

CPS Investigations

Prior CPS history must be reviewed for all prospective caregivers prior to placement. The assessment is completed on the MDHHS-5770 and the DHS-3130A and includes the following information:

- The length of time since last investigation and any services that were provided to rectify the problem(s).
- If services were provided, determination as to whether the individual(s) benefitted and completed services successfully.
- Any risk factors that may impact the safety of the child and describe the protective interventions that are needed or currently in place.

Director approval is required when a placement is made with a prospective caregiver who was confirmed as a perpetrator on a prior CPS investigation; see *Relative Approval & Placement Safety Screen* or *Relative Placement Home Study* in this policy for details.

If a current relative caregiver is investigated by CPS, a DHS-3130A addendum must be completed when the investigation concludes. Director approval is required if the caregiver is confirmed as a perpetrator in the CPS investigation.

The addendum must be completed by the case manager and approved by the supervisor within 14 calendar days of the date the investigation concludes.

Central Registry

All relative caregivers and adult household members must have a Central Registry check completed prior to placement. The date and result of each Central Registry check and out-of-state child abuse/neglect check (if applicable) must be documented on the MDHHS-5770 and the DHS-3130A.

A relative caregiver or adult household member identified as a perpetrator on Central Registry is not disqualified from placement consideration. Children may be placed with the relative listed on Central Registry after director approval of the DHS-3130A **and** the expunction of the caregiver/adult household member's Central Registry history.

Case managers must include the following supporting information in the DHS-3130A:

- Reason for substantiation.
- Length of time since the substantiation.
- Services that were provided to rectify the problem(s).
- If services were provided, assess whether the individual completed and benefited from the services.
- Describe the circumstances that have changed since the substantiation.
- Address any risk factors that may impact the safety of the child and describe what protective interventions are currently in place.

**Parent(s) Residing
in Relative Home**

When a parent on Central Registry resides or will reside in the relative home a recommendation may be made to approve placement. Approval from the county director, designated child welfare director, or private agency child welfare director is required to approve the MDHHS-5770 and the DHS-3130A.

A safety plan must be developed with the relative to identify and address any safety concerns. Safety plans must be documented on the MDHHS-5770 and the DHS-3130A.

Note: Completion of a DHS-3130A is not required if the caregiver has an approved and valid DHS-3130A completed prior to the parent on central registry residing in the home. In those instances, only a MDHHS-5770 is required. This would be considered the MDHHS-5770 safety screen type of *New Household Member*.

Criminal History

All relative caregivers and adult household members must have a state criminal history background check completed prior to placement. All criminal history information must be verified. Verification is accomplished by corroborating the information obtained from the state criminal history background check with credible public sources, including [Internet Criminal History Access Tool \(ICHAT\)](#), [Michigan Public Sex Offender Registry \(MPSOR\)](#), the [U.S. Department of Justice National Sex Offender Public Website \(NSOPW\)](#), and police or court records/personnel. The date and results of all criminal history background checks must be documented on the MDHHS-5770 and the DHS-3130A. Documentation guidelines are outlined in [SRM 700, Law Enforcement Information Network \(LEIN\)](#).

Note: Only verified results from public sources should be documented in the MDHHS-5770 and the DHS-3130A.

Prohibited Felony Convictions

Placement is prohibited if anyone residing in the home has a **felony** conviction for one of the following crimes:

- Child abuse/neglect.
- Spousal abuse.
- Crime against children (including pornography).
- Crime involving violence, including rape, sexual assault, or homicide but not including other physical assault or battery.
- Physical assault, battery, or drug related felony offense within the last five years.

Note: Expunged crimes are not included in the evaluation of criminal histories. For five-year placement prohibited felony convictions, the five years begins on the date the crime was committed.

Good Moral Character Convictions

A caregiver or an adult household member with a conviction listed in the [CWL Pub 673, Good Moral Character](#), excluding the prohibited felony convictions listed above, is not disqualified from placement consideration.

If a caregiver or an adult household member has been convicted of a good moral character offense, a review and assessment of the conviction(s) must be completed prior to placement. The assessment is completed on the MDHHS-5770 and the DHS-3130A and includes the following information:

- The explanation for the conviction and length of time since the offense.
- Any services provided to rectify the problem.
- If services were provided, whether the individual completed and benefitted from the service.
- Any risk factors that may impact the safety of the child and describe the protective interventions that are needed or currently in place.

If placement occurs, the assessment of the conviction(s) must support the basis for the placement and describe how the child is safe in the relative's home. Director approval is required when a placement is made with a prospective caregiver who has a good moral character conviction; see *Relative Approval & Placement Safety Screen* or *Relative Placement Home Study* in this policy for details.

Note: Emergency placement can be made based on the results of the MDHHS-5770 with director approval.

Registered Sex Offender

All caregivers and adult household members must have their name **and** address searched on the [Michigan Public Sex Offender Registry \(MPSOR\)](#) prior to placement.

Note: Minor household members are not required to be checked on the MPSOR; however, this information may be obtained through family self-report or through the address search.

Placement is prohibited if an adult residing in the home has been adjudicated or convicted of a sexual offense **and** is required to register as a sex offender.

If a minor household member has been adjudicated or convicted of a sexual offense **and** is required to register as a sex offender, a review and assessment of the conviction(s) must be completed prior to placement. The assessment is completed on the DHS-3130A and includes the following information:

- The explanation for the conviction and length of time since the offense.
- Any treatment provided to address the offense and whether the youth completed and benefitted from the treatment.
- Any risk factors that may impact the safety of the child and describe the protective interventions that are needed or currently in place and the caregiver's ability to provide protective interventions.

If placement occurs, the assessment of the conviction(s) must support the basis for the placement and describe how the child is safe in the relative's home. Director approval is required when a placement is made into a home with a minor household member who has been adjudicated or convicted of a sexual offense and is required to register as a sex offender.

Out-of-State Child Abuse Neglect Registry and Criminal History Background Checks

Any caregiver or adult household member who has resided outside of the State of Michigan's jurisdiction, for example, another state, country, territory, or tribal jurisdiction, within the last five years must have a child abuse/neglect registry check and a criminal history background check from all previous places of residence during those five years.

Out-of-state clearances must be requested no later than 72-hours after an emergency placement and prior to a planned placement. The out-of-state requests and responses must be documented on the MDHHS-5770 and DHS-3130A and any correspondence

received pertaining to the request must be uploaded into the electronic case record.

Note: Results received after the approval of the MDHHS-5770 must be documented in the DHS-3130A initial assessment or addendum within 14 calendar days.

The Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs has created a guide, [How to Obtain Clearances from Other States Employees and Volunteers](#) that may be used to assist in obtaining clearances from other states.

Responsibility for Completion

Initial placements occurring after hours: CPS case managers must request CPS history, Central Registry history, and criminal history background checks through their local county resources or contact centralized intake at 855-444-3911 and request completion of a CPS history, Central Registry, and criminal history background check for all members of the household.

Initial placements occurring during normal business hours and subsequent placements for cases supervised by MDHHS: Local offices are responsible for CPS history, Central Registry history, and criminal history background checks.

Subsequent placements for cases supervised by a private child placing agency: Private child placing agency (PAFC) case managers must request CPS history, Central Registry history, and criminal history background checks for all caregivers and household members from the MDHHS POS monitor. Requests must be made immediately for emergency placements and at least 14 calendar days before the Safety Screen/Home Study due date for planned placements. PAFC case managers must check ICHAT, MPSOR, and NSOPW and evaluate the information that is available to them prior to making an emergency placement. The POS monitor must share all verified criminal history, CPS investigation history, and Central Registry history with the private child placing agency case manager; see [FOM 914, MDHHS Responsibilities For PAFC Managed Cases](#).

Expiration Date

If the date of placement is more than 30 calendar days after the date the clearances were completed, then new clearances must be completed.

Documentation

Clearances are documented within the applicable MDHHS-5770 or DHS-3130A. MPSOR, I-CHAT, and Central Registry verification documents must be uploaded to the corresponding *Home Evaluation* hyperlink under *Provider Summary* in the electronic case management record. Verification documents should include the date the clearance was checked.

Note: Memos and emails do not serve as MPSOR, I-CHAT, and Central Registry verification.

UNLICENSED PLACEMENT LIMITATIONS AND EXCEPTION REQUESTS

For information on unlicensed placement limitations and exception requests, see [FOM 722-03E Placement Exception Requests and Approvals](#).

RELATIVE APPROVAL & PLACEMENT SAFETY SCREEN

The MDHHS-5770 Relative Approval & Placement Safety Screen, is used to examine basic qualifications of a prospective caregiver and to identify immediate safety concerns in the caregiver's home. The MDHHS-5770 must be completed and approved prior to, but no more than 30 calendar days before a child's placement. All MDHHS-5770s must be completed in the electronic case management record. **All adult relatives who express an interest in placement must be screened using the MDHHS-5770.**

Note: The home visit must be completed no more than 30 calendar days before the child's placement to be compliant.

If a safety concern is identified but does not prohibit placement, then the case manager must establish a safety plan with the relative. Safety plans must be documented on the MDHHS-5770.

Fingerprint Acknowledgement

Relative caregivers must sign and date the MDHHS-5770 as an acknowledgement that Michigan State Police (MSP) and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) records will be reviewed pertaining to information regarding criminal convictions under authority of Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006.

Responsibility for Completion

CPS or a designated case manager is required to complete and approve the MDHHS-5770 for initial placements.

The supervising agency is required to complete and approve the MDHHS-5770 for subsequent placements.

All MDHHS-5770s must be completed and approved in the electronic case management system.

Supervisor Approval

The MDHHS-5770 must be reviewed and approved by a supervisor **prior** to placing a child with an unlicensed relative.

Director Approval

Approval from the county director, designated child welfare director, or private child placing agency director is required prior to an emergency placement with:

- A caregiver who was confirmed as a perpetrator on a prior CPS investigation.
- A caregiver or adult household member who has a conviction of a good moral character offense.
- A caregiver who has a minor household member who has been adjudicated or convicted of a sexual offense **and** is required to register as a sex offender.

- A caregiver when a parent on Central Registry resides in the relative home.

Verbal Approval

Verbal approval may be obtained from a supervisor and, if applicable, the county director/designated child welfare director, or private child placing agency director, for emergency placements. Verbal approval must be documented in the MDHHS-5770.

Verbal approval is **not appropriate** for subsequent planned placements.

Electronic Case Management System Approval

Emergency Placements

Supervisors are required to electronically approve the MDHHS-5770, no later than one business day following an emergency placement. CPS must not transfer the case to foster care before obtaining supervisor approval on the MDHHS-5770.

Planned Placements

For planned placements, supervisors must approve the MDHHS-5770 within five business days from the date the MDHHS-5770 is routed for review.

Distribution

A copy of the MDHHS-5770 must be given to the relative caregiver who is the subject of the safety screen.

Denied Placement Recommendation

Relatives who meet all the requirements on the MDHHS-5770 except for Central Registry are **not** disqualified from placement consideration. Placement may be made upon completion and approval of the DHS-3130A; see *Clearances* in this item.

If the placement recommendation on the MDHHS-5770 is denied, then a [DHS-31, Foster Care Placement Decision Notice](#), must be provided to the relative with a copy of the Safety Screen, **within five business days of the denial**. Case managers must complete

a social work contact in the electronic case record documenting that the DHS-31, Foster Care Placement Decision Notice, and MDHHS-5770 were provided to the relative.

RELATIVE PLACEMENT HOME STUDY

The DHS-3130A, Relative Placement Home Study, is a comprehensive home assessment that considers multiple domains in a prospective caregiver's life. The DHS-3130A allows case managers to identify strengths and barriers that may impact a child's placement. The DHS-3130A must be completed within the timeframes described below:

- **For emergency placements**, within 30 calendar days of the child's placement in the relative home.
- **For planned placement changes**, prior to placement in the relative home, but within 30 calendar days of the written request.
- **For requests received when the child is placed with a relative**, within 90 calendar days of the written request; see *Multiple Relatives Interested in Placement* in this item.

Note: This extended timeframe is only to be used when there is not an immediate need for a placement change, e.g., when the child is in a stable placement with another relative.

Relative Placement Safety Screen Review and Validation

Case managers must begin the DHS-3130A by reviewing the MDHHS-5770. This review consists of validating all clearances completed on all caregivers and household members and evaluating and resolving any identified concerns.

The results of the MDHHS-5770 review must be documented on the DHS-3130A.

**Responsibility for
Completion**

Placement decisions are the responsibility of the foster care program; therefore, the supervising agency is responsible for completing and approving the DHS-3130A. DHS-3130A's completed by an alternate unit within the supervising agency must be reviewed by the primary foster care case manager and the foster care supervisor. The review must be documented in the social work contacts.

**Obtaining
Required
Information**

Case managers must attempt to obtain the required information for each segment of the home study by asking questions of the prospective caregiver(s) and other information sources. Case managers cannot rely solely on the caregiver's self-report. All members of the household, including children, must be interviewed. The case manager's observations must be included as part of the final recommendation.

**Electronic Case
Management
System
Documentation**

The DHS-3130A must be completed in electronic case management record and the date of each face-to-face contact must be documented in the social work contacts.

Completion Date

The date the home study was completed is listed on the first page of the DHS-3130A as Date Home Study Completed. The completion date is the date the case manager routes the DHS-3130A to the foster care supervisor for review in the electronic case management record.

Supervisor Approval

Emergency Placement

A supervisor is required to review and approve the DHS-3130A in electronic case management system within 14 calendar days after the date the home study was completed.

Subsequent or Planned Placement

A supervisor is required to review and approve the DHS-3130A in MiSACWIS within 14 calendar days after the date the home study was completed but **prior** to the placement.

Note: For subsequent or planned placements, the DHS-3130A is required to be routed by the case manager and approved by the supervisor prior to the placement. This means if the case manager routes to their supervisor less than 14 days before the child changes placement the supervisor will not have a full 14 days to approve.

Director Approval

Approval from the county director, designated child welfare director, or private child placing agency director is required when placing a child in a home when:

- A caregiver was confirmed as a perpetrator on a prior CPS investigation.
- A caregiver or adult household member has a conviction of a good moral character offense.
- A caregiver or an adult household member is listed as a perpetrator on Central Registry.
- A caregiver has a minor household member who has been adjudicated or convicted of a sexual offense **and** is required to register as a sex offender.
- A parent on Central Registry resides in the relative home.

Director approval must be obtained in the electronic case management record within 14 calendar days after the date the home study was completed.

Approved Placement Recommendation

If the placement recommendation on the DHS-3130A is approved, the child must be placed with the relative. All placement change criteria must be followed; see [FOM 722-03D, Placement Change](#).

Denied Placement Recommendation

If the placement recommendation on the DHS-3130A is denied and the child is currently placed in the relative home, then the child is required to change placements, unless the court orders the placement against MDHHS' recommendation. If the child is required to change placements, the foster care case manager **must** follow the placement change policy outlined in [FOM 722-03, Placement Selection and Standards](#) and the caregiver **must** be provided the [DHS-30, Foster Parent/Caregiver Notification of Move](#).

If the placement recommendation on the DHS-3130A is denied **before** the child is placed in the caregiver's home, then a [DHS-31, Foster Care Placement Decision Notice](#), must be provided to the relative, with a copy of the DHS-3130A **within five business days of the denial**. Case managers must complete a social work contact in the electronic case record documenting that the DHS-31, Foster Care Placement Decision Notice, and DHS-3130A were provided to the relative.

Distribution and Redaction

A copy of the home study must be given to the court and to the relative caregivers who are the subject of the home study. Social Security numbers and other protected information must be redacted from all written reports; see [SRM 131, Confidentiality](#).

Annual Review

The DHS-3130A, **including all clearances**, must be completed by the case manager annually (within 365 days of the previous DHS-3130A completion date) for unlicensed caregivers.

Clearances must be completed no more than 30 calendar days before the completion date. The supervisor must review and approve the DHS-3130A within 14 calendar days after the date it

was completed. **An approved DHS-3130A is valid for 365 days and will expire 365 days from the completion date.**

Note: The day after the case manager routes to the supervisor is considered day 1.

Director approval is required when completing an annual assessment with a caregiver who has a good moral character conviction; see *Relative Placement Home Study* in this policy item.

Changes in a DHS-3130A Approved Caregiver's Household

An approved DHS-3130A is valid for 365 days. The DHS-3130A will expire 365 days after the date it was completed, a new DHS-3130A **is not required** when:

- A new child in foster care is placed in the caregiver's home during the year.
- A child in foster care is placed with the caregiver and subsequently changes placement (for example, returns home) but returns to the caregiver's home during the year.
- A new household member or additional relative caregiver is added during the year.
- The caregiver moves to a new residence during the year.

For these situations, case managers must reassess the placement using the MDHHS-5770. The MDHHS-5770, **including all non-fingerprint clearances**, must be reviewed and approved prior to, but no more than 30 calendar days before placement of a new foster child in the home, a child returns to this home after another placement, or when a new household member is added. If the caregiver moves to a new residence during the year the MDHHS-5770 must be completed as soon as possible within 30 calendar days of the move to ensure safety criteria continue to be met.

Exception: When a child enters one of the temporary break situations listed below and returns to the caregiver's home within 30 calendar days, then completion of a DHS-3130A, MDHHS-5770, or the Fingerprint Assessment is **not** required; see [FOM 722-03D, Placement Change](#).

- Absent without legal permission (AWOLP).
- Detention.
- Jail.
- Medical hospitalization.
- Psychiatric hospitalization.

Behavior Management

Each child will have an individualized behavior management plan, and corporal punishment is prohibited for children in foster care. Corporal punishment means hitting, paddling, shaking, slapping, spanking, or any other use of physical force as a means of behavior management. Caregivers may use reasonable restraint to prevent a child from harming themselves, other persons, or to prevent serious property damage.

Discipline and child-handling techniques are to be recorded in the *Parent-Agency Treatment Plan and Service Agreement, under Foster Parent/Relative/Unrelated Caregiver Activities*; see [FOM 722-08D Treatment Plans](#).

If an unlicensed or approved caregiver is confirmed to have used corporal punishment on a child in foster care the case manager must reassess the placement by completing a DHS-3130A addendum. The case manager must complete the *Behavior Management Assessment* and document the caregiver's agreement to follow the behavior management plan and refrain from using corporal punishment. This includes having the caregiver describe behaviors that require intervention and how they will intervene/handle these behaviors.

The addendum must be completed by the case manager and supervisor approved within 14 calendar days of the date corporal punishment is confirmed.

FINGERPRINTS

All relative caregivers must be fingerprinted within 30 days of placement. In a two-caregiver household, both caregivers must be fingerprinted.

If a new caregiver is added to an already approved home, they are required to obtain fingerprints within 30 days of the case manager being notified of the change. The relative approval continues during the additional caregiver review process. A new MDHHS-5770 must

be completed and signed; see Relative Approval & Placement Safety Screen, Fingerprint Acknowledgement in this policy item. A new Fingerprint Assessment must also be completed; see *Fingerprint Assessment* in this item.

Process

The fingerprinting process for relative caregivers is outlined below:

1. Each relative caregiver in the home must sign and date the MDHHS-5770 Relative Approval & Placement Safety Screen acknowledging fingerprints.
2. The assigned case manager must provide the relative caregiver with an RI-030 that has Section I Authorizing Information filled out. The following relative caregiver specific information is required in this section:
 - Fingerprint reason code: AWA
 - The requestor/agency ID: 93991P
 - Agency name: List the assigned agency name.
 - Individual ID: Leave blank.
3. Each relative caregiver in the home must complete, sign, and date the RI-030 Live Scan Fingerprint Background Check Request. The MDHHS-5770 must be signed and dated prior to or on the same day as the relative caregiver signing and dating the RI-030 Live Scan Fingerprint Request.

Note: The MDHHS-5770 and the RI-030 must be signed and dated prior to or on the same day as the fingerprint appointment.

4. Following the completion of the MDHHS-5770 and RI-030, an appointment for fingerprinting is scheduled by the case manager or the relative caregiver through the fingerprint vendor contracted with the State of Michigan. The relative caregiver will receive a registration number following enrollment online or by phone.

Note: When scheduling a fingerprint appointment, the correct reason code must be used, and the same code used for the appointment must be indicated on the RI-030.

5. The relative must take their registration number and the RI-030 to the appointment for the completion of their fingerprints. Once the fingerprint process at the vendor location has been completed, they will receive a receipt which includes a TCN#, which is a unique identifier for the fingerprint. The TCN# is written on the RI-030 by the vendor.
6. Once fingerprints are obtained the relative must provide the completed RI-030 to the case manager.
7. The assigned case manager must email the following **for each relative caregiver** to DCWL at MDHHS-Relative-DCWL@michigan.gov for processing:
 - MDHHS-5770 completed report.
 - MDHHS-5770 Signature page(s). The signature page must include each relative caregiver's signature and must be dated.
 - The completed RI-030.

Note: DCWL will accept PDF versions of these forms. All information submitted must be legible and include the full document.

8. The assigned case manager will receive an email notification letting them know the results have been uploaded to the Electronic Case Management System.
9. After the results have been uploaded, the assigned case manager will need to complete the Fingerprint Assessment found in the provider record in the electronic case management system. See *Fingerprint Assessment* in this policy item.

Note: The Fingerprint Assessment must not be completed until all relative caregivers in the home have completed the fingerprint process and the results are received.

Fingerprint Expiration

Fingerprints are valid for the duration of the relative placement. One fingerprint result is good for the entire placement episode and additional fingerprints are not required during this timeframe even if

another relative child is placed into the home. If the child enters a temporary break situation a new Fingerprint Assessment is not required; see *Changes in An Approved Caregiver's Household* in this policy item.

For previously approved relatives, who do not currently have a relative placement, additional timeframes are included below:

- Fingerprints are valid for 180 days from the Fingerprint Assessment approval date.
 - If the Fingerprint Assessment is approved and the child(ren) is not placed into the home, a new set of fingerprints would not be required if the Fingerprint Assessment was approved within the previous 180 days of the child's placement date.
 - If a new relative placement is made into a previously approved home, a new set of fingerprints is not required if the fingerprint assessment was approved within the previous 180 days.

Note: Anytime a child is placed into a relative home, regardless of approval or fingerprint status, a new MDHHS- 5770 would be required within 30 days prior to the child's placement as directed in policy.

Timeframe Exception

Staff should assist the relative in scheduling and obtaining fingerprints within the required timeframe. If the relative caregiver(s) is unable to be fingerprinted within the required timeframe an exception request must be submitted and approved.

Exception requests are submitted in the form of a memo and must include the following:

- Relative caregiver name, names of child(ren) placed into the home, and date of placement.
- The reason why fingerprints were not completed within 30 days of placement and why additional time is requested.

Each exception is valid for up to 14 calendar days from the Director approval date. Director approval is captured in the form of email approval, or a signature and date included on the memo.

The approved memo along with any director approval documentation must be uploaded to the *Document* hyperlink under *Case Overview* in the electronic case record.

The relative caregiver(s) must be fingerprinted within 30 days of the placement, or an approved exception request must be in place.

Relative Not Complying with Fingerprinting

If the relative caregiver(s) is not complying with the fingerprinting requirement and has not obtained fingerprints within 30 days of placement or within any approved extended timeframe, a Fingerprint Assessment and a DHS-3130A addendum with denial recommendations are required. See *Fingerprint Assessment*; *Denied Placement Recommendation* in this policy item for details. The child will be required to change placements unless the court orders the placement against MDHHS' recommendation.

If the child is required to change placements, the case manager must follow the placement change policy outlined in [FOM 722-03 Placement Selection and Standards](#) and the caregiver must be provided the DHS-30, Foster Parent Notification of Move.

Note: In a two-caregiver home, both caregivers must complete required fingerprints within 30 days of placement or within any approved extended timeframe.

FINGERPRINT ASSESSMENT

The Fingerprint Assessment is used to review each relative caregiver's fingerprint results and to provide final approval. The assessment must be completed and approved for each relative caregiver within 14 calendar days of the fingerprint completion notification. The assessment is found within the Electronic Case Management System in the provider record.

**Responsibility for
Completion**

Placement decisions are the responsibility of the foster care program; therefore, the supervising agency is responsible for completing and approving the Fingerprint Assessment. Fingerprint Assessment's completed by an alternate unit within the supervising agency must be discussed with the primary foster care case manager and the foster care supervisor. This discussion must be documented in the social work contacts.

Criminal History

If criminal history is identified through the fingerprint results that were not previously assessed in the MDHHS-5770 and/or the DHS-3130A, it must be assessed in the Fingerprint Assessment. If the caregiver has a conviction listed in the CWL Pub 673, Good Moral Character, excluding the prohibited felony convictions, Director approval is required to maintain placement.

**Denied Placement
Recommendation**

If a relative caregiver is not complying with fingerprint requirements or a criminal history is identified through the fingerprint results, that was not previously assessed in the MDHHS-5770 and/or the DHS-3130A, and a placement prohibited offense is identified, or if the supervising agency is no longer recommending the caregiver(s) for placement, the Fingerprint Assessment should be denied. A DHS-3130A addendum must also be completed, updating the placement recommendation. *See Relative Placement Home Study; Denied Placement Recommendation* in this policy item for details.

**Challenge or
Corrections with
Fingerprints**

See [SRM 200 Fingerprints](#) for directions on how to correct or challenge the fingerprinting results.

**DOCUMENTS TO BE
PROVIDED****Upon Placement**

Any time placement is made with an unlicensed caregiver, the caregiver must receive the following documents at or before the time of placement:

- [DHS-Pub-114, Relative Caregiving: What You Need to Know.](#)
 - Case managers must document that the publication was given to the caregiver in the social work contacts in the electronic case record.
- [DHS-3307, Placement Outline and Information Record.](#)
- Medical Information.
 - DHS-3762, Consent to Routine, Non-Surgical Medical Care and Emergency Medical/Surgical Treatment Card.
 - [DHS-Pub-268, Guidelines for Foster Parents and Relatives Caregivers for Health Care and Behavioral/Mental Health Services.](#)
 - Medicaid card.
 - Medicaid Health Plan member card, if applicable.
 - Medical Passport.
- Education Information.
 - All of the child's available student records, such as, report cards or Individualized Education Plans (IEPs); see [FOM 723, Educational Services](#), for exceptions to the standard operating procedure.

**Upon Placement
Change**

For documents that must be completed and/or provided upon a placement change; see [FOM 722-03D, Placement Change](#).

Upon Placement Decision or Denial

The supervising agency must make a placement decision and document the reason for the decision within 90 calendar days of the child's removal from their home. MCL 722.954a.

If the supervising agency places a child with a relative and **approves** the placement on the DHS-3130A during the first 90-days a child is in care, then this is the placement decision that must be recorded on [the DHS-31, Foster Care Placement Decision Notice](#); see [FOM 722-03, Placement Selection and Standards](#).

Additionally, **anytime** a relative is denied for placement on the MDHHS-5770 or the DHS-3130A, a DHS-31, Foster Care Placement Decision Notice, is required to be provided to the relative caregiver, with a copy of the denied MDHHS-5770 or DHS-3130A, within five business days of the denial. Case managers must complete a social work contact in the electronic case record documenting the DHS-31, Foster Care Placement Decision Notice, and MDHHS-5770/DHS-3130A were provided to the relative.

A copy of the DHS-31, Foster Care Placement Decision Notice, must be sent to:

- The child's attorney, guardian, and/or guardian ad litem.
- The prosecutor.
- All legal parents.
- The attorney(s) for the child's parents.
- Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA).
- Tribal representative.
- The child, if developmentally/age appropriate.

Note: If there is a safety concern, the child's current placement address may be redacted.

COURT ORDERED PLACEMENTS

Against MDHHS Recommendation

If the court orders placement with an unlicensed caregiver against MDHHS' recommendation all of the following must be completed:

- MDHHS-5770, Relative Placement Safety Screen.

- DHS 3130A, Relative Placement Home Study.

All standards of promptness identified in this item must be followed.

FAMILY INCENTIVE GRANT

Policy on the Family Incentive Grant (FIG), a grant for home improvement purchases or services required to meet Division of Child Welfare Licensing, licensing standards, or to address safety concerns to maintain placement, can be found in [FOM 980, Family Incentive Grant](#).

LEGAL AUTHORITY

Federal Law

Social Security Act, 42 USC 671(a)(19)

Social Security Act, 42 USC 671(a)(20)(A)

Social Security Act, 42 USC 671(a)(29)

State Laws

Probate Code, 1939 PA 288, as amended, MCL 712A.13a

Probate Code, 1939 PA 288, as amended, 712A.13b

Foster Care and Adoption Services Act, 1994 PA 203, as amended, MCL 722.954a

POLICY CONTACT

Questions about this policy item may be directed to the child welfare policy mailbox at: child-welfare-policy@michigan.gov.