

AUNT MARTHA'S YOUTH SERVICE CENTER, INC.

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| SUBJECT: ADOPTIVE PARENT CRITERIA | EFFECTIVE DATE: 05/05/2011 |
| SCOPE: FOSTER CARE DIVISION | RESPONSIBLE POSITION/DEPARTMENT: FOSTER CARE |
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Policy:

It is the policy of Aunt Martha's Youth Service Center, Inc, Foster Care Division to prescribe internal Agency standards for permanency as a conversion of a Foster Parent/Foster Home.

Purpose:

To ensure the safe, adequate, and appropriate adoptive homes for the youth served in this Division.

Procedure:

The following procedures relates to the process of permanency for all eligible children.

PRESCREENING

- Case must be taken to prescreening within sixty (60) days of Termination of Parental Rights.
- Must have CANTS/LEADS on Natural Parents within six (6) months of Prescreening.
- Must have CANTS/LEADS on Foster Parents within six (6) months of Prescreening.
- Must have CANTS/LEADS on all household members over the age of thirteen (13) within six (6) months of Prescreening.
- Must have Putative Father Registry completed within six (6) months of Prescreening (www.putativefather.org).
- Must complete Diligent Search by using the Diligent Search Service Center (DSSC) within six (6) months of prescreening (www.diligentsearch.org).
 - Complete a progress note with the tracking ID number in order to be able to access the results again.
- Diligent Search letters from the DSSC must be sent certified and regular mail.
- Location efforts must be made for the Natural Parents by conducting an in-person visit to the last known address of the Natural parent, and completing a progress note.
- Inmate checks for the Natural Parent must be completed within 24-48 hours of Prescreening. Inmate checks must be completed for Illinois Department of Corrections at www.idoc.state.il.us and the county in which the case originated, or where the parent is known to reside. For Cook County cases, the website is www.cookcountysheriff.org.
- Public Aid searches must be completed within six (6) months of Prescreening.

ADOPTION

- Child must reside in the home for a minimum of six (6) months.
- Enhanced Adoption provides transitional services for youth over the age of fourteen (14), as well as for younger siblings who are moving towards adoption with them (Refer to Enhanced Subsidized Guardianship and Adoption Program handout).

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- Foster parent must choose an Adoption Attorney from the Adoption Attorney Panel, found on the DCFS website, http://www.state.il.us/dcfs/library/com_communications-stateattt.shtml.

EXPEDITED ADOPTION

- Child must reside in the home for a minimum of six (6) months.
- Child must be placed in a pre-adoptive home.
- Both Natural Parents' whereabouts are unknown.
- One Natural Parent's whereabouts are unknown and the other Natural Parent has signed specific Consents for Adoption.
- Both parents have signed specific Consents for Adoption.

KINGAP

- KinGAP is available to any child in a licensed relative home.
- A child must have lived in a licensed relative home for six (6) consecutive months.
- KinGAP is restricted to relative homes according to the federal government, however, Illinois is making an exception for youth fourteen (14) years of age and older to be considered for guardianship with licensed non-relatives.

Eligibility Criteria:

For a child to qualify for subsidized guardianship under KinGAP, the following criteria must be met:

1. The Child must have been removed from his or her home pursuant to a voluntary placement agreement or as a result of a judicial determination to the effect that continuation in the home would be contrary to the welfare and the best interest of the child; and
2. The child must be eligible for foster care maintenance payments while residing for at least six (6) consecutive months in the home of a licensed prospective relative guardian immediately prior to the establishment of the guardianship; and
3. The prospective relative guardian must have been a licensed foster parent for at least the consecutive six (6) months period that the child has been in their home immediately prior to the establishment of the guardianship; and
4. Being returned home or adopted are not appropriate permanency options for the child; and
5. The child demonstrates a strong attachment to the prospective relative guardian and the relative guardian has a strong commitment to caring permanently for the child; and
6. With respect to a child who has attained fourteen years of age, the child has been consulted and the child has agreed to the guardianship arrangement;

OR

7. The child is a sibling of an eligible child who is placed with the same relative under a kinship guardianship agreement and the IDCFS and the relative guardian agree that the placement is appropriate;

OR

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8. The child is fourteen (14) years of age or older, who has lived with a licensed Non-Relative for at least the six (6) consecutive month period prior to the establishment of the guardianship and meets the following:
 - a. the child was removed from his or her home pursuant to a voluntary placement agreement or as a result of a judicial determination the effect that continuation in the home would be contrary to the welfare and best interest of the child; and
 - b. the child was eligible for foster care maintenance payments while residing for at least six (6) consecutive months in the licensed non-relative home immediately prior to establishing of the guardianship; and
 - c. the prospective guardian has been a licensed foster parent for at least the consecutive six (6) month period immediately prior to the establishment of the guardianship; and
 - d. being returned home or adopted are not appropriate permanency options for the child; and
 - e. the child demonstrates a strong attachment to the prospective guardian and the prospective guardian has a strong commitment to caring permanently for the child; and
 - f. the child has been consulted and has agreed to the guardianship arrangement.

Siblings of a child fourteen (14) years of age or older living with an unrelated prospective guardian are not eligible for the sibling exception noted in 1G.

KinGAP Subsidized Guardianship Agreements:

The subsidy agreement under KinGAP will include all of the same service provisions offered in the current adoption assistance and subsidized guardianship agreements. The agreements will terminate on the 18th birthday of the child with the same allowance for extensions to nineteen (19) years of age if the youth has not completed high school or to twenty-one (21) years of age if the child has specialized medical or mental health needs that will substantially limit his/her ability to function independently as an adult.

Responsibilities:

Case Management Supervisor
Case Manager
Licensing Supervisor
Foster Care Training Coordinator
Licensing Specialist

References:

Rule 401 Child Welfare Agencies