EXPLANATION: Policy revisions were approved by the Commission and the Governor as required by the Administrative Procedures Act.

The proposed revisions to Subchapter 1, 7, and 11 of Chapter 75 amend the rules to update language to conform to the Practice Model and Bridge resource family initiatives being implemented by Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS). The revisions further clarify and set out procedures that enhance the goals of safety and permanency for children and expand the availability of placement resources for children.

340:75-1-26.2 is a new rule to require the acquisition of a death certificate when the Child Welfare (CW) worker becomes aware that a parent is deceased.

340:75-7-2 is amended to: (1) add definitions for contract foster care and integrated assessment; and (2) update language.

340:75-7-10 is amended to update language.

340:75-7-12 is amended to: (1) update language; (2) update Bridge resource requirements to include legal residency and participation in initial meetings with biological parents; and (3) allow for disposition of foster care application.

340:75-7-14 is amended to update language.

340:75-7-15 is amended to: (1) clarify that all background investigation results must be obtained prior to approving a Bridge resource home; and (2) update language.

340:75-7-18 is amended to: (1) update language; (2) allow a child
child safety pool cover instead of a fence to be used each time a pool is not in use; (3) require a discussion with the Bridge applicant when the national criminal background check results show history; (4) provide a procedure for approval of a Bridge resource home; and (5) update the re-application procedure when a home has been closed more than five years, or was closed during an investigation, or when a Written Plan of Compliance was required.

340:75-7-37 is amended to: (1) update language; and (2) add Bridge resource parent responsibility to participate in the initial meeting with the child's parent.

340:75-7-37.1 is amended to: (1) update language; and (2) specify the resource specialist assists the Bridge resource family in completing travel claims for certain mileage.

340:75-7-41 is amended to: (1) update language; (2) require the resource specialist’s assessment of placement decisions to consider the Bridge resource family’s skills and abilities; and (3) specify that the family’s willingness to accept a child is not the major criterion for placement decisions.

340:75-7-51 is amended to: (1) include fingerprint results as a prerequisite to reimbursement for foster care; (2) update language; (3) set out repayment options; and (4) provide procedure for disposition of a warrant upon the death of a Bridge resource parent.

340:75-7-52 is amended to: (1) update language and form numbers; (2) clarify that kinship Bridge resource families may be approved for expedited reimbursements on a case-by-case basis; and (3) clarify that the Bridge resource family receives reimbursement for days a child spends in the home when the child attends a residential program.

340:75-7-52.1 is amended to update language.

340:75-7-65 is amended to: (1) update language; (2) include tribal foster parents providing care for children in tribal custody and contract foster care providers as eligible to apply for child care services; (3) clarify that Bridge resource parents may make occasional informal care arrangements of children if the care is for less than 12 hours; (4) clarify that the alternate caregiver may be used for periods of time over 12 hours; (5) clarify that the Bridge resource family is responsible for the deductible if a claim is made against the liability insurance; and (6) allow for travel reimbursement for Bridge resource parents under certain conditions.
340:75-7-280 is a new rule: (1) providing for contract foster care (CFC); and (2) setting out roles and responsibilities for CFC.

340:75-11-286 is amended to correct a rule cite.
INSTRUCTIONS FOR FILING MANUAL MATERIAL

OAC is the acronym for Oklahoma Administrative Code. If OAC appears before a number on an Appendix or before a Section in text, it means the Appendix or text contains rules or administrative law. Lengthy internal policies and procedures have the same Chapter number as the OAC Chapter to which they pertain following an "OKDHS" number, such as personnel policy at OKDHS:2-1 and personnel rules at OAC 340:2-1. The "340" is the Title number that designates OKDHS as the rulemaking agency; the "2" specifies the Chapter number; and the "1" specifies the Subchapter number.

The chronological order for filing manual material is: (1) OAC 340 by designated Chapter and Subchapter number; (2) if applicable, OKDHS numbered text for the designated Chapter and Subchapter; and (3) all OAC Appendices with the designated Chapter number. For example, the order for filing personnel policy is OAC 340:2-1, OKDHS:2-1, and OAC 340:2 Appendices behind all Chapter 2 manual material. Any questions or assistance with filing manual material will be addressed by contacting Policy Management Unit staff at 405-521-4326.

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Revised 5-11-06

Delivery of Child Welfare (CW) services is recorded by entry into the KIDS system, storage of documents and digital images into the KIDS application file cabinet, and maintaining a paper case file of all related case documents and information. A case record is established on the family when:

1. the client or representative requests service;

2. service is requested on the client's behalf and the requested service is available through the CW services program; or

3. a report of child abuse or neglect is assessed or investigated.

INSTRUCTIONS TO STAFF 340:75-1-26

Revised 6-1-09

1. (a) Purpose of CW case record. Child Welfare (CW) workers use the CW case record to document demographic information, decisions, and actions made with or on behalf of the children and families CW serves. Contacts are kept up to date at least monthly from the point of intake through case closure. All notes and phone messages are not destroyed unless transcribed into the paper case record or KIDS. The case record serves as:

   (1) a means for the CW worker to develop a clear understanding of the client's situation and a basis for planning with the client;

   (2) evidence that the client has been offered requested or needed services and is receiving services through staff delivery, purchase of service, or referral;

   (3) documentation of the specific goals to which services are directed;

   (4) an accounting of the way in which the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) responsibilities are fulfilled;

   (5) evidence that the client's eligibility has been satisfactorily determined or redetermined;
(6) a means for future CW workers to obtain knowledge of the client's previous experience in relation to OKDHS;

(7) documentation for the client, OKDHS, and community against inaccuracies that might arise from memory errors;

(8) a means of eliminating repeated inquiries by the CW worker about the same matter;

(9) an aid in the supervision of work, in assisting the CW worker to develop his or her skills, and in evaluating performance; and

(10) a source of reference to OKDHS in making various social and economic studies and surveys and identifying program planning needs.

(b) Paper case record. The majority of direct service CW case information is online in the KIDS system. A paper case record is set up and maintained for the purpose of maintaining case related documents that are not in KIDS, are not generated by CW, and any CW document that requires signatures and dates and is submitted to another entity, for example, the court or client. In part, the CW paper case record includes:

(1) all legals and court documents;

(2) birth verifications, per OAC 340:75-13-9;

(3) Social Security cards or information;

(4) death certificates for any deceased parent(s), per OAC 340:75-1-26.2;

(5) Form 04KI003E, Report to District Attorney, or Form 04KI007E, CPS Family Assessment, or both;

(6) grievance forms;

(7) psychological evaluations;

(8) medical information from providers;

(9) Form 04FC011E, Placement Agreement for Out-of-Home Care;
(10) appropriate child support forms;

(11) Form 04K1002E, Eligibility Determination;

(12) Form 04K1004E, Placement Provider Information;

(13) Form 04K1005E, Placement Plan;

(14) Form 04K1008E, Treatment Plan, or 04K1012E, Individualized Service Plan (ISP), or both;

(15) Form 04K1011E, Preadjudication Court Report, 04K1009E, Court Report, 04K1014E, Individualized Service Plan (ISP) Progress Report, 04K1013E, Individualized Service Plan (ISP) Dispositional Report, or all;

(16) Form ODH 347, Medical and Social History Report for Adoption;

(17) Independent Living Life Skills Assessment;

(18) Form 04AN022E, Child Profile Assessment for Adoption;

(19) Form 04AN006E, Affidavit of Information Disclosure for Adoption;

(20) Form 04AN024E, Placement Recommendation Worksheet; and

(21) any other forms or data that are pertinent to the CW case record, such as letters, police reports, Department of Corrections reports, and similar documents.

c) Case record security. All paper case records are filed in locked file cabinets, according to their status, active or closed.

(1) Case records are kept in the county office in locked file cabinets, except when officially handled by CW staff, until the requirements for storage are met per OAC 340:75-1-26 Instructions to Staff 1(h).

(2) Special circumstances may require additional security, such as case restriction. A CW case is restricted in KIDS when:

(A) an OKDHS employee or relative of an employee is involved;
(B) the case is highly publicized;

(C) the case involves a public figure; or

(D) the situation receives a lot of media attention.

(3) The decision to restrict a CW case is made by the CW supervisor. Most CW cases do not require restriction. The county director maintains restricted paper case records in a secure file separate from the county record files.

(d) Transfer of electronic and paper case records.

(1) Timeliness. Timely transfer of cases is necessary to continue service provision to the child and family. Non-receipt of the paper case record, missing information in the KIDS case, or any other issue must not delay services. CW supervisors discuss areas of concern and coordinate and communicate with each other to resolve issues.

(A) Prior to case transfer in KIDS, the receiving county is notified of the transfer by phone or e-mail and provided with any information about the family.

(B) If the initial notice is via e-mail, the initiating county CW staff contacts the receiving county CW staff by phone to discuss current case circumstances no later than five working days after the transfer.

(2) Primary case transfer. The primary CW supervisor transfers primary case responsibility in KIDS no later than five working days after:

(A) county of jurisdiction changes;

(B) a youth attains the age of majority, is in voluntary placement in a county other than the county of jurisdiction, and no other child is being provided services in the case; or

(C) a family receives Family-Centered Services or ICPC case services from another state and the family moves.
(3) Transfer of primary paper case record. The corresponding CW paper case record is sent within ten working days of the change in case status to the other county along with Form 04AD002E, Transfer Between Counties.

(4) Secondary case transfer. When a child is placed or the parent(s) resides outside the county of jurisdiction, the CW supervisor of the primary case makes the secondary case assignment in KIDS no later than five working days after placement or notification of the parent(s)' location.

(A) The corresponding CW paper case record is sent within ten working days, if not provided at the time of the child's placement, to the other county along with Form 04AD002E.

(B) Case content. Cases to be transferred are updated with current information, including, but not limited to:

(i) child's custody status and any upcoming hearing dates;

(ii) client status information, such as address, phone number, employment, and placement;

(iii) data regarding visits with parents, relatives, siblings, and other family members;

(iv) any scheduled or canceled visits;

(v) recent contacts with clients and collaterals; and

(vi) services scheduled, offered, or provided to a child, family member, and caregiver with type of service, date of service, and name of service provider.

(C) When services are completed or are no longer needed in the secondary county, the CW supervisor of the:

(i) secondary case:

(I) returns the secondary county paper case record to the primary county within ten working days, using Form 04AD002E; and
(II) end dates the secondary assignment in KIDS.

(ii) primary case, upon receipt of the secondary paper case record:

(I) reviews the secondary paper case record for any records that are not filed in the primary case record;

(II) files these records in the primary case record; and

(III) prepares the duplicate case record for security destruction per OAC 340:2-21-35.

(5) Closed case transfer. The county that needs a closed CW paper case record that is located in another county office requests transfer of the case, using Form 04AD002E. The corresponding CW paper case record is sent to the other county no later than two working days following the request identified on Form 04AD002E.

(e) Documentation of race and Hispanic or Latino origin. The collection of uniform data on race and Hispanic or Latino origin is an important piece of documentation in the case record. The CW worker asks adults and, if age appropriate, children to identify all applicable racial categories to which they belong. Additionally, the CW worker determines the adult's or child's Hispanic or Latino origin. Self-identification or self-reporting is the preferred method of gathering information on race and Hispanic or Latino origin.

(1) American Indian or Alaskan Native persons have origins in any of the original peoples of North or South America, including Central America, and maintain tribal affiliation or community attachment.

(2) Asian persons have origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.

(3) Black or African American persons have origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.

(4) Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander persons have origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.
(5) White persons have origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, Middle East, or North Africa.

(6) Unable to determine is a valid choice for race or Hispanic or Latino origin when:

(A) a child is very young or a child or adult is severely disabled and there is no person available to identify the child's or adult's race or Hispanic or Latino origin;

(B) an adult or, if age appropriate, a child refuses to identify his or her race or Hispanic or Latino origin; or

(C) a parent, relative, or guardian refuses to identify the child's race or Hispanic or Latino origin.

(f) Document and photograph storage. KIDS has the capacity to store documents and digital images. CW workers store any WORD document and digital image in the KIDS File Cabinet.

(1) Saving documents to KIDS. Refer to the File Cabinet How To found in KIDS/Help/How To's for instructions on saving documents.

(2) Storing digital images and photographs. The CW worker stores all photographs as taken. Due to legal issues, no enhancements, such as color, brightness, and contrast, or doctoring, are permitted. Refer to the Storing Photographs and Images How To found in KIDS/Help/How To's for instructions on using a digital camera and saving digital images and photographs.

(g) Case closure. Termination of services to clients may occur according to plan or due to the decision of the client or court, contrary to the CW worker's recommendation. If the CW worker determines that other services are needed, the worker makes every effort to refer the client to another agency or resource and to document the concerns. A CW case is closed in KIDS when there are no outstanding ticklers or actions associated with the case, each client in the case has an OKDHS client number, and there are no open lines of service. The CW worker enters the date and reason for closing the case and a closing summary that describes the services provided to the child and family. Reasons for closing the CW case include, but are not limited to:
(1) completion of mutually agreed upon goals;

(2) reasons for needing CW services have changed;

(3) services needed are outside the scope of CW; or

(4) court case is dismissed or closed.

(h) Paper case record storage. Closed paper case records are stored in locked file cabinets and kept in the county office until either the youngest child in the case reaches age 18 and no longer receives services or there has been no activity on the case for at least two years. When a case meets requirements for storage, the case is sent for storage per instructions via http://s99web01/adss_supportservices/openrecords1.shtm.
340:75-1-26.2. Death certificates

Issued 6-1-09

Within 15 days of becoming aware that a child in custody of Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) has a deceased parent, the Child Welfare (CW) worker requests a certified copy of that parent’s death certificate.

INSTRUCTIONS TO STAFF 340:75-1-26.2

Issued 6-1-09

1. (a) In-state death certificates. To request a full-certified copy of a death certificate from Oklahoma State Department of Health Division of Vital Records, the Child Welfare (CW) worker:

   (1) utilizes the Division of Vital Records Death Certificate Application, located on Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) InfoNet under Forms, Click here for non-OKDHS forms;

   (2) types or legibly prints the required information pertaining to the deceased parent on the Death Certificate Application, including the parent’s:

      (A) full name; and

      (B) date and place of death.

   (3) enters his or her name and county address as the applicant information on the Death Certificate Application to ensure delivery of the death certificate to the appropriate person, and signs the application;

   (4) mails original Death Certificate Application along with a copy of the OKDHS employee identification (ID) of the person signing the application to Children and Family Services Division (CFSD) Resource Unit. CFSD sends the Death Certificate Application to Vital Records for processing; and

   (5) upon receipt, provides a copy of the certificate to the court and district attorney and files the certified copy in the paper case record.

      (A) Vital Records sends the certified copy of the death certificate to CFSD for mailing to the local OKDHS office.
(B) If Vital Records returns the Death Certificate Application noting that the certified death certificate cannot be found with the information provided, CFSD returns the Death Certificate Application to the requesting CW worker who:

(i) checks the information for accuracy, and if needed, fills out the optional information on the form before resubmitting the Death Certificate Application to CFSD; and

(ii) when unable to locate any further information and obtain a certified death certificate, contacts CFSD Resource Unit for assistance;

(C) The CFSD copy of the Death Certificate Application is destroyed upon receipt of the full-certified copy of the death certificate from Vital Records.

(b) Out-of-state death certificates. To request a full-certified copy of the death certificate for a parent who has died in another state, the CW worker:

(1) contacts the appropriate state's Vital Records office to determine the requirements for obtaining a death certificate;

(2) obtains and completes that state’s death certificate application. The CW worker's name and office mailing address are included on the application;

(3) completes:

(A) notarized Form 10AD012E, Claim Form, that includes the child's name and KK number and that state's federal employer identification (FEI) number; and

(B) Form 10CL017E, Claim Code Slip. The CW worker ensures the Case Related Information and Contact Information sections of Form 10CL017E are fully completed; and

(4) remits to CFSD Administrative Services Unit (ASU) the death certificate application, Forms 10AD012E and 10CL017E, and, if requested by that state, a photocopy of his or her OKDHS ID badge.
(c) CFSD ASU procedures for out-of-state death certificates. Upon receipt of the CW worker's request for an out-of-state death certificate and required documents listed in 1(b) of this instruction, ASU:

(1) verifies the information on Form 10AD012E and requests that state to complete Form 23CO135E, Vendor Information, if the vendor is not currently listed in the Office of State Finance vendor database;

(2) submits original Form 10AD012E and, if applicable, Form 23CO135E to OKDHS Finance Division for payment processing. The death certificate application, photocopy of OKDHS ID badge, if applicable, and Form 10CL017E are retained by ASU;

(3) upon receipt of a warrant from Finance Division, mails the warrant, original death certificate application, photocopy of OKDHS ID badge, if applicable, and Form 10AD012E to that state's Vital Records office; and

(4) maintains copies of all documentation.

(d) Receipt of out-of-state death certificates. The out-of-state Vital Records office mails the full-certified copy of the death certificate to the address on the death certificate application. Upon receipt, the CW worker, provides a copy of the certificate to the court and district attorney and files the certified copy in the paper case record.
SUBCHAPTER 7. FOSTER HOME CARE

PART 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section
340:75-7-1. Foster resource family care services [REVOKED]
340:75-7-2. Purpose, legal basis, and definitions
340:75-7-3. Voluntary foster family care for children under age 18 [REVOKED]
340:75-7-4. Reunification program responsibilities and philosophy [REVOKED]
340:75-7-5. Preparation for adult life/independent living initiative [REVOKED]
340:75-7-6. Voluntary foster care after age 18 [REVOKED]
340:75-7-7. Long-term foster care [REVOKED]
340:75-7-8. Number and ages of children allowed placed in a regular or kinship foster resource home [REVOKED]

PART 2. DEVELOPMENT OF RESOURCES

340:75-7-10. Recruitment of Bridge resource families
340:75-7-11. Legal basis and authority [REVOKED]
340:75-7-12. Initial screening and requirements
340:75-7-12.1. Inquiries of Department of Human Service (DHS) employees [REVOKED]
340:75-7-13. Mutual family assessment [REVOKED]
340:75-7-13.1. Definitions [REVOKED]
340:75-7-14. Training
340:75-7-15. Background investigation and assessment of results
340:75-7-15.1. Prospective kinship foster resource criminal background records search after normal business hours and holidays [REVOKED]
340:75-7-16. Automated fingerprinting authorizations [REVOKED]
340:75-7-17. Assessment of background investigation results [REVOKED]
340:75-7-18. Bridge resource family assessment
340:75-7-19. Joint approval of foster homes
340:75-7-20. Contract foster resource home assessments [REVOKED]
340:75-7-21. Denial or withdrawal of the foster home application [REVOKED]
340:75-7-22. Disposition of foster resource home assessments [REVOKED]
340:75-7-23. Regular Child Welfare (CW) foster resource home contracts including Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) [REVOKED]
340:75-7-24. Kinship placements
PART 3. REUNIFICATION SERVICES [REVOKED]

340:75-7-25. Background [REVOKED]
340:75-7-26. Values [REVOKED]
340:75-7-27. Goals [REVOKED]
340:75-7-28. Parental involvement [REVOKED]
340:75-7-29. Visitation between the child in foster home care and family [REVOKED]
340:75-7-30. Mail and telephone contact [REVOKED]
340:75-7-31. Case management services [REVOKED]
340:75-7-32. Criteria for return of child to own home [REVOKED]
340:75-7-33. Issues to consider when family reunification does not seem appropriate [REVOKED]

PART 4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

340:75-7-35. Goals [REVOKED]
340:75-7-36. Foster parents' rights [REVOKED]
340:75-7-37. Responsibilities of Bridge resource parents
340:75-7-37.1. Roles and responsibilities of the resource specialist
340:75-7-38. Discipline for children in foster family care
340:75-7-39. Religious and cultural observation [REVOKED]
340:75-7-40. Education [REVOKED]
340:75-7-41. Placement considerations and requirements
340:75-7-41.1. Types of reimbursement for kinship caregivers [REVOKED]
340:75-7-42. Exceptions to foster family care policy [REVOKED]
340:75-7-43. Change of placement and notice to placement providers [REVOKED]
340:75-7-44. Voluntary foster family care for children under age 18 [REVOKED]
340:75-7-45. Voluntary foster care after age 18 [REVOKED]
340:75-7-46. Services to the child in foster family care provided by Child Welfare (CW) worker and the foster parent [REVOKED]
340:75-7-47. Child Welfare (CW) worker contacts with foster parents [REVOKED]
340:75-7-48. Professional team of the foster resource specialist, Child Welfare (CW) specialist, and foster parents [REVOKED]

PART 5. ELIGIBILITY AND PAYMENTS

340:75-7-50. Eligibility [REVOKED]
340:75-7-51. Foster care claims
340:75-7-52. Foster care contracts and rates of reimbursement
340:75-7-52.1. Social Security benefits
340:75-7-53. Difficulty of care
340:75-7-54. Difficulty of Care rate descriptions [REVOKED]
340:75-7-55. Difficulty of care approval process [REVOKED]
340:75-7-56. Difficulty of care reviews [REVOKED]
340:75-7-57. Difficulty of care cancellations [REVOKED]
340:75-7-58. Foster resource home overpayments [REVOKED]
340:75-7-59. Foster resource home underpayments [REVOKED]
340:75-7-60. Late or lost foster home payments [REVOKED]
340:75-7-61. Child out of foster home for hospitalization [REVOKED]

PART 6. FOSTER HOME CARE SUPPORT SERVICES

340:75-7-62. Foster care grievance procedure [REVOKED]
340:75-7-63. Foster Parent Hotline [REVOKED]
340:75-7-64. Day care services for children in foster or kinship care [REVOKED]
340:75-7-65. Foster care child care and supportive services
340:75-7-66. Alternate care [REVOKED]
340:75-7-67. Travel outside the state [REVOKED]
340:75-7-68. Transportation responsibilities [REVOKED]
340:75-7-69. In-service training programs for resource families [REVOKED]
340:75-7-70. Foster care associations [REVOKED]

PART 7. FOSTER FAMILY CARE PLACEMENTS, ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND SERVICES [REVOKED]

340:75-7-75. Goals [REVOKED]
340:75-7-75.1. The Multiethnic Placement Act of 1994 [REVOKED]
340:75-7-76. Placement procedures for children in foster home care [REVOKED]
340:75-7-76.1. Change of placement and notice to foster parents [REVOKED]
340:75-7-77. Grievance procedure for children in out of home care [REVOKED]
340:75-7-77.1. Dispute resolution or grievance procedures for foster parents [REVOKED]
340:75-7-77.2. Foster Parent Hotline [REVOKED]
340:75-7-78. Social worker contacts with foster parents [REVOKED]
340:75-7-79. Responsibilities and services to the child in foster home care [REVOKED]
340:75-7-79.1. Foster parents' rights [REVOKED]
340:75-7-80. Responsibilities of the foster parents [REVOKED]
340:75-7-80.1. Discipline for children in foster family care [REVOKED]
340:75-7-81. Religious and cultural observation [REVOKED]
340:75-7-82. Education [REVOKED]
340:75-7-83. Services to the child in foster family care [REVOKED]
340:75-7-83.1. Long term foster care as a plan for temporary or permanent custody children [REVOKED]
340:75-7-84. Services and training to assist foster families [REVOKED]
340:75-7-85. Day care services for children in foster or kinship care [REVOKED]
340:75-7-85.1. Payment for day care services in licensed day care center or licensed day care home [REVOKED]
340:75-7-85.2. In-home day care [REVOKED]

**PART 8. CONTINUOUS QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF A RESOURCE HOME**

340:75-7-86. Resource family assessment [REVOKED]
340:75-7-87. Investigative protocol for abuse or neglect of a child in foster resource family care [REVOKED]
340:75-7-88. Appeals process for foster home investigation findings [REVOKED]
340:75-7-89. Time frames for decision making regarding continued use or closure of the foster home [REVOKED]
340:75-7-90. Evaluation of foster home rule violations or concerns [REVOKED]
340:75-7-91. Written plan of compliance (WPC) [REVOKED]
340:75-7-92. Closure of a resource home [REVOKED]
340:75-7-93. Re-application to provide foster care [REVOKED]
340:75-7-94. Foster care reviews

**PART 9. SERVICES TO FOSTER PARENTS [REVOKED]**

340:75-7-100. Role of the CW worker with foster parents [REVOKED]
340:75-7-101. Short term care [REVOKED]
340:75-7-102. Travel outside the county/state [REVOKED]
340:75-7-102.1. Transportation responsibilities [REVOKED]
340:75-7-103. Foster Pride - Adopt Pride preservice training [REVOKED]
340:75-7-104. Inservice training programs for foster parents [REVOKED]
340:75-7-105. Scheduling of training sessions [REVOKED]
340:75-7-105.1. Roles and responsibilities in regard to training [REVOKED]
340:75-7-106. Selection of trainers [REVOKED]

**PART 10. KINSHIP CARE [REVOKED]**

340:75-7-107. Definition of kinship care [REVOKED]
340:75-7-108. Purpose of kinship care [REVOKED]
340:75-7-109. Identification of potential providers and types of kinship care [REVOKED]
340:75-7-110. Initial kin placement [REVOKED]
340:75-7-111. Kinship placement process and certification requirements [REVOKED]
340:75-7-112. Kinship home assessment process [REVOKED]
340:75-7-113. Kinship foster care contract or non-paid kinship agreement [REVOKED]
340:75-7-114. Role of the Child Welfare (CW) worker in kinship care settings [REVOKED]
340:75-7-115. Services provided by kinship providers [REVOKED]

PART 11. APPLICATION AND ELIGIBILITY TO PROVIDE FOSTER HOME CARE [REVOKED]

340:75-7-119. Legal base and authority [REVOKED]
340:75-7-120. Inquiry and initial screening of foster family home [REVOKED]
340:75-7-121. Mutual family assessment [REVOKED]
340:75-7-122. Background investigation [REVOKED]
340:75-7-123. Mutual assessment process [REVOKED]
340:75-7-123.1. Dual approval of foster homes [REVOKED]
340:75-7-123.2. Contract foster home assessments [REVOKED]
340:75-7-124. Denial or withdrawal of the foster home application [REVOKED]
340:75-7-125. Disposition of foster home applications [REVOKED]
340:75-7-126. Exceptions to foster home care policy [REVOKED]
340:75-7-127. Foster home contract [REVOKED]
340:75-7-127.1. Foster parent associations [REVOKED]
340:75-7-128. Identification of Indian foster homes [REVOKED]

PART 13. ANNUAL ASSESSMENT OF A FOSTER HOME [REVOKED]

340:75-7-145. Applicability [REVOKED]
340:75-7-146. Investigation protocol for abuse or neglect of a child in foster family care [REVOKED]
340:75-7-146.1. Time frames for decision making regarding continued use or closure of the foster home [REVOKED]
340:75-7-147. Evaluation of foster home rule violations or concerns [REVOKED]
340:75-7-148. Written plan of compliance [REVOKED]
340:75-7-149. Closure of a foster home [REVOKED]
340:75-7-150. Re-application to provide foster care [REVOKED]

PART 15. TRIBAL FOSTER CARE [REVOKED]
340:75-7-165. Placement of an Indian child [REVOKED]
340:75-7-166. Tribal foster care arrangements [REVOKED]
340:75-7-167. Tribal foster care for DHS custody children [REVOKED]
340:75-7-168. Allegations of abuse or neglect of DHS custody children in tribal foster care [REVOKED]
340:75-7-169. Tribal foster care for tribal custody children [REVOKED]
340:75-7-170. Tribal or facility contracts for residential child care [REVOKED]

PART 17. PERMANENCY PLANNING FOR CHILDREN IN DHS CUSTODY [REVOKED]

340:75-7-185. Process [REVOKED]
340:75-7-186. Termination of parental rights [REVOKED]
340:75-7-187. Planning for permanent custody children [REVOKED]
340:75-7-188. Permanent custody Indian children [REVOKED]
340:75-7-189. Long term care as a plan for temporary or permanent custody children [REVOKED]
340:75-7-190. Fast-adopt in permanency planning for all custody children [REVOKED]

PART 19. SPECIALIZED FOSTER CARE (SFC)/DDSD THROUGH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES SERVICES DIVISION (DDSD) [REVOKED]

340:75-7-205. Community base waiver program [REVOKED]
340:75-7-206. Roles and responsibilities in specialized foster care through Developmental Disabilities Services Division [REVOKED]
340:75-7-207. Specialized foster care through Developmental Disabilities Services Division referral, study and training process [REVOKED]
340:75-7-208. Specialized foster care through Developmental Disabilities Services Division claims procedure [REVOKED]
340:75-7-209. Referral to DDSD for services beyond age eighteen [REVOKED]

PART 20. KINSHIP CARE [REVOKED]

340:75-7-210. Definition of Kinship Care [REVOKED]
340:75-7-211. Purpose of Kinship Care [REVOKED]
340:75-7-212. Identification of potential caregivers and types of Kinship Care [REVOKED]
340:75-7-213. Initial kin foster care placement [REVOKED]
340:75-7-214. Initial kinship placement process [REVOKED]
340:75-7-215. Kinship placement assessment process [REVOKED]
340:75-7-216. Kinship foster home assessment process [REVOKED]
340:75-7-217. Kinship foster care contract and reimbursement [REVOKED]
340:75-7-218. Role of the Child Welfare worker in Kinship Care settings [REVOKED]
340:75-7-219. Services provided by kinship caregivers [REVOKED]

PART 21. EMERGENCY AND SPECIALIZED FOSTER CARE PROGRAMS [REVOKED]

340:75-7-225. Emergency foster care (EFC) program [REVOKED]
340:75-7-226. EFC assessments [REVOKED]
340:75-7-227. Emergency foster care contracts [REVOKED]
340:75-7-228. EFC payment [REVOKED]
340:75-7-229. EFC leave [REVOKED]
340:75-7-230. EFC training [REVOKED]
340:75-7-231. Specialized foster care (SFC) program [REVOKED]

PART 23. GUIDELINES FOR WORKING WITH EFC CONTRACTORS [REVOKED]

340:75-7-245. Requirements [REVOKED]
340:75-7-246. Contractor's family needs [REVOKED]

PART 25. EMERGENCY FOSTER CARE PROGRAM

340:75-7-260. Mission statement [REVOKED]
340:75-7-261. Population to be served [REVOKED]
340:75-7-262. Emergency foster care
340:75-7-263. Movement of children from emergency foster care [REVOKED]
340:75-7-263.1. Admission into regular contract foster care [REVOKED]
340:75-7-264. Roles and responsibilities in emergency foster care program [REVOKED]
340:75-7-265. Service delivery in emergency foster care programs [REVOKED]
340:75-7-266. Substitute care [REVOKED]
340:75-7-267. Reimbursement to emergency foster care program providers [REVOKED]
340:75-7-268. Discharge from emergency foster care (EFC) [REVOKED]
340:75-7-268.1. Discharge from contract regular foster care [REVOKED]
340:75-7-269. Standards for emergency foster care (EFC) program homes [REVOKED]
340:75-7-270. Training for contract foster care program providers and contract staff [REVOKED]
340:75-7-271. Additional contract requirements [REVOKED]

PART 27. CONTRACTED FOSTER CARE PROGRAM

340:75-7-280. Contracted foster care
340:75-7-2. Purpose, legal basis, and definitions

Revised 6-1-09

(a) Purpose. Foster family care is a planned, goal directed service that provides 24-hour a day substitute temporary care and supportive services in a home environment for any child, birth to 18 years of age, residing in Oklahoma and in the custody of Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS). Voluntary foster care is available for any child, birth to 21 years of age, per OAC 340:75-4-12.1 and 340:75-6-115.9.

(b) Legal basis.

(1) The Oklahoma Foster Care and Out-of-Home Placement Act acknowledges that foster parents have a recognizable interest in the familial relationship they establish with a child who is placed in their care. The law recognizes that foster parents are essential participants in decision-making related to the child in their home.

(2) Sections 7203 and 7204.4 of Title 10 of the Oklahoma Statutes define and authorize foster family care.

(3) Titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act mandate and provide funding for certain child welfare services, including foster care.

(4) OKDHS implements recruitment and retention activities that support the:

(A) Multiethnic Placement Act of 1994 as amended by the Interethnic Adoption Provisions of 1996 (MEPA/IEP), per OAC 340:75-1-9;

(B) Federal Indian Child Welfare Act (FICWA), per Section 1901 et seq. of Title 21 of the United States Code, and Oklahoma Indian Child Welfare Act (OICWA), per Section 40 et seq. of Title 10 of the Oklahoma Statutes;

(C) Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (ASFA) that amended Titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act, per Sections 620 through 679 of Title 42 of the United States Code; and

(D) regulations promulgated to implement each Act.

(c) Definitions. The following words and terms, when used in this Subchapter, shall have the following meaning, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:
(1) "Bridge resource family" is a family who may be asked to:

(A) provide temporary care, love, and nurturance to the child and serve as a mentor actively helping the parent improve their ability to safely care for their children while staying connected and assisting in the transition to reunification, legal guardianship, or adoption to another family; and/or

(B) serve as the legal guardian for the child while maintaining a child's connection to kin, culture, and community; and/or

(C) adopt the child while maintaining a child's connection to kin, culture, and community.

(2) "Contract foster care (CFC)" is substitute care for children in custody of OKDHS provided by a contract child placing agency to meet the child's needs through service coordination and delivery in conjunction with OKDHS.

(3) "Emergency foster care (EFC)" means short-term substitute care for children in the custody of OKDHS from birth through five years of age. Care is provided by a contracted agency to meet the child's needs through service coordination and delivery in conjunction with OKDHS.

(4) "Foster family care" means an essential temporary Child Welfare (CW) service for a child and parent(s), legal guardian, or custodian when the child's safety cannot be ensured in his or her own home due to the threat of child abuse, neglect, or special circumstances necessitating out-of-home care on a temporary basis in a home away from the child's parent(s), legal guardian, or custodian. A service of continuous care is provided for a child requiring out-of-home placement in a home environment, including, but not limited to, the care, supervision, guidance, and rearing of a child by a Bridge resource parent, who is approved by and under contract with OKDHS.

(5) "House assessment" means the evaluation of the prospective Bridge resource family's place of residence to determine whether the residence meets OKDHS physical requirements for safety.

(6) "In-service training" means instruction on a yearly basis that is required to maintain continued approval of a Bridge resource home.

(7) "Inquiry" means the first contact a prospective Bridge resource parent has with OKDHS. The prospective Bridge resource parent may ask the local OKDHS office staff about foster parenting, through a phone call, e-mail, or personal contact.

(8) "Integrated Assessment" means an assessment, of a family interested in
becoming a Bridge resource family for OKDHS, that is completed by OKDHS staff or by a contractor of OKDHS. The assessment consists of an evaluation of the family’s ability to foster and adopt, and includes, but is not limited to:

(A) consideration of criminal and CW history;

(B) the safety and physical ability of the home to integrate a new family member;

(C) the number and ages of children in the home;

(D) references;

(E) military history; and

(F) household income.

(9) "Kinship foster family care" means continuous care provided for a child requiring out-of-home placement by a relative, stepparent, or other responsible adult who has a bond or tie with the child or a family relationship role with the child's parent(s) or the child prior to the child's entry into foster care.

(10) "Mutual decision-making" means the process by which the prospective Bridge resource family decides, given what they have learned about themselves and the children served by OKDHS, whether they want to become approved foster, kin, or adoptive parents. OKDHS, represented by the resource specialist, determines whether the family has the skills, willingness, and Bridge resources to foster or adopt an available child.

(11) "Parental substitute authority" means the ability of the foster parent to integrate the child requiring out-of-home placement into the family setting and to care for the child as the foster parent would his or her child, by:

(A) meeting the child's physical and emotional needs;

(B) teaching the child problem-solving, self-control, and responsibility; and

(C) building the foster parent - child relationship. This does not include the authority to use corporal punishment on any child in OKDHS custody.

(12) "Pre-service training" means instruction required of a Bridge resource parent applicant prior to approval.
340:75-7-10. Recruitment of Bridge resource families

Revised 6-1-09

(a) **Bridge resource families.** The recruitment of Bridge resource families is a crucial component for providing safe home environments for children requiring out-of-home placement due to child abuse, neglect, or other special circumstances. Diligent recruitment ensures children have access to Bridge resource families who:

1. live in close proximity to biological families;
2. can meet each child's unique needs;
3. allow sibling groups to remain together; and
4. reflect and understand the racial and ethnic diversity of local communities.

(b) **Recruitment and retention.** In order to impact the availability and diversity of Bridge resources, the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) implements recruitment and retention activities that are defined by each county.

**INSTRUCTIONS TO STAFF 340:75-7-10**

Revised 6-1-09

1. Recruitment plan. Each county develops, implements, monitors, and refines a plan annually to increase the availability or diversity of Bridge resources to serve children in Oklahoma Department of Human Service (OKDHS) custody and retain current resources. A copy of the annual recruitment plan is provided to Children and Family Services Division (CFSD) Foster Care Section and to the respective Field Operations Division area office. The recruitment plan:

   1. is developed with input from key stakeholders within the community, including Bridge resource families and Child Welfare (CW) staff;
   2. is based on an assessment and prioritization of need. Needs assessments consider the:

      (A) proximity of available Bridge resources to families;
      (B) language skills of Bridge resource families;
(C) racial and ethnic diversity of Bridge resources;

(D) availability of tribal resources to serve Indian children who fall under the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA); and

(E) ability of available Bridge resources to provide care for sibling groups, older children, and children with special needs;

(3) includes two recruitment activities per year;

(4) incorporates strategies to retain current Bridge resources through one retention activity per year;

(5) is implemented under the direction of the county director;

(6) is monitored monthly by the county director. The results and status of implementation are reported in a prescribed format quarterly to the respective Field Operations Division area office; and

(7) is modified as objectives are achieved or the need for different strategies is identified.
340:75-7-12. Initial screening and requirements

Revised 6-1-09

(a) **Inquiries.** Any person who is at least 21 years of age may apply to become a Bridge resource parent by contacting the local Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) office. ■ 1

(b) **Requirements.** Requirements described in OAC 340:110-5 serve as a framework for families and OKDHS in the mutual assessment process that assists in selecting the best home for children placed in foster family care. All applicants must:

1. be at least 21 years of age and preferably no more than 55 years older than the child considered for placement;

2. be residing lawfully in the United States;

3. have healthy relationships whether married, single, separated, or divorced;

4. have the ability to manage personal and household financial needs without relying on the foster care reimbursement;

5. provide appropriate sleeping arrangements for each child placed;

6. provide verification that all household members are in sufficiently good physical and mental health to provide for the individual needs of each child placed;

7. submit to a search of all OKDHS records, including Child Welfare records;

8. ensure that each household member, 18 years of age or older, submits fingerprints for a state and national criminal history records search;

9. submit to a search of Juvenile Justice Information System (JOLTS) records for any child older than 13 years of age in the household;

10. ensure that no household member has a prior conviction of any sexual offense;

11. participate in the family assessment process which includes a home study;

12. not smoke in the home when a child is placed in the home;

13. not smoke in the automobile when transporting a child placed;
(14) provide references;

(15) complete 27 hours of pre-service training;

(16) complete 12 hours of in-service training each calendar year;

(17) demonstrate the basic competencies that are to:

(A) protect and nurture children who have been abused, emotionally maltreated, or neglected;

(B) meet the medical and developmental needs of these children;

(C) support relationships between children and their parents, siblings, and kin, as specified by OKDHS;

(D) connect children to safe, nurturing relationships; and

(E) collaborate with OKDHS as a team member;

(18) provide a home that is clean and safe;

(19) have a house assessment completed;

(20) have extended family or friends to provide support and child care other than, or in addition to, licensed child care paid by OKDHS;

(21) submit verification of employment when requesting OKDHS paid child care services for a child in foster care;

(22) acknowledge and agree to abide by applicable Oklahoma statutes and OKDHS rules regarding the child in their care that include, but are not limited to:

(A) OKDHS, as the legal custodian of the child, has the right to move any child from any foster home at any time when in the child's best interests and in accordance with statutes governing movement of children;

(B) the necessity of maintaining and respecting the confidential nature of all information regarding a child placed in the Bridge resource home. A breach of confidentiality may be grounds for closure of the Bridge resource home and termination of the foster care contract; and
(C) the requirement that OKDHS investigate or assess allegations of abuse, neglect, or maltreatment of any child in OKDHS custody placed in an approved Bridge resource home in the same manner as any other abuse or neglect investigation or assessment conducted by OKDHS;

(23) notify OKDHS whenever any member of the Bridge resource family is seriously ill or hospitalized;

(24) provide a physician's statement, once approved as a Bridge resource parent:

(A) for any hospital stay;

(B) for ongoing outpatient medical or mental health care, including psychological counseling; or

(C) upon OKDHS request;

(25) agree to provide foster care as a planned, temporary placement for the child whose permanency plan is family reunification or other permanency plan;

(26) work as a member of a professional multidisciplinary team with OKDHS staff to develop a permanency plan for each child placed;

(27) participate in an initial meeting with the parent(s);

(28) share parenting of the child in care with the parent(s), who may have different values and lifestyles;

(29) be willing to actively mentor the parent in helping them improve their ability to safely care for their child;

(30) treat all information regarding the child and family as confidential, only sharing such information necessary to obtain services for the child or with persons who are directly involved with the case;

(31) participate in the development of an effective parent and child visitation plan that may include contact with the parents and siblings, if siblings are separated;

(32) comply with OKDHS rules on discipline;

(33) maintain requirements necessary for continued approval as a foster home;
(34) participate in the re-assessment of the Bridge resource home and the evaluation of the OKDHS Foster Care program and services;

(35) utilize the foster care reimbursement for the care and maintenance of the child's basic needs, such as food, clothing, shelter, incidentals, non-prescription medications, including special activity fees, allowances, and recreational opportunities;

(36) utilize the clothing allowance included in the foster care reimbursement to provide adequate clothing for the child placed; and

(37) comply with all Oklahoma statutes relating to the care and support of minors including those that prohibit the use of tobacco, alcohol, or non-prescribed medications.

(c) Specific inquiries. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients and OKDHS employees may apply to be OKDHS Bridge resource families.

(d) Requests from other states. When former foster parents apply in another state to be a foster resource and that state requests information about the foster parents from OKDHS, Children and Family Services Division Foster Care Section responds to the request.

(e) Disposition of application. The application will be accepted or denied. If denied, the reasons for denial are discussed with the applicant.

INSTRUCTIONS TO STAFF 340:75-7-12

Revised 6-1-09

1. Response to inquiry. Child Welfare (CW) staff:

   (1) responds within three working days of the inquiry by sending a Bridge information packet to the prospective applicant;

   (2) documents each inquiry in KIDS Pre-Resource screen by noting the referral source;

   (3) follows within five working days after the Bridge information packet has been sent and contact is continued at two week intervals to determine the applicant's interest either by face-to-face or telephone;
(4) discusses with each potential applicant the:

(A) basic responsibilities and requirements expected of a foster parent;

(B) children requiring out-of-home placement; and

(C) elements of the application and training process;

(5) discusses with the applicant his or her ability to meet the day-to-day needs of a child, such as providing a stimulating environment and ensuring a child the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities.

(A) When the age difference between the applicant and the child considered for placement is more than 55 years, CW staff consults with the CW field liaison (CWFL) and county director. If the applicant does not have the ability or willingness to meet these responsibilities and requirements, CW staff explains that the application may be denied.

(B) If the applicant still wishes to make a formal application, the application is accepted and processed;

(6) carefully considers the responses of each potential applicant to an explanation of the focus and goals of Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) programs;

(7) obtains information regarding the person's particular circumstances, motivation, and ability to be a foster parent; and

(8) makes a referral to other Children and Family Services Division (CFSD) units, such as Adoption Services, or other divisions within OKDHS, such as Division of Child Care or Office of Volunteerism, when the applicant's needs or expectations are better met through these sources.

2. Foster parent eligibility.

(1) TANF recipients. The assessment process explores the ability of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipient to provide for the child's needs pending receipt of the foster care reimbursement.

(2) OKDHS employees. An OKDHS employee interested in becoming a
Bridge resource parent submits a written inquiry to the employee's supervisor. If the employee is assigned to CW, the written inquiry is also sent to the CWFL.

(A) Assessment of the request. Each applicant’s request requires assessment on a case-by-case basis. The supervisor and county director or division director, as applicable, discuss the:

(i) potential for a conflict of interest between the role as an employee and that of an OKDHS Bridge resource parent; and

(ii) employee’s understanding that employment with OKDHS is not used as a means to obtain information about the child's case or gain services.

(B) Memorandum. The county director or division director, as applicable, submits the application request in a written memorandum to CFSD Foster Care Section. The memorandum documents the discussion of conflict of interest and the separation of job duties as an employee and Bridge resource parent.

(C) Written approval. The Bridge resource family assessment process for an OKDHS employee is initiated only after receiving written approval from the Foster Care Section.

(D) Placement considerations. When an OKDHS employee is an approved Bridge resource or tribal foster parent, placement of a child is not considered when the child is on the employee’s caseload.

3. Inquiries from other states. Requests from other states, agencies, or persons regarding information from an active or closed resource are routed to CFSD Foster Care Section for response.

   (1) The Foster Care Section requests information from the county, if necessary.

   (2) The county office removes all reference information and child abuse and neglect information from the requested resource record before sending the information to the Foster Care Section.

4. When denying the application, specific information obtained is provided to the
applicant in writing and is documented in the KIDS Pre-Resource screen. The pre-resource is closed within one week after a decision has been made to deny the application or the applicant has not expressed interest within 45 days.
340:75-7-14. Training

Revised 6-1-09

(a) **Pre-service training.** Applicants and adult household members who will be caring for a child in Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) custody complete a prescribed course of training that addresses the values and competencies essential to caring for a child who is a victim of maltreatment. ■ 1

(1) Each adult age 18 years or older in a Bridge resource home identified as a provider for a child completes required training or is determined to possess required competencies as a result of prior foster care training and experience.

(2) Required pre-service training consists of approximately 27 hours of instruction addressing required competencies, including, but not limited to:

   (A) protecting and nurturing children who have been abused, emotionally maltreated, or neglected;

   (B) meeting the medical and developmental needs of these children;

   (C) supporting relationships between children and their parents, siblings, and kin, as specified by OKDHS;

   (D) connecting children to safe, nurturing relationships; and

   (E) collaborating with OKDHS as a team member.

(3) Applicants may request a waiver of training requirements by submitting to the resource specialist a list of subjects addressed in training as a result of prior service with Oklahoma, another state, or a private agency. Requests for training waivers are reviewed and acted on by the Children and Family Services Division (CFSD) Foster Care Section programs manager.

   (A) An applicant with a break in OKDHS service of less than five years meets the training requirements.

   (B) Supplemental information or confirmation of training may be requested from another state or private agency identified by the applicant to aid in decision-making.

   (C) The resource specialist notifies the applicant of the decision within 30
working days of the request for a training waiver.

(4) Kinship Bridge resource families may be approved as initial placements before the completion of classroom training.

(5) Bridge resource families may request exception to training based on work schedule or disability.

(A) A self-study curriculum addressing the required competencies may be:

(i) requested by an adult in the applicant's home when the person's work schedule precludes the completion of training; and

(ii) approved by the Foster Care programs manager or designee. The assigned resource specialist supervises self-studies.

(B) A permanent training waiver may be approved by the Foster Care programs manager or designee for adults in the applicant's home when verification is received that the person has a significant disability that precludes completion of classroom or self-study curriculums. Persons who are granted a permanent training waiver may not be considered as a provider for a child.

(b) In-service training. All Bridge resource parents complete 12 hours of continuing in-service training per calendar year on subjects that promote their skills and interests as providers.

(1) OKDHS offices provide free in-service training options to Bridge resource families, including conferences, video and taped instruction, and literature.

(2) Internet instruction through recognized state and private foster care agencies is accepted as meeting in-service training requirements. The Bridge resource family provides to the resource specialist the certificate of training, if available, from the training source, listing the completed approved hours.

(3) Bridge resource families have options in selecting classes, conferences, reading materials, or other learning opportunities that enhance their skills as providers and meet the in-service training requirement. Prior approval from the resource specialist is secured to ensure a common understanding of credit for each event.

(4) Bridge resource families caring for children in OKDHS custody residing in another state must meet the requirements of that state for ongoing training to maintain approval.
INSTRUCTIONS TO STAFF 340:75-7-14

Revised 6-1-09

1. Pre-service training.

   (1) Training schedule. A schedule for Foster Care pre-service training is maintained in KIDS. The Child Welfare field liaison may request additional sessions in the current or subsequent quarter on an as-needed basis. Requests are honored as resources allow. **A session must have at least 12 participants enrolled and committed to attend. If participation is less than 12 at the first training session, consideration would be given to suspending the training.**

   (2) Enrollment. The resource specialist enrolls the applicant in pre-service training on KIDS.

2. In-service training. The resource specialist documents all training completed by Bridge resource families in the KIDS resource or verifies the training tracked by KIDS.
340:75-7-15. Background investigation and assessment of results

Revised 6-1-09

(a) Requirements. A background investigation is conducted on all adults in the Bridge resource applicant’s home as a safeguard for children placed in Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) custody. Results from the background investigation are obtained prior to approving the Bridge resource applicant's home. Background investigations are conducted at the time of application and include, but are not limited to:

1. an Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation (OSBI) name and records criminal history search, including the Department of Public Safety (DPS) and Sex Offender Registry, of the applicant and any adult living in the applicant's household;

2. a Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) national criminal history search, based on the fingerprints of the applicant and any adult members of the household;

3. a search of any court involvement;

4. a search of all OKDHS records, including Child Welfare (CW) records, for past confirmation of child maltreatment involving the applicant and any adult living in the household;

5. a search of all applicable out-of-state child abuse and neglect registries for any applicant or adult household member who has not lived continuously in Oklahoma for the past five years. The prospective resource home is not approved without the results of the state-maintained child abuse and neglect registry checks, if a registry is maintained in the applicable state, for all adult household members living in the home. If no child abuse and neglect registry is maintained in the applicable state, the resource specialist requests any information that can be provided; and

6. a search of Juvenile Justice Information System (JOLTS) records for any child older than 13 years of age in the applicant's household.

(b) Criminal history search. The applicant and adult household members provide consent for an OSBI and FBI criminal history search by signing Form 04AD003E, Request for Background Check.

(c) Exception to fingerprinting. The Director of OKDHS or designee may authorize
an exception to the fingerprinting requirement, and authorize use of an alternative procedure for obtaining a national criminal records check for any person residing in the home who has a severe condition that precludes such person being fingerprinted. In limited, case specific circumstances, OKDHS may not be able to obtain:

(1) an individual's fingerprints as a result of the individual's disability; or

(2) legible fingerprints due to low quality fingerprints, as a result of age, occupation or otherwise, thereby making it impossible for the national crime information databases (NCID) to provide results. ■ 2

(d) **Residence time frame.** Applicants or adult household members who have lived in Oklahoma for less than five years must also provide the equivalent background records check from previous state(s) of residence prior to placement. ■ 4 Equivalent records check includes, but is not limited to, a state's criminal history search, including DPS and Sex Offender Registry. OKDHS obtains the child abuse and neglect registry check from the previous state(s) of residence.

(e) **Occupancy of the household.** A criminal history search is completed for every adult who sleeps in the household more than 30 days per calendar year or engages in a pattern of overnight visitation that meets this test. Such persons are considered household members.

(f) **New occupants in the Bridge resource home.** The Bridge resource parent notifies OKDHS within 24 hours of any person taking up residence in the foster home. OKDHS completes a background investigation, per OAC 340:75-7-15, for persons age 18 years or older. The Bridge resource parent's child who reaches age 18 is considered in this category. Adults in this category have no provider responsibility until the background investigation is complete. A Bridge resource family's failure to notify OKDHS of a new household member or refusal of a household member to consent to a background check is grounds for cancellation of the foster care contract.

(g) **Kinship Bridge resource applicant criminal background records search after normal business hours or on a holiday.** When OKDHS considers placement of a child with a prospective kinship Bridge resource family in an emergency situation, after normal business hours or on a holiday, OKDHS requests that local law enforcement conduct a name based National Crime Information Center (NCIC) criminal history search. This is based upon submission of the name, race, gender, date of birth, and Social Security number of each person age 18 years or older living in the household. Each person completes and signs Form 04AD003E to initiate the search. ■ 5
(h) Assessment of background investigation results.

(1) History of felony convictions. OKDHS denies a Bridge resource home application if the applicant, or any person residing in the home of the applicant, has a criminal conviction record for any of the felony offenses listed in (A) through (E). The criminal conviction of an approved Bridge resource parent or any person residing in the Bridge resource home of any of the felony offenses listed in (A) through (E) requires the closure of the Bridge resource home, cancellation of the foster care contract, and removal of each child in OKDHS custody. The felony offenses are:

(A) physical assault, battery, or a drug-related offense within the five year period preceding the application date;

(B) child abuse or neglect;

(C) domestic abuse;

(D) a crime against a child, including, but not limited to, child pornography; or

(E) a crime involving violence, including, but not limited to, rape, sexual assault, or homicide, but excluding physical assault or battery. Homicide includes manslaughter. A crime involving violence means an offense that:

(i) has as an element the use, attempted use, or threatened use of physical force against the person or property of another; or

(ii) by its nature, involves a substantial risk that physical force against the person or property of another may be used in the course of committing the offense.

(2) Exceptions to history of felony or relevant misdemeanor arrests or convictions. OKDHS does not grant exceptions regarding felony convictions, per OAC 340:75-7-15(h)(1), of a prospective or approved Bridge resource parent or of anyone residing in the Bridge resource home. Any applicant who has, or is living with a person who has, any felony, relevant misdemeanor, criminal arrest, or conviction history will be reviewed by a committee. A relevant misdemeanor may include, but is not limited to, assault and battery, alcohol or drug-related offenses, crimes involving domestic abuse, and other such offenses. ■ 6
(3) **Sex related crimes.** OKDHS denies the application of an applicant if the applicant, or any person residing in the applicant's home, has been convicted, whether upon a verdict or a plea of guilty or upon a plea of nolo contendere, for any crime specified per Section 582 of Title 57 of the Oklahoma Statutes. OKDHS denies the application of an applicant if the applicant is subject to, living with, or married to a person who is subject to the Oklahoma Sex Offender Registration Act.

(4) **History of crimes, charges, or other convictions.** Approval of any applicant who has, or is living with a person who has, a history of arrests, charges, or convictions for any felony other than those listed in OAC 340:75-7-15(h)(1) or a relevant misdemeanor may be approved on a case-by-case basis. A relevant misdemeanor includes, but is not limited to, assault and battery, alcohol or drug related offenses, crimes involving domestic abuse, and other such offenses. ■ 6

(5) **History of child abuse and neglect investigations.** OKDHS determines the approval of any applicant with a history of child abuse and neglect investigations on a case-by-case basis. The county director considers the:

(A) nature and seriousness of the CW history;

(B) time elapsed since the CW history;

(C) circumstances of the CW history;

(D) degree of rehabilitation;

(E) risk, if any, to the child by such placement; and

(F) results of appeals, if applicable. ■ 7

(6) **History of child abuse and neglect investigations on closed foster homes.** OKDHS determines whether to pursue the approval of any applicant that was previously a Bridge resource home with a history of child abuse and neglect investigations as a Bridge resource parent. The Children and Family Services Division Foster Care Section reviews investigations where there have been abuse or neglect allegations and confirmed findings. ■ 8

(7) **JOLTS information.** The information obtained from a JOLTS search on the child older than 13 years of age living in the applicant's home is used to determine
whether that child poses a risk to a child in OKDHS custody.

INSTRUCTIONS TO STAFF 340:75-7-15

Revised 6-1-09

1. Background checks. All searches, except for Juvenile Justice Information System (JOLTS), are completed on each foster applicant and adult household member using current and previous names, aliases, and Social Security numbers.

   (1) OSBI and FBI searches.

   (A) Authorization by signature. Child Welfare (CW) staff advises the applicant that the applicant’s signature on Form 04AD003E, Request for Background Check, authorizes Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) to complete an investigation of the applicant.

   (B) Process. The anticipated time frame for completion of the entire fingerprinting process is eight weeks. The process for obtaining, sharing, and recording an Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation (OSBI) name and records search and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) national criminal history records search consists of CW staff:

   (i) submitting Form 04AD003E to Children and Family Services Division (CFSD) Fingerprint Processing Section;

   (ii) retaining a copy of Form 04AD003E in the resource record;

   (iii) submitting one Form 04AD003E for the OSBI name search and a separate Form 04AD003E with fingerprint cards for the OSBI records search and FBI national criminal history records search for every adult household member;

   (iv) providing two fingerprint cards to every person 18 years or older residing in the applicant’s home;

   (v) providing the applicant with an automated fingerprinting authorization through Finance AS400;
(vi) instructing the applicant to take the authorization and fingerprint cards to local law enforcement or a fingerprinting agency for fingerprinting services and return the cards to CW staff once fingerprinting is completed;

(vii) checking the fingerprint cards for accuracy and forwarding all cards for the applicant's household, along with Form 04AD003E to the Fingerprint Processing Section;

(viii) if the fingerprint cards are rejected and reprinting is necessary, returning the cards to and instructing the person to take the cards to the original vendor, who reprints the person at no additional charge;

(ix) storing fingerprint results in a locked file cabinet for all adult household members each in a separate manila envelope with the name and resource number written on the outside; and

(x) entering the date of the search in KIDS Criminal Background Check screen.

(2) Court records search. A search is completed to determine whether there has been any court involvement and, if so, the disposition of criminal charges and court involvement. The results are documented on Form 04AF007E, Records Check, and filed in the resource record. CW staff searches:

(A) the Oklahoma State Courts Network (OSCN) at www.oscn.net;

(B) offender information and offender lookup through Oklahoma Department of Corrections (DOC) at www.doc.state.ok.us; and

(C) Oklahoma District Court Records (ODCR) at www.odcr.com.

(3) OKDHS records search. CW staff completes a search of all OKDHS records including CW history. A search is completed using the Information Management System (IMS) and KIDS with the adult's Social Security number and date of birth. The information is recorded on Form 04AF007E and filed in the resource record.
(4) JOLTS search. CW staff completes a search on JOLTS of all children in the home older than 13. The results are documented on Form 04AF007E and filed in the resource record.

2. Exception. CW staff submits the request for an exception in writing to the Fingerprint Processing Section. Upon review, the Fingerprint Processing Section determines if the request meets the criteria for an exception and sends the request to the Foster Care Section for approval. It is not acceptable for an alternative background check process to be used when fingerprints impressions are of low quality due to lack of technological capacity or use of improper techniques. The Foster Care Section responds to the CW staff with the determination and the response is placed in the resource file. The Fingerprint Processing Section uses an alternative procedure and requests a name-based check of the NCID.

(1) Inability to obtain fingerprints due to a physical disability. A name-based check of the NCID must be conducted to obtain a comprehensive criminal background check when fingerprints cannot be obtained due to a physical disability. This alternative procedure is for limited and case-specific situations, such as when a fingerprint specialist has documented that the prospective foster parent's disabling condition prevents fingerprinting, or the individual does not have fingers.

(2) Inability to obtain results due to low quality fingerprints. If the individual's fingerprint impressions are rejected by the NCID, an alternate procedure to conduct a name-based check of the NCID must be conducted to obtain a comprehensive criminal background check. This alternative procedure is for limited and case-specific situations.

3. Child Abuse and Neglect information. If a state that maintains a child abuse and neglect registry does not respond appropriately to an information request, the foster care supervisor notifies the CFSD foster care programs manager who contacts the Administration for Children and Families regional office for assistance. If information cannot be obtained from the other state(s), the CW staff documents the name of the state(s) and efforts made to obtain the information in the resource record.

4. Kinship Bridge resource applicant criminal background records search after
normal business hours or on a holiday. CW staff:

(1) request a purpose code x name-based NCIC criminal history search;

(2) documents the criminal history search by local law enforcement after normal business hours and on holidays in KIDS Resource Contacts screen;

(3) submits signed Form 04AD003E to the Fingerprint Processing Section the next working day, indicating that it is an after hours follow-up;

(4) submits the fingerprint cards to the Fingerprint Processing Section within five business days of the name-based after hours background records check, attached to a copy of the previously submitted Form 04AD003E; and

(5) does not place a child in a kinship Bridge resource home if the prospective kinship Bridge resource applicant or person age 18 or older residing in the home refuses fingerprinting. A child in placement is removed if the prospective kinship Bridge resource applicant or person age 18 or older residing in the home refuses fingerprinting.

5. Assessment of other related crimes, charges, and convictions. The resource specialist conducts a thorough assessment of the risk potential to the child and obtains approval to consider the applicant from the applicable area or state review committee when there is any felony or relevant misdemeanor criminal arrest or conviction history on the applicant or anyone living in the home.

(1) The resource specialist considers any other issues that may be relevant in assessing appropriateness of the applicant.

(2) According to Oklahoma law, a deferred sentence is not a conviction nor considered as such, but a finding or plea of guilty or nolo contendere to a charge may be considered even if the person has been granted a deferred sentence.

(3) Assessment of charges and convictions include, but are not limited to:
(A) type of crime committed;
(B) time elapsed since the crime or conviction;
(C) length of the deferment or length and type of sentence imposed;
(D) completion date of the sentence;
(E) assignment of a probation officer and the officer's information;
(F) positive changes the applicant has made in his or her lifestyle and a description of how and why the changes occurred;
(G) self-evaluation by the applicant regarding how the experience may help children or youth placed in the home; and
(H) provisions for the safety and well-being of a child in the home due to the applicant's criminal history.

(4) Committees reviewing criminal history.

(A) An area committee reviews situations involving any Bridge resource applicant or person living in the home who has a criminal arrest or conviction for any felony or relevant misdemeanor. If the Bridge resource considered for placement is in another area, the area committee where the Bridge resource is geographically located is the committee that reviews and makes the determination. If there is no consensus of the area committee members, the state committee reviews the history and makes a determination. The area committee includes:

(i) the foster care supervisor and the appropriate county director;

(ii) the area adoption supervisor; and

(iii) a Child Welfare field liaison (CWFL) or permanency field liaison (PFL) as assigned by the area director.

(B) The state committee reviews situations where there is no consensus
of the area committee members, or when the area committee has not denied an applicant with a criminal arrest or conviction history believed to involve one or more of the specifically prohibited felony offenses:

(i) physical assault, battery or a drug-related offense within the five year period preceding the application date;

(ii) child abuse or neglect;

(iii) domestic abuse;

(iv) a crime against a child, including but not limited to, child pornography; or

(v) a crime involving violence, including but not limited to, rape, sexual assault or homicide, but excluding physical assault or battery. Homicide includes manslaughter.

(C) The criminal history information is transmitted to the state committee for review. The state committee will confirm whether the criminal history includes a felony conviction that prohibits the Bridge resource applicant from further consideration or if the arrest or conviction history is not a bar, whether the Bridge resource applicant should be considered. The decision by the state committee regarding the Bridge resource applicant is provided to the area committee and is a final decision.

(D) The state committee has consultation and technical assistance from the OKDHS Legal Division and includes:

(i) a field operations representative;

(ii) foster care programs manager II; and

(iii) adoptions programs manager III.

(E) Review committee procedures. The foster care or adoption supervisor responsible for the application in question arranges the committee meeting as quickly as possible. To expedite the process, the
meeting can be conducted via conference call or e-mail.

(i) The committee reviews the history and determines whether the applicant may be considered. The responsible supervisor documents in KIDS the decision for any situation not involving the specifically prohibited felony offenses, citing all relevant information that was considered and the names of the committee members and provides notification to the appropriate parties.

(ii) If the area committee determines the Bridge resource applicant should be considered and the criminal arrest or conviction history involves one or more of the specifically prohibited felony offenses, final approval for consideration of the applicant is determined by the state committee. A referral is not made to the state committee if the applicant has been denied by the area committee.

(iii) The state committee arranges a meeting as quickly as possible to review the decision and notifies the area committee of the results. The appropriate programs manager documents the decision in KIDS, citing all relevant information that was considered and the names of the committee members.

(iv) Any decision allowing consideration of the Bridge resource applicant is documented on the appropriate screen in the KIDS resource case(s), and represents the official OKDHS position.

6. CW history results. The resource specialist consults on a case-by-case basis with the CW supervisor, CWFL, and county director about any CW history found, including appeal decisions.

7. CW history results on closed Bridge resource homes. CFSD Foster Care Section reviews the CW history and makes a recommendation in writing to the county director.

8. JOLTS information. The resource specialist consults on a case-by-case basis with the CW supervisor, CWFL, and county director about any JOLTS history found. The county director considers the:

    (1) nature and seriousness of the JOLTS history;
(2) time elapsed since the JOLTS history;

(3) circumstances of the JOLTS history;

(4) child's ongoing involvement with Office of Juvenile Affairs; and

(5) child's degree of rehabilitation.
340:75-7-18. Bridge resource family assessment

Revised 6-1-09

(a) Bridge resource family assessments. The Bridge resource family assessment is completed by Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) staff or by a contractor of OKDHS and consists of an evaluation of the items listed in (1) through (7). The written assessment depicts the family based on complete, consistent, and truthful information gathered by the resource specialist or contractor in conjunction with the family.

1. Background investigation. Completed and signed Forms 04AF001E, Resource Family Assessment Application, and 04AD003E, Request for Background Check, authorize OKDHS to conduct an investigation into criminal and OKDHS records, including Child Welfare (CW) records, of the applicant and each adult household member, per OAC 340:75-7-15.

2. House assessment. The resource specialist conducts an evaluation of the applicant's residence to assess the location, condition, and capacity to accommodate children in foster care. The resource specialist assesses:

   (A) location. The home must be accessible to school, medical, and recreational resources;

   (B) condition. The home must be clean and safe;

   (C) play space. Adequate and safe indoor and outdoor space for play activities must be available;

   (D) equipment. Age appropriate child care equipment, such as beds, high chairs, and toys must be available and in good repair;

   (E) communications. A working phone must be maintained in the home;

   (F) automobiles. The applicant must maintain an automobile in working order, carry the statutorily mandated automobile liability insurance, possess a valid Oklahoma driver license, and have a current, valid license tag. The resource specialist observes passenger restraints and advises the applicant that proper automobile restraints are used at all times when a child in OKDHS custody is riding in an automobile.

     (i) Every driver must use a child passenger restraint system that meets
federal standards when transporting a child who is younger than six years of age.

(ii) Every child age six to 18 years who is transported in an automobile must be protected by a passenger restraint system or seat belt.

(iii) The provisions in (i) and (ii) do not apply to the:

(I) driver of a school bus, taxicab, moped, motorcycle, or other vehicle not required by law to be equipped with safety belts;

(II) driver of a vehicle in which all seat belts are in use;

(III) transportation of a child for whom medical reasons prohibit the use of a passenger restraint system or seat belt; or

(IV) transportation of a child who weighs more than 40 pounds and is transported in the back seat using only a lap seat belt when the back seat of the vehicle is not equipped with combination lap and shoulder belts or when the combination lap and shoulder belts are used by other children weighing more than 40 pounds. The back seat includes all seats located behind the front seat of a vehicle;

(G) sleeping arrangements and privacy.

(i) The applicant's home provides a separate bed for each child with the exception of siblings younger than six years of age who exhibit a need for mutual support. A separate bedroom is provided for a child who acts out sexually.

(ii) Preferably, no more than two children share a bedroom. Primary consideration is given to the child's safety according to age and emotional needs.

(iii) The applicant's home provides separate bedrooms for children older than six years of age who are of the opposite sex.

(iv) A child in OKDHS custody, with the exception of an infant who is younger than 12 months of age, does not share a bedroom with an adult in the household.

(v) The applicant's home provides space for the child's personal possessions
and for a reasonable degree of privacy.

(vi) The applicant may not designate a room, such as the living room, utility room, den, dining room, pantry, or unconverted garage, as a bedroom unless the room is specifically designed as a bedroom;

(H) sleeping arrangements for infants. A crib, port-a-crib, bassinet, or playpen with a firm waterproof mattress or pad is used for each child younger than one year of age.

(i) Bassinets are used for infants:

(I) weighing up to 15 pounds; or

(II) no more than three months of age.

(ii) Port-a-cribs or playpens are used for short-term sleeping arrangements, such as naps or respite and traveling for periods of no more than one week.

(iii) Cribs, port-a-cribs, bassinets, and playpens with more than two and 3/8 inches between slats or between the side and end panels are not allowed.

(iv) Cribs with decorative cutout areas in crib-end panels or tall decorative knobs on the corner posts that may entrap a child's head or catch the child's clothing are not allowed.

(v) Mattresses must be tight fitting with no more than one inch between the mattress and crib, port-a-crib, bassinet, or playpen.

(vi) Mattress and crib sheets must fit snugly.

(vii) Drop-side latches must:

(I) hold sides securely; and

(II) not be accessible by the child in the crib, port-a-crib, bassinet, or playpen.

(viii) Pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, stuffed toys, bumper pads, and other soft products are not permitted in the infant's crib, port-a-crib, bassinet, or playpen.
(ix) To reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), infants younger than 12 months of age are placed on their back for sleeping unless there is a medical reason the infant must not sleep in this position, as documented by a health professional. This documentation is maintained by the foster parent and filed in the child's CW case record.

(x) Infants who are able to turn themselves over are placed initially on their back for sleeping but allowed to sleep in a position they prefer;

(I) water safety.

(i) Any activity that involves wading and swimming is supervised at all times.

(ii) Pools are fenced to prevent unsupervised access or a child safety pool cover can be placed over the water area each time the pool is not in use. Pool covers must be completely removed prior to pool use. Municipality and insurance requirements for pools are followed. All doors and gates leading to the pool are locked. There is:

(I) a sturdy fence at least four feet high that cannot be easily climbed; or

(II) a fence that connects to the top of an above-ground pool and extends two feet above the pool or follows other specified safety guidelines.

(iii) The hot tub must be equipped with a hard cover designed for a hot tub.

(iv) The use of portable wading pools is monitored at all times. The wading pool is emptied at the end of each use;

(J) animal and household pet safety. ■ 2

(i) Animals are in good health, do not show evidence of carrying disease, and do not present a threat to the health, safety, or well-being of children.

(ii) Documentation of current rabies vaccinations administered by a licensed veterinarian for dogs, cats, and other applicable pets is kept in the resource file.

(iii) If an animal bites a child, the child's CW worker is contacted immediately; and

(K) weapon safety. Any activity that involves a weapon must have supervision at
all times. The activity must be approved by the CW worker. Weapon includes, but is not limited to, gun, BB gun, bow and arrow, and knife, with the exception of cooking and eating utensils.

(3) **Total number of children in placement.** The total number of children in OKDHS custody placed in a Bridge resource home may not exceed five. The total number of all children in the home, which includes biological, adoptive, foster, and other children not in OKDHS custody, may not exceed six.

(4) **Children younger than two years of age.** No more than two children younger than two years of age, including the Bridge resource family's own children, are placed in the same home.

(5) **References.** The resource specialist solicits and reviews the comments of personal, employer, and school references identified by the applicant regarding the applicant's parenting strategies and skills. Information obtained through references is confidential.

(A) Three personal references are interviewed by phone or in person.

(B) The applicant's current or most recent employer is contacted by letter, phone, or in person. When the applicant is self-employed, a reference is obtained from a customer.

(C) School teachers, counselors, or administrators who have recently served the applicant's child are contacted by letter, phone, or in person to assess the applicant's involvement in educational concerns, if applicable.

(D) If the applicant home schools their own child, a person that has knowledge of the applicant's home schooling experience is contacted by letter, phone, or in person.

(E) All adult children of the applicant are interviewed by letter, phone, or in person, if applicable.

(F) The mental health professional is contacted by letter, when the applicant or applicant's child has received counseling, whether currently or in the past.

(G) A minimum of six references is required. □ 3

(6) **Military discharge.** If an applicant has been discharged from the armed forces, a copy of DD Form 214, Certificate of Release of Discharge From Active Duty, is
required to determine the type of discharge. Any discharge other than honorable must be specifically addressed in the assessment as a consideration in the applicant's ability to attend to the safety and well-being of a child requiring foster care services. ■ 4

(7) Previous foster care experience. Applicants who have previously served as foster parents in another state or with a private agency provide or authorize release of all previous foster home assessments, reports, and training records from the state or agency. ■ 5

(8) Household income. The applicant provides verification that he or she can manage personal and household financial needs without relying on the foster care reimbursement. The applicant must have sufficient income to meet the needs of an additional child placed in his or her home until receipt of foster care reimbursement for that child.

(b) Disposition of Bridge resource home assessments. ■ 6 Upon completion of the Bridge resource home assessment, a decision regarding disposition is made assessing all the information gathered. The assessment process is completed and the determination regarding disposition is made no later than 90 days after receipt of Form 04AF001E. The resource specialist confirms in writing all decisions made concerning the assessment and application with the applicant. The resource specialist shares with the applicant the resource family assessment for the applicant's input prior to deciding to select in or out of the Foster Care program. When the fingerprint results are received showing history, the resource specialist has a discussion about the history with the applicant or adult member of the household. Disposition of the assessment may result in:

(1) postponement of the assessment. The applicant is advised of any condition that does not conform to Foster Care rules, per OAC 340:75-7, during the assessment. When determined appropriate, the resource specialist postpones the assessment to afford the applicant the opportunity to resolve issues of concern;

(2) voluntary withdrawal of the application. If the resource specialist determines the applicant does not meet the requirements for becoming a foster parent, the reasoning for the determination is explained, and the resource specialist gives the applicant the option to voluntarily withdraw the application;

(3) approval of the assessment.

The resource specialist reviews and discusses the assessment with the applicant for clarification of content, except for the Juvenile Justice Information System
(JOLTS) review, CW records search, and reference information.

(4) exceptions to the assessment. OKDHS may, at its discretion, grant an exception of specific rules or standards upon request by the applicant.

(A) OKDHS may establish conditions that must be met by the applicant in order to operate under the exception granted.

(B) Exceptions may be granted upon a showing by the applicant that:

(i) the particular rule or standard that is the subject of the exception request may not be applied as written because strict application of the rule or standard would cause undue hardship; and

(ii) adequate standards affording protection for the health, safety, and care of the child exists and will be met in lieu of the exact requirements of the rule or standard in question; or 7

(5) denial of the assessment. The decision to deny requires an explanation to the applicant by the resource specialist regarding the reasons the assessment is denied. If a kinship home is denied, the child in OKDHS custody in the home is moved immediately. Reasons for denying an assessment may include, but are not limited to:

(A) a lack of stable, adequate income to meet the applicant's own or total family needs or poor management of available income;

(B) a physical facility that is inadequate to accommodate the addition of children to the home or presents health or safety concerns;

(C) the applicant or any person residing in the home has a history of alleged or confirmed child abuse, neglect, or both, per OAC 340:75-7-15;

(D) the applicant or any person residing in the home has a history of arrests or convictions per OAC 340:75-7-15;

(E) the age, health, or any other condition of the applicant impedes the applicant's ability to provide appropriate care for a child;

(F) relationships in the household are unstable and unsatisfactory;

(G) the mental health of the applicant or other family or household member
impedes the applicant's ability to provide appropriate care for a child;

(H) references are guarded or have reservations in recommending the applicant;

(I) the applicant fails to complete the application, required training, or verifications in a timely manner as requested or provides information that is incomplete, inconsistent, or untruthful;

(J) the home is determined unsuitable for the child requiring placement;

(K) the applicant has applied for a child that OKDHS reasonably believes may not be available for placement; or

(L) one or more factors concerning the applicant, a family or household member, or conditions in the home as described in the denial letter, renders the applicant or home environment inappropriate as a resource home.

(c) **Approval of a Bridge resource home.**

1. The resource specialist, CW supervisor, and applicant sign Form 04AF003E, Resource Family Assessment – Bridge Family Profile, and a copy is provided to the applicant. The home is not considered approved until the CW supervisor approves the family assessment in KIDS and signs Form 04AF003E, and the foster family has completed the pre-service training and fingerprint results have been received and reviewed.

2. Prior to initiation of reimbursement, the applicant signs the foster care contract with the exception of a kinship placement, per OAC 340:75-7-24.

3. The resource specialist provides the family with the Resource Parent Handbook. Each foster parent signs Form 04AF021E, Verification of Receipt of OKDHS Rules.

4. The foster parent signs Form 15GR008E, Notice of Grievance Rights - Foster Parents.

(d) **Re-application to provide foster care.** Persons who desire to re-open their foster home must re-apply. If the foster home has been closed more than five years, a Bridge resource family assessment is completed. If the Bridge resource home has been closed five years or less and at the time of closure the home was in good standing and the re-assessments were up-to-date; the home can be opened with an addendum and updated forms. If the re-assessments were not in compliance, a Bridge resource family assessment is completed. If the home was closed during an investigation or needing a
Written Plan of Compliance, a Bridge resource family assessment is completed.  ■ 9

(e) Dissolved marriage or other relationships. If Bridge resource parents divorce or the relationship is dissolved, the person who continues to foster retains the existing resource number and information.  ■ 10

(f) Contract Bridge resource home assessments. Children and Family Services Division (CFSD) may contract with licensed child-placing agencies or a qualified person to provide a range of CW services that include conducting resource family assessments. OKDHS makes the final decision regarding the disposition of all resources assessed by contractors.  ■ 11

(g) Changes in the household. The Bridge resource parent must notify the resource specialist within 24 hours of any change in the household that precludes the Bridge resource parent from providing adequate care for the child, including, but not limited to:

(1) income;
(2) location;
(3) health; or
(4) relationship.  ■ 12

INSTRUCTIONS TO STAFF 340:75-7-18

Revised 6-1-09

1. Resource family assessment.

(1) Initial family assessment. The resource specialist conducts the initial consultation with the family in the family's home to answer questions, explain the mutual assessment process and training requirements, and assess the safety of the home. Observations are documented on Form 04AF004E, House Assessment.

(2) Resource family assessment. The resource specialist or contractor uses Form 04AF002E, Guidelines for Resource Family Assessment – Bridge Family Profile, to obtain information about the family. If the resource specialist is completing the resource family assessment, the information is written on Form 04AF003E, Resource Family Assessment – Bridge Family Profile.
(3) **Fingerprint addendum.** The resource specialist completes Form 04AF033E, National Criminal History Records Search Results – Bridge Resource Family Assessment Addendum, for each adult household member when the results of the fingerprints have been received.

(1) If there is no record found or the results are the same as the OSBI name search, the addendum is completed and filed in a manila envelope with the fingerprint results.

(2) If the results are different than the OSBI name search, the resource specialist:

   (A) discusses the results with the adult member;

   (B) completes Form 04AF033E;

   (C) obtains the adult member's signature on the addendum; and

   (D) files the addendum in a manila envelope with the appropriate fingerprint results.

(4) **Review of resource assessment forms.** During the initial consultation the resource specialist provides dates for pre-service training and reviews Forms:

   (A) 04AF010E, Resource Family Financial Assessment;

   (B) 04AF001E, Resource Family Assessment Application;

   (C) 04AF008E, Medical Examination Report, that is received by the resource specialist as soon as possible or prior to the final consultation visit, and includes, if applicable, a statement from the family physician for all children in the home to verify that the children are healthy, free from communicable diseases, and current on immunizations;

   (D) 04AF017E, Family Health History;

   (E) 04AF018E, Child Needs Information List;

   (F) 04FC003E, Notice to Foster Parent Applicant(s), signed by the
applicant;

(G) 04MP001E, Consent for Release of Information, signed by the applicant; and

(H) 08H1003E, Authorization to Disclose Medical Records.

(5) Tribal membership. The resource specialist verifies tribal membership or tribal affiliation of the applicant in order to identify valid placement resources for children eligible under the Indian Child Welfare Acts, per OAC 340:75-19.

2. Animal safety. For exotic animals, the resource specialist contacts the Wildlife Department or the veterinarian of record for the animal to determine the safety of children and documents the information in the KIDS resource case.

3. References.

(1) The resource specialist documents all information provided by voluntary and applicant specified references regarding the applicant. A minimum of six references is required. The resource specialist explains to each person contacted as a reference program expectations and the needs of children who come into care. The resource specialist uses Forms:

(A) 04AF015E, Resource Family Reference Letter for Adult Children, to document contact by mail, phone, or face-to-face with all adult children of each applicant, if applicable. The resource specialist requests consultation with the Child Welfare (CW) supervisor, CW field liaison (CWFL), and county director to determine the significance of the information provided by an adult child who:

   (i) has a history of abuse and neglect;

   (ii) disagrees with his or her parent(s)’ desire to foster; or

   (iii) has other concerns about his or her parent(s);

(B) 04AF014E, Resource Family Reference for School Personnel, when the applicant has a school-age child, to contact by letter the school principal, counselor, or teacher for each child of the applicant;
(C) 04AF025E, Resource Family Reference Letter for Home Schooling, when the applicant home schools their child;

(D) 04AF011E, Resource Family Reference Letter for an Employer, to document contact by mail, phone, or face-to-face with the employer or direct supervisor of the applicant. The resource specialist assesses the information given by the applicant and the present employer or supervisor and decides whether contact with past employers or supervisors is necessary. When the applicant is self-employed, contact with a customer suffices;

(E) 04AF016E, Resource Family Personal Reference Letter, as a guide to conduct interviews and document phone interviews of personal references. When a reference is not well enough acquainted with the applicant to provide pertinent information or when the person declines to serve as a reference, this is documented in the assessment and the applicant is asked for another reference;

(F) 04AF013E, Resource Family Assessment Reference Letter for Mental Health Professionals, when the applicant has received mental health services, currently or in the past, to contact the mental health professional by letter. The resource specialist uses Form 08HI003E to obtain the information; and

(G) 04AF012E, Child's Mental Health Reference Letter, when the applicant's child has received mental health services, currently or in the past, to contact the mental health professional by letter. The resource specialist uses Form 08HI003E to obtain the information.

(2) Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) does not deny the continuation of the foster application process based solely on information provided by a reference. When a reference provides information requiring further explanation from the applicant, the resource specialist discusses the nature of the information without revealing the source.

4. Military history. The resource specialist requests consultation with the CW supervisor, CWFL, and county director to determine the significance of information provided by military history, if needed.

5. Previous foster care information. The resource specialist uses Form
04MP001E to secure a copy of the applicant’s foster home assessment, related information, and training record from other states or agencies, if applicable.

(1) OKDHS secures the applicant’s record from the other state or agency and provides the information to the contractor, if applicable.

(2) The resource specialist sends via mail or fax the training record to Children and Family Services Division (CFSD) Foster Care Section to determine further training requirements.

(3) A copy of an assessment and training record presented by an applicant from another state during the application and assessment process in Oklahoma is acceptable, but requires verbal verification from the state of the presented assessment and training record.

(4) The resource specialist documents the verbal verification in KIDS Pre-Resource or Resource Contacts screens, if applicable.

6. Disposition process. The assessment and approval process must be completed no later than 90 days after receipt of Form 04AF001E. The resource specialist reviews the completed family assessment for content using Form 04AF002E, or Form 04AF003E. The resource specialist consults with the CW supervisor, CWFL, and county director for assistance in reaching a decision regarding the disposition of the assessment, if needed. CFSD Foster Care Section staff is available for consultation.

(1) Postponing a disposition. The disposition of an assessment is postponed when the applicant and resource specialist make a decision to postpone the process. The resource specialist requests an exception to the 90-day assessment completion time frame from the CW supervisor and CWFL. The reason for the exception is documented in KIDS Resource Contacts screen. The assessment is denied when resolution is not possible.

(2) Voluntary withdrawal. If the applicant withdraws the application, the resource specialist follows up with a letter of confirmation of the withdrawal.

(3) Approving a family assessment. Before the assessment is discussed with the family, the CW supervisor reviews the assessment, attachments,
and fingerprint results for content. The resource specialist:

(A) reviews the family assessment with the family and obtains signatures;

(B) obtains the CW supervisor signature;

(C) sends a copy of the approved family assessment to the Bridge resource family;

(D) files in the resource record the original Form 04AF003E with signatures; and

(E) sends a copy of the approved family assessment to the CFSD Adoption Section if the family selects into the Adoption program;

(4) Denying a family assessment.

(A) The resource specialist staffs the information with the CW supervisor.

(B) The resource specialist documents all information obtained in the resource record and KIDS Pre-Resource or Resource Contacts screens. The resource specialist documents the disposition decision in KIDS Resource Status screen.

(C) Denial of the assessment is documented by the resource specialist in summary form with detailed information in KIDS Pre-Resource or Resource Contacts screen and a copy of the written summary is filed in the resource record.

7. Exceptions.

(1) The resource specialist submits a written request for an exception of the requirements in OAC 340:75-7 to the CW supervisor.

(2) The CW supervisor sends the request to CFSD Foster Care Section with a copy to the county director.

(3) Upon receipt of the request, Foster Care Section staff responds in writing with a decision. A copy of the response to the request is retained
in the resource and child's record.

(4) The resource specialist documents the request and response in KIDS Resource Contacts screen.

8. Approving a Bridge resource home. The resource specialist:

(1) copies the KIDS Pre-Resource to a Resource for all approved applications, except when the child in OKDHS custody is in a kinship placement;

(2) end dates the KIDS Pre-Resource after conversion to a Resource;

(3) enters the request for approval of the assessment in KIDS Resource Status screen with the date Form 04AF003E is sent to the CW supervisor for approval.

(A) The CW supervisor approves the assessment in KIDS Resource Status screen; and

(B) signs Form 04AF003E with the same date;

(4) completes the Bridge resource screens in KIDS Resource/Other/Bridge;

(5) files the verification in the resource record and documents receipt of the Resource Parent Handbook in KIDS Resource Contacts screen; and

(6) provides a signed copy of Form 15GR008E, Notice of Grievance Rights – Foster Parents, to the Bridge resource parent and files the original in the resource record with documentation of the signature in KIDS Resource Contacts screen.

9. Re-opening a foster home.

(1) The resource specialist reviews the resource record to determine the foster parent's performance history with OKDHS. The review includes:

(A) any OKDHS policy or foster care contract violations or concerns;

(B) the outcomes of any written plans of compliance and recommendations regarding continued use of the home; and
(C) the training record, to ensure that pre-service training was completed and documented.

(2) After the review, the resource specialist and CW supervisor determine the disposition of the re-application. Consultation is available with the CWFL, county director, or Foster Care Section, if needed.

(3) Re-opening a foster home requires:

(A) completion of:

(i) Form 04AF001E;

(ii) Form 04AF004E;

(iii) Forms 04AF008E, Medical Examination Report and 04AF010E, Resource Family Financial Assessment, unless completed within the last 12 months;

(iv) Form 04AD003E, Request for Background Check, for all adult members of the household, unless completed within the last 12 months;

(v) Form 04AD003E for fingerprints for all adult members of the household, unless completed within the last five years;

(vi) an OKDHS records search, including:

(I) CW history in KIDS;

(II) Information Management System (IMS); and

(III) Juvenile Justice Information System (JOLTS) review of any child older than 13 years of age residing in the home. All information is recorded on Form 04AF007E, Records Check, and filed in the resource record; and

(vii) Form 04AF003E, Resource Family Assessment Bridge Family Profile, including an updated recommendation, if the home was closed for five years or more. If the home was closed for less than
five years, an addendum to Form 04AF003E is completed for homes in good standing and for whom re-assessments were up-to-date at closure. If the home was not in good standing when closed or if re-assessments were not up-to-date, Form 04AF003E is completed.

(B) contact with three current references, if the home was closed more than 12 months;

(C) additional references, if new reference information is not consistent with previous references or with the requirements per OAC 340:75-7-18;

(D) re-opening the closed resource as pending in KIDS Resource Status screen and entering a new family assessment line for the new assessment or the addendum; and

(E) a new contract. Upon approval, the resource specialist has the family sign a new contract and submits the contract to CFSD Foster Care Section to assign a new contract number.

10. Dissolved marriage or relationship. If foster parents divorce or the relationship dissolves, the person who continues to foster retains the existing resource number and information. An addendum is completed and documented in KIDS Resource Contacts screen to reflect the changes in the household. A new Form 04AF010E is completed to address any change to the financial status of the household. The Out of House Date and Reason is entered in KIDS Resource Homes screens to reflect this information.

(1) If both foster parents wish to continue to foster, the primary foster parent maintains the original KIDS resource number, and another resource is opened cross-referencing the original resource number.

(2) If the primary foster parent does not wish to continue fostering and the designated Head of Household 2 elects to foster, he or she becomes Head of Household 1 in the existing KIDS resource. The person wishing to continue to foster signs a new foster care contract, per OAC 340:75-7-52 and a new contract number is assigned.

(3) If neither foster parent wishes to foster, the KIDS resource is closed.

11. Contracted home assessments.
(1) If the referral is for a kinship Bridge resource, the CW worker or resource specialist refers the family assessment to the contractor within seven days of the child's placement. If the referral is not made within seven days after the child's placement, the resource specialist completes the family assessment in a timely manner.

(2) Non-paid kinship and foster care Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) home assessments are not contracted, and the resource specialist completes the family assessment.

(3) The contractor completes an application packet on each foster home referred by the CWFL or contract liaison.

(4) At a minimum, the contractor meets with the foster or kinship applicant twice during the assessment process in the home and at the conclusion of the resource assessment for review and signatures by the applicant. The identification of issues and concerns during the assessment process requires consultation with the resource specialist and additional meetings with the family.

12. Changes in household. The resource specialist addresses any household changes with the Bridge resource parent and documents this information. An assessment is completed regarding the foster parent's ability to continue providing care for a child in OKDHS custody.
340:75-7-24. Kinship placements

Revised 11-20-08

(a) **Kinship care.** Kinship care is considered as the first option in providing care for the child requiring out-of-home placement, provided the child's needs are met and safety is reasonably ensured in the kinship placement. A kinship placement is assessed as a potential permanent placement for the child if reunification is not achieved. Kinship relationships do not require a blood relationship. The types of kinship relationships are identified in (1) through (6).

(1) **Related by blood.** Blood relatives considered as kinship, including half-blood, are:

   (A) siblings;

   (B) grandparents, including those denoted by prefixes of great and great-great;

   (C) aunts and uncles, including those denoted by prefixes of great and great-great;

   (D) nieces and nephews, including those denoted by prefixes of grand and great-grand; and

   (E) cousins.

(2) **Related by marriage.** Per OAC 340:75-7-24(a)(1), relationships by marriage, whether common-law or ceremonial, including step-relations and even after the marriage is terminated by death or divorce, are considered kinship.

(3) **Related by adoption.** Relatives by adoption, per OAC 340:75-7-24(a)(1) and (2), are considered kinship.

(4) **Paternal relatives.** Paternal relatives, per OAC 340:75-7-24(a)(1) through (3), of children born out of wedlock, are considered kinship.

(5) **Related by emotional tie or bond.** An emotional tie or bond exists when a child or the child's parent acknowledges and accepts a person as part of the extended family or in the family's close network of friends and relationships. The family relationship role exists prior to the necessity for out-of-home placement of the child.

(6) **Noncustodial parent.** A child returned to or placed with a noncustodial parent
or a parent whose rights were terminated is not a kinship placement. Biological parents are not kinship resources and are not eligible for foster care reimbursement.

(b) **Initial kinship placement.** A child may be placed in a kinship foster home prior to completion of the resource family assessment and pre-service training, provided:

1. Form 04FC001E, Initial Kinship Placement Agreement, is completed and signed;
2. Forms 04AF001E, Resource Family Assessment Application, and 04AD003E, Request for Background Check, are completed and signed, per OAC 340:75-7-15 and 340:75-7-18;
3. an Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) records search, including Child Welfare (CW) records, is completed and documented on Form 04AF007E, Records Check;
4. Form 04AF004E, House Assessment, is completed and approved; and
5. three personal references, only one of whom is a family member, are interviewed by phone.

(c) **Kinship reimbursement option.** The kinship applicant may opt for payment by OKDHS or a money payment for which the child is eligible instead of the foster home reimbursement.

1. The foster home reimbursement is reduced by the amount of the money payment if the money payment is less than the foster home reimbursement. Refer to OAC 340:75-7-52.1 for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Administration (SSA) benefits received for a parent who is deceased or disabled.

2. Payment may include:

   (A) other financial resources, per OAC 340:75-13-28; or
   (B) Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits, per OAC 340:10-9.

(d) **Kinship requirement.** All kinship foster homes, paid or non-paid, must meet the same requirements as all other CW foster homes. Kinship foster homes, that have not been approved within the preceding five years, are entitled to receive:

1. a one-time kinship start-up stipend to assist with initial expenditures for each
child placed in the home for fourteen days; and

(2) a training stipend half after enrollment and half after completion of the pre-service training when a child has been placed in the home. The kinship start-up stipend and the training stipends are set out in OKDHS Appendix 04AX003E, Children and Family Services Division Rates Schedule. For paid kinship foster homes, reimbursements begin at the time requirements are met and are not retroactive.

INSTRUCTIONS TO STAFF 340:75-7-24

Revised 6-1-09

1. Exception. An exception may be requested from the Children and Family Services Division (CFSD) Foster Care Section when a diligent search has been completed per OAC 340:75-6-85.2 and documented in the child’s KIDS case. An exception may be requested when:

   (1) a specialized skill is needed to care for the child;

   (2) a teenager has found placement through a connection in the community; or

   (3) a child in permanent custody or long-term placement has a connection in the community.

2. Kinship. Every effort is made to place a child in a kinship placement. The resource specialist carefully considers the child's physical and emotional health and safety in identifying potential kin providers.

3. Initial kinship placement. An Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) records search, including Child Welfare (CW) records, is completed first on potential kinship providers and documented on Form 04AF007E, Records Check. If the resource specialist does not complete the initial kinship placement, the CW worker provides all necessary paperwork to the resource specialist within two working days. The resource specialist:

   (1) copies KIDS Pre-Resource screen to a Resource after the child is placed in a kinship foster home and the initial placement requirements are completed, per OAC 340:75-7-24;

   (2) documents the relationship of the kinship provider in KIDS Resource
General Information screen. When requesting an out-of-county kinship placement, a KIDS Pre-Resource is assigned to the county in which the kinship provider resides with the information from the CW records search;

(3) end dates the KIDS Pre-Resource after the conversion to a Resource; and

(4) completes:

(A) Form 04FC001E, Initial Kinship Placement Agreement;

(B) the criminal records search, OKDHS records review, background checks, and Juvenile Justice Information System (JOLTS) review for any child older than 13 years of age residing in the home, per OAC 340:75-7-15;

(C) Form 04AF004E, House Assessment, and submits to the CW supervisor for review; and

(D) an interview by phone with three personal references, only one of whom is a family member.

4. Kinship reimbursement. The kinship start-up stipend and the training stipends will be entered automatically by the KIDS system. The resource specialist:

(1) refers relative kinship providers to the local OKDHS office for the application of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits pending completion of the assessment process as a paid foster family;

(2) to avoid an overpayment, informs the Family Support Services worker within one day when the requirements are met for foster care;

(3) at the initial consultation:

(A) has the kinship provider sign a contract, per OAC 340:75-7-52 Instructions to Staff, or for non-paid kinship, sign Form 04FC002E, Nonpaid Agreement; and

(B) provides all the adult applicants in the home with fingerprint cards to be completed and returned to the resource specialist within five days; and
(4) consults with the CW supervisor and determines whether an exception is necessary.

(A) Exceptions for payments made before requirements are completed are considered on a case-by-case basis.

(B) A request for a one-time 60-day waiver is made only after all efforts by the county to expedite training or the home study are exhausted, and the efforts are documented in KIDS Resource Contacts screens.

(C) A written request and a waiver request on KIDS is submitted to CFSD Foster Care Section by the CW supervisor.

(i) The types of training waivers are a:

(I) temporary waiver when pre-service training is not available and all other requirements are met; and

(II) permanent waiver when a spouse is incapacitated, available only after the primary kinship provider completes the pre-service training.

(ii) A home assessment waiver is requested when:

(I) the resource specialist has not completed the home assessment timely; or

(II) any required documentation is not received.
340:75-7-37. Responsibilities of Bridge resource parents

Revised 6-1-09

As members of a professional team with Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) staff, Bridge resource parents assume responsibility both to OKDHS and to the children and families served. A clear understanding of the roles, abilities, and requirements of the Bridge resource parents is necessary for effective coordination with OKDHS staff and the children and families served.

(1) Responsibilities of the Bridge resource parent to the child in OKDHS custody and the child's family. Responsibilities of the Bridge resource parent include:

(A) integrating the child into the Bridge resource family setting and caring for the child as the Bridge resource parent would for the Bridge resource parent's own child;

(B) providing mentoring services to the child's parent(s) and coordinating visitation and contact to facilitate timely reunification, including phone and mail contact when appropriate;

(C) participating in the initial meeting with the child's parents;

(D) working as a multidisciplinary team member with the Child Welfare (CW) worker and the child's parent(s) toward family reunification or other permanency plan;

(E) helping the child understand why he or she is in foster care and to deal with the grief caused by the separation;

(F) cooperating and assisting in sibling contact or visitation, including phone and mail contact, when siblings are separated;

(G) helping the child maintain a connection to the child's kin, culture and community;

(H) cooperating and assisting the CW worker in the placement of siblings together;

(I) helping the child develop a positive identity and self-esteem by feeling lovable, capable, worthwhile, and competent;
(J) helping the child learn appropriate behavior without using physical punishment;

(K) utilizing appropriate behavior management, parent-child conflict resolution, and stress management techniques in a manner appropriate to the age and development of the child in foster care;

(L) enrolling the child in an accredited school, if applicable, and ensuring the child attends;

(M) advocating for the child to obtain appropriate educational testing and placement in a timely manner;

(N) attending school conferences and Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meetings;

(O) ensuring the child participates in extracurricular and other recreational activities as appropriate;

(P) ensuring the child's necessary medical, dental, and counseling needs are met by:

   (i) making appointments;

   (ii) providing transportation to appointments and sibling and parent visits; and

   (iii) obtaining prescription medications or over-the-counter medications as necessary and administering the medication as directed;

(Q) maintaining records of all medical, dental, and counseling appointments and notifying the CW worker of the time and place of the appointments, all medications prescribed for the child, and over-the-counter medications given to the child;

(R) notifying the CW worker of all medical and educational problems and progress;

(S) ensuring the child's opportunity to participate in the religious practices of the child's family's choice, including the provision of transportation to worship services other than those of the foster parent, if necessary, and ensuring a child in foster care is not made to attend religious services against the child's wishes;
(T) providing transportation for the child to meet with legal counsel upon reasonable request, attending court hearings as desired or required, submitting to the court written reports or presenting testimony concerning the strengths, needs, behavior, important experiences, and relationships of the child, in addition to other information the court requests;

(U) providing from the foster care reimbursement:

(i) essentials such as food, shelter, non-prescription medical needs, clothing, shoes, and toiletries;

(ii) clothing and fees for special activities;

(iii) school pictures;

(iv) athletic and band instrument fees;

(v) cap and gown rental and prom clothing; and

(vi) birthday and holiday gifts;

(V) providing federally mandated independent living services to youth who are at least 16 years of age and assisting other children in learning basic life skills that allow the opportunity to improve self-concept and strengthen identity in preparation for life after foster care;

(W) allowing the child access to mail from family members and the child's attorney; and

(X) allowing the child overnight stays with friends of the child whom the Bridge resource parent knows and approves while ensuring the safety of the child.

(2) Responsibilities of the Bridge resource parent in the development and support of an appropriate permanency plan for each child. Responsibilities of the foster parent include:

(A) informing the CW worker and other team members of each child's strengths, needs, progress, and development;

(B) participating in the development of an effective parent and child visitation plan approved by OKDHS that defines contact with the parent(s) and siblings, if
siblings are separated;

(C) collaborating with the child's CW worker prior to visits with the birth parents unless part of a specific plan;

(D) advising the CW worker of all pertinent information about the child and family;

(E) participating in meetings and case staffings when appropriate;

(F) completing all required training hours each calendar year, including policy training when offered; and

(G) maintaining current medical and education records for each child in foster care. A Life Book is maintained for each child placed in the home to support the child's sense of family continuity. These records accompany the child when he or she leaves the foster home.
340:75-7-37.1. Roles and responsibilities of the resource specialist

Revised 6-1-09

A clear understanding of the roles, responsibilities, and requirements of the resource specialist is necessary for effective coordination with Bridge resource parents and the children and families served.

(1) **Recruitment.** The resource specialist engages in activities designed to recruit Bridge resource families who reflect the diversity of the children in out-of-home care and who are willing and able to parent children with special needs. Every effort is made to place a child in a kinship placement.

(2) **Inquiries.** Inquiries into becoming a foster or kinship family are documented by the resource specialist in KIDS as a Pre-resource. The resource specialist discusses with each potential applicant the basic responsibilities and requirements expected of a Bridge resource parent, the types of children requiring out-of-home placement, and the elements of the approval process.

(3) **Assessment process.** The resource specialist or a contractor of Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) completes the Bridge resource family assessment. The initial consultation with the family is completed in the family's home. The resource specialist:

   (A) conducts at least two home visits with the family, excluding the final review of the assessment;

   (B) evaluates the prospective foster or kinship home to assess the location, condition, and ability to accommodate children in foster care; and

   (C) contacts three personal references by phone or in person.

(4) **Training.** The resource specialist:

   (A) enrolls the applicant in pre-service training;

   (B) documents all other training the resource family completes, including 12 hours of required in-service training;

   (C) engages the family in completing the required 12 hours of in-service training each calendar year;
(D) provides the resource family with materials to obtain the 12 hours of in-service training; and

(E) assists the family in completing the self-study requirements, if applicable.

(5) **Disposition of the assessment.** The resource specialist:

(A) confirms in writing all decisions made regarding the assessment and application process;

(B) shares with the applicant the resource family assessment for the applicant's input prior to deciding to select in or out of the foster care program;

(C) provides the applicant with an explanation of the reasons the assessment is denied, if applicable; and

(D) provides the applicant with a copy of the resource family assessment, if the assessment is approved.

(6) **Reimbursement.** The resource specialist:

(A) refers relative kinship providers to the local OKDHS office for the application of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits pending completion of the assessment process;

(B) coordinates with the local OKDHS office when TANF benefits should end and foster care payments will begin;

(C) assists families in applying for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security (SSA) for a parent who is deceased or disabled, per OAC 340:75-7-52.1;

(D) responds to reimbursement issues timely; and

(E) assists the Bridge resource family in completing Form 10AD006E Travel Claim, for mileage per OAC 340:75-7-65.

(7) **Retention.** The resource specialist engages in activities that value and support the Bridge resource parent's role and assists the resource family in navigating the Child Welfare (CW) system.

(8) **Re-assessments.** The resource specialist timely completes the yearly
re-assessments.

(9) **Visitation.** Quarterly visitation of the resource family by the resource specialist is recommended to provide ongoing support and address any concerns or issues that the resource family may have.

(10) **Placements.** The resource specialist:

   (A) carefully considers the child's physical and emotional health and safety in identifying placements, including potential kinship providers; and

   (B) works with the Bridge resource family to place siblings together.

(11) **Investigations and policy violations.** The resource specialist works in conjunction with the Bridge resource family to address any identified issues, concerns, or policy violations through a written plan of compliance, per OAC 340:75-7-94, to ensure the placement is safe and stable for children.

(12) **Team member.** The resource specialist:

   (A) works as a professional team member with Permanency Planning, Child Protective Services, Adoption Services, and the Bridge resource family to ensure the child's safety, well-being, and permanency; and

   (B) treats the Bridge resource family with respect and assists the Bridge resource family with any issues arising with the children placed in the home and any concerns they have as a Bridge resource family.

(13) **Closure.** The resource specialist assesses the need for closure of a Bridge resource home and timely completes all necessary documentation regarding closure of the home.

(14) **Fair hearing.** The resource specialist prepares documentation for a fair hearing, per OAC 340:75-1-12.6.
340:75-7-41. Placement considerations and requirements

Revised 6-1-09

(a) Approved Bridge resource family homes. Approved Bridge resource family homes serve as out-of-home placements for children in Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) custody. Cooperation between Child Welfare (CW) workers and Bridge resource families is required to ensure the effective and appropriate use of foster families to serve the best interests of the children. The resource specialist assesses each placement decision with careful consideration of the skills and abilities of the Bridge resource family. The willingness of the Bridge resource family to accept the placement of a child is not the major criterion for placement decisions. 1

(b) Number and ages of children placed. To determine the number and ages of children placed in a Bridge resource home, consideration is given to:

(1) capabilities and skills of the Bridge resource family;

(2) number and ages of the Bridge resource family's own children;

(3) accommodations of the home;

(4) known behavioral patterns of the foster family's own children and the children in foster care; and

(5) the anticipated effect of the placements upon the family as a unit. The needs of the child placed in the home may restrict the capacity of the home regardless of the approved number of children for the home. 2

(c) Tribal foster homes. Each tribe determines the number of children in OKDHS and tribal custody allowed for placement in a tribal foster home. OKDHS makes every attempt to place Indian children in OKDHS custody in compliance with the placement preferences of the Indian Child Welfare Act, per OAC 340:75-19.

INSTRUCTIONS TO STAFF 340:75-7-41

Revised 6-1-09

1. (a) Placement location. If a kinship placement is not identified, the resource specialist and child's Child Welfare (CW) worker make every effort to place a child with a Bridge resource family who resides in close proximity to the child's family and who can best meet the child's needs.
(1) If a Bridge resource home is not available for a child in the child’s county of jurisdiction, a search for a Bridge resource home in the adjoining counties is initiated, then statewide, if necessary.

(2) The responsibility of transporting the child is coordinated between the county of jurisdiction and the county of placement. The child is accompanied by an adequate supply of clothing, a sufficient amount of a prescribed medication to allow for uninterrupted treatment, and Form 04MP012E, Receipt and Release of Prescription and Over-the-Counter Medication(s), and Form 04KI004E, Placement Provider Information, that includes:

   (A) a schedule of the child's daily routine;
   
   (B) immunization records; and
   
   (C) education information.

(3) If a disruption occurs in an out-of-county placement, joint information sharing occurs between the county of placement and county of jurisdiction regarding the best alternative placement for the child. Ultimate placement planning and responsibility rests with the county of jurisdiction. Factors considered in determining the placement are the child’s:

   (A) length of stay in the placement;
   
   (B) connection to the community;
   
   (C) connection to the school; and
   
   (D) extracurricular activities.

(b) Primary responsibility. The primary responsibility of the resource specialist is to find placements for children and to coordinate and cooperate with other CW workers and specialists to meet the goals for timely, safe, and informed placements.

(c) Oklahoma Schools for the Deaf or Blind. Bridge resource homes may receive a pro-rated payment for days a child, who attends the Oklahoma School for the Deaf or the Oklahoma School for the Blind, is actually in the resource home.
These days are entered into the KIDS system for payment. Coordination with the counties of placement for Oklahoma Schools for the Deaf and Blind are listed in (1) through (3).

(1) Murray County is the liaison county for the Oklahoma School for the Deaf. Muskogee County is the liaison county for the Oklahoma School for the Blind.

(2) The county of jurisdiction is responsible for notifying Murray or Muskogee County of a child's placement in either school. Murray and Muskogee County CW workers are secondary workers on the KIDS case.

(3) Inquiries or replies to inquiries about the child in OKDHS custody are sent to Murray or Muskogee County and not directly to the individual schools.

(g) Out-of-county moves. Prior to the movement of the child in OKDHS custody out-of-county with the Bridge resource parent, the approval of the CW supervisor of the child's CW worker and resource specialist is required.

(1) Approval requires a written request stating the reasons for the request and why remaining in the current resource home is in the child's best interests.

(2) The CW worker notifies the court and the child's attorney of the move.

(3) The resource specialist files copies of the request and approval in the resource and child's record, and documents the date and general content of the results of the request in the KIDS Resource Contacts screen.

(4) The resource specialist sends a copy of the authorization for the movement of the child to the receiving county.

(f) Non-transferring case to a new county. A request to not transfer a resource case by the resource specialist is submitted in writing to the resource specialist's supervisor. The supervisor forwards the request with a recommendation to the county directors of the counties concerned. The request and county director's decision is documented in the KIDS Resource Contacts screen.

(g) Out-of-state moves. Movement of the child in OKDHS custody out-of-state
with the **Bridge resource** parent requires the approval of the county director. The county director considers such a move when family reunification is no longer the goal for the child and family.

1. The child's CW worker's supervisor, with consultation from the child's worker, resource specialist, and supervisor of the resource specialist of the relocating **Bridge resource** parent, requests approval by memorandum to the county director with a copy to the CW field liaison (CWFL).

2. The memorandum includes:
   
   (A) the reasons for the request;
   
   (B) the benefits to the child;
   
   (C) a medical plan that includes a manner of payment for necessary and expected services; and
   
   (D) conditions or orders of the court or recommendations of the child's attorney regarding the request that the child relocate to another state with the **Bridge resource** parent, such as the court requiring the child's presence at the court hearings.

3. Upon approval for the move by the county director, the CW worker initiates a request for a foster home assessment per OAC 340:75-1-86.

2. Exception to the number or age limit of children. The placement of a child in a **Bridge resource** home that causes the home to exceed the number or age limit, per OAC 340:75-7-41, requires an exception request and approval prior to placement.

1. The CW worker consults with the resource specialist concerning the feasibility of an exception for a foster or kinship family to exceed the number or age limit for placements.

2. The CW worker makes an exception request to the CW supervisor that includes:

   (A) the search and results for an alternate, appropriate placement for the child;
(B) the name and resource number of the Bridge resource family considered for the exception;

(C) the number, gender, and ages of children:
   (i) for which the Bridge resource home is currently approved;
   (ii) currently placed in the home;
   (iii) for whom the request is made; and
   (iv) of the Bridge resource family;

(D) the date and overall results of the last assessment;

(E) the number of in-service training hours completed by the Bridge resource family in the last contract year;

(F) a summary of the behaviors, treatment needs, and placement and permanency plans of each child currently placed and each child included in the exception request;

(G) the specified time frames for the exception;

(H) the effect of the exception on sibling placement, if any;

(I) a summary of previous placements and exception requests for the children included in the request;

(J) a plan for the transportation needs of all children placed in accordance with state automobile child safety restraint requirements;

(K) the sleeping arrangements for all children in the Bridge resource home;

(L) the effect the exception may have on the placement of children currently in the home; and

(M) the recommendation of the resource specialist regarding the exception request.
(3) The needs of the specific child included in the exception request and the specific needs of the children currently in the placement are the basis for consideration of the exception.

(4) The CW worker documents the exception request and date of the request in the child's case KIDS Contacts screen, and the resource specialist documents this information in the KIDS Resource Contacts screen.

(5) The CW supervisor submits the request information and documentation to the county director for an exception decision and documents the date of submission in the child's case KIDS Contacts screen. The county director makes the determination on the request and notifies the CW supervisor of the decision.

(6) The CW supervisor notifies the CW worker and resource specialist of the county director's decision. The decision is documented in the child's and resource case KIDS Contacts screens.
340:75-7-51. Foster care claims

Revised 6-1-09

(a) Reimbursement for foster care claims requires the completion and approval of a foster home assessment, pre-service training, fingerprint results and a signed foster care contract. Reimbursement may not precede the date of the contract.

(b) Bridge resource parents are responsible for ensuring the accuracy of the warrant upon receipt. When errors occur, the procedures for adjustments listed in (1) through (4) must be completed.

(1) The Bridge resource parent immediately notifies the resource specialist upon discovery of an error in reimbursement.

(2) Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) notifies the Bridge resource family upon discovery of an error in reimbursement.

(3) OKDHS authorizes reimbursements upon discovery for previously unclaimed services, underpayments. When an overpayment coincides with the underpayment, the overpayment is recouped before payment of the underpayment.

(4) OKDHS authorizes repayment schedules when Bridge resource parents are paid for services not rendered or at an amount greater than authorized.

(A) Bridge resource parents are responsible for reimbursing OKDHS for any overpayment, regardless of the party responsible for the initial error, per OAC 340:75-1-27. Each monthly payment toward resolving the overpayment must equal at least ten percent of the overpayment.

(B) The county of service resource specialist notifies the Bridge resource parent:

(i) of the amount of overpayment;

(ii) responsibility of the repayment; and

(iii) payment options.

(C) Repayment options are:

(i) pay in full by check or money order payable to OKDHS;
(ii) return the warrant;

(iii) deduct from the monthly reimbursement when children remain in the home; or

(iv) make extra payments each month as well as the deduction.  ■ 1

(D) If the Bridge resource family closes their home and does not repay the overpayment, the amount of the overpayment will remain in the system indefinitely. If the Bridge resource reopens, the overpayment will be deducted from the foster care reimbursements.

(5) OKDHS may authorize the issuance of a warrant when the foster care reimbursement is late or lost.

(A) The contract for services affords OKDHS 20 days to process each claim. Late claim adjustments are not made during this interval.  ■ 2

(B) OKDHS cancels the reimbursement warrant per Oklahoma statutes when a foster parent reports the warrant lost after 90 days.  ■ 3

(c) Death of a Bridge resource parent. In a two parent household, the surviving parent may cash the warrant. In a single parent household, the warrant is returned to Children and Family Services Division (CFSD) Foster Care Section and re-issued in the name of the estate.  ■ 4

INSTRUCTIONS TO STAFF 340:75-7-51

Revised 6-1-09

1. Overpayment notice. The county office staff completes and sends Form 04FC010E, Notification of Overpayment in Foster Home, to Finance Division with payment or voided warrant attached. The county office submits payments immediately to Finance Division. Children and Family Services Division (CFSD) Foster Care Section is notified by the resource specialist of the payment plan or the non-responsiveness of the foster family.

2. Status of warrant. The county office utilizes the Host Command Facility (HCF) Finance Warrant Control Tracking system to determine the status of a warrant. The county office advises the foster family not to contact the Finance Division directly.
3. Warrants.

(1) Canceled warrants. If the foster family possesses the canceled warrant, county staff sends the warrant under cover memorandum to Finance Division - Warrant Control requesting the warrant be re-issued and includes the mailing address for the new warrant.

(2) Lost warrants. If the original warrant is not available, county staff assists the foster family in completing Form 10AD044E, Affidavit of Lost or Destroyed Warrant. Form 10AD044E is completed and sent under cover memorandum to the Finance Division - Warrant Control requesting re-issuance of the warrant.

(3) Forgery. If the warrant has been cashed, a copy of the endorsed warrant is returned to the county for the foster family to view the endorsement. In the event of forgery, Finance Division - Warrant Control provides further instructions.

4. Death of a Bridge resource parent.

(1) If the head of household (HOH) 1 is deceased, HOH 2 can cash the warrant. If the surviving HOH wants to continue as a Bridge resource parent, a new contract is signed with the surviving HOH and a new contract number is issued.

(2) If there is only an HOH 1, the resource specialist obtains:

   (A) the warrant to be cancelled;

   (B) the name of the estate;

   (C) the documentation showing the name of the executor or executrix; and

   (D) the address where the new warrant is mailed.

(3) A memo containing the information is provided to CFSD Foster Care Section.
340:75-7-52. Foster care contracts and rates of reimbursement

Revised 6-1-09

(a) Foster care contracts. The rules in OAC 340:75-7-52 and the provisions of a contract for services define the responsibilities of Bridge resource parents and Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) regarding the care of children in a Bridge resource home. Foster care contracts are signed when all conditions for approval are met, per OAC 340:75-7-18, except for kinship, per OAC 340:75-7-24.

(1) Foster care contracts are perpetually renewed and considered in effect unless a specific action by one of the parties to the contract terminates the contract. Bridge resource parents are eligible for foster care reimbursement effective the date the home is approved. Kinship Bridge resource parents are not paid retroactive to date of placement.

(2) Reimbursements are authorized for intervals of care provided to a child in foster care placed through OKDHS or a tribe with an approved Tribal/State Agreement with OKDHS.

(3) Kinship Bridge resource families may be approved for expedited reimbursements, per OAC 340:75-7-24, on a case-by-case basis.

(4) Kinship Bridge resource families who meet the degree of relationship, per OAC 340:10-9-1, may apply for assistance through Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) at the local OKDHS office pending foster home approval and entry into a contract, per OAC 340:75-7-52(a)(1) through (3).

(b) Foster care reimbursement. The foster care contract authorizes reimbursement to offset the cost of each child's care and a difficulty of care (DOC) reimbursement to address the additional expense of caring for a child with extraordinary needs. The foster care reimbursement is paid the month after the service is rendered. The OKDHS Committee on Rates and Standards authorizes the amount of reimbursement available through the foster care reimbursement and DOC payment rate, per OAC 340:75-7-53.

(1) Foster care reimbursements correspond to the child's age set out in OKDHS Appendix C-20, Children and Family Services Division Rates Schedule, as amended from time to time, as approved by the Commission for Human Services.

(2) Foster care reimbursements are provided to address the costs of room, board, clothing, and incidentals.
(3) Bridge resource parents receive a clothing allowance for each child, per OAC 340:75-13-45.

(4) The medical expense of a child in foster care is covered through Medicaid when private insurance is not available to the child, per OAC 340:75-13.

(5) Reimbursement received through the foster care contract is not considered income pursuant to Section 131 of Title 26 of the United States Code Annotated and the foster family does not receive Form 1099 from OKDHS at year's end. Bridge resource parents consult their own tax advisor for advice.

(6) Foster care reimbursement and DOC reimbursement rates are a fixed monthly amount.

(7) When a partial month of foster care service is provided, reimbursement begins on the child's date of entry to the home and concludes on the day before the child's departure from the home. A prorated sum is paid based on the number of days of service provided multiplied by the daily rate, per OKDHS Appendix C-20, and is paid automatically by the KIDS system.

(8) When a change in the child's age qualifies for a new rate, the new rate becomes effective on the first day of the month following the child's birthday.

(9) When a child is out of the Bridge resource home for family reunification purposes, pre-placement visits, or is absent without leave (AWOL) for up to seven consecutive days, the Bridge resource parent receives reimbursement if the child is expected to return to the Bridge resource home at the end of the seven days.

(10) The Bridge resource parent is eligible for prorated foster care reimbursement and DOC reimbursements when the child attends an Indian boarding school, Oklahoma School for the Deaf, Oklahoma School for the Blind, or a similar residential program and returns to the Bridge resource home for weekends or school vacations. When the child returns to the Bridge resource home for a summer vacation, the monthly rate is used. The days the child spends in the Bridge resource home are documented in the KIDS system, and the payment for the Bridge resource family is automatically generated.

(11) The Bridge resource parent is eligible for foster care reimbursement and DOC reimbursement for up to ten days of each event of hospitalization for the child's treatment of health or mental health concerns when there is no evidence of Bridge resource parent misconduct contributing to the event.
(12) The foster care reimbursement is an automatic electronic filing system based on the child's placement episode in the KIDS system.

(13) A foster care contract is signed for approved Interstate Compact on the Placement of children (ICPC) foster families residing in another state providing care for children in OKDHS custody, per OAC 340:75-1-86. No contract is signed for ICPC foster families living in Oklahoma caring for children in the custody of another state. ■ 1

(14) There is no reimbursement after the effective date of cancellation or termination of the contract.

(c) Reimbursement option. The Bridge resource family may opt for reimbursement by OKDHS or a money payment for which the child is eligible in lieu of receiving foster home reimbursement, per OAC 340:75-7-52.1.

(d) Cancellation of the foster care contract. Cancellation of the foster care contract occurs when:

(1) the Bridge resource family fails to meet the terms and conditions of the contract. Cancellation of the contract results from:

   (A) a felony conviction, per OAC 340:75-7-15(j)(1);

   (B) the receipt of findings of the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation (OSBI) records search and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) national criminal history records search when a child has been placed through kinship or in the home initially approved; or

   (C) a serious and significant violation of the foster care contract, OKDHS rule, or law. Serious and significant violations include, but are not limited to, behaviors by the Bridge resource parent or other person in the Bridge resource home that place the child at significant risk of harm;

(2) OKDHS closes a Bridge resource family home that no longer meets OKDHS requirements, per OAC 340:75-7-12; or

(3) the Bridge resource parent fails to implement provisions of Form 04AF023E, Written Plan of Compliance, per OAC 340:75-7-94, designed to resolve conditions that present a risk to the child and do not conform with the requirements of the foster care contract or rules, per OAC 340:75-7-52. ■ 2
(e) **Termination of the foster care contract.** A Bridge resource parent requests termination of the foster care contract verbally or in writing. Verbal requests are witnessed whenever possible.

(1) Contract termination occurs subsequent to a request by the Bridge resource family only when there are no pending issues of concern.

(2) When the relationship between the Bridge resource parents is dissolved, and the person who wishes to continue providing foster care services, per OAC 340:75-7-18, is not the primary Bridge resource parent, that Bridge resource parent signs a new foster care contract.

**INSTRUCTIONS TO STAFF 340:75-7-52**

Revised 6-1-09

1. Foster care reimbursement.

(1) Foster care contract. Upon approval of the home, the resource specialist:

   (A) explains the contract to the Bridge resource family;

   (B) has the Bridge resource family sign two original contracts with the Bridge resource parent’s name listed on the contract;

   (C) ensures both contracts have original signatures and attaches a legible copy of the primary contractor's Social Security card to each contract. The name on the contract must be the same as the name listed on the Social Security card;

   (D) ensures both contracts have the most recent Supplier Contract Affidavit, found at [www.dcs.ok.gov](http://www.dcs.ok.gov), attached with notarized, original signatures. Affidavits are needed for each person signing the contract;

   (E) faxes a vendor update request with a legible copy of the Social Security card to Finance-claims;

   (F) provides a copy of the signed contract to the Bridge resource family at the time of signing;

   (G) submits two contracts with original signatures to Children and
Family Services Division (CFSD) Foster Care Section for OKDHS signature and assignment of the contract number within three working days and returns one of the two contracts to the county within ten working days; and

(H) files the contract in the resource record.

(2) Claims. Foster care claims are generated automatically through KIDS when the child's placement is updated. Child Welfare (CW) staff approves the monthly claims for Bridge resource families and tribal foster families by the seventh day of the month. It is imperative that placements are entered timely to ensure Bridge resource families are paid accurately and timely. The unapproved claims should be monitored daily. The claim must include:

(A) the payee's Social Security number;

(B) the payee's name and address the same as on the signed foster care contract; and

(C) a vendor update sent to the Finance Division for any change of address.

2. Cancellation of the foster care contract. When a Bridge resource family verbally requests closure of the Bridge resource home, the resource specialist confirms the verbal request by sending Form 04FC008E, Notice of Closure to OKDHS Foster Parents, to the Bridge resource family. The resource specialist closes the KIDS resource within two working days of the contract cancellation.
340:75-7-52.1. Social Security benefits

Revised 6-1-09

(a) Payee. For a child in Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) custody receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Administration (SSA) benefits, SSA, upon application, makes the kinship Bridge resource family the payee to receive these benefits. Upon application, the Bridge resource parent with whom the child has been placed at least nine months may be the payee to receive these benefits.

(b) Kinship Bridge resource family. The kinship Bridge resource family may receive the kinship start up and training stipends during the family assessment process while a child is in the home.

INSTRUCTIONS TO STAFF 340:75-7-52.1

Revised 6-1-09

1. Assistance to the Bridge resource parent. When the child is identified as a recipient of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Administration (SSA) benefits, the resource specialist assists the family with applying with the Social Security Administration local office. The resource specialist enters the amount of the SSI or SSA into the KIDS resource/Other/Soc.Sec.Pmt for each child and the KIDS system automatically adjusts the claim for that child.

2. Assistance to the kinship Bridge resource families. If the child is receiving SSI or SSA, the resource specialist:

   (1) creates a paid resource in KIDS; and

   (2) has the family sign a Fixed Rate Kinship Foster Care Contract.
340:75-7-65. Foster care child care and supportive services

Revised 6-1-09

Child Welfare (CW) staff arranges services that address the needs of Bridge resource parents as well as children in foster care. Bridge resource parent needs are assessed as a component of treatment planning for each child in foster care and appropriate services are recorded on Form 04KI005E, Placement Plan. Service delivery and effect are monitored monthly to ensure intended effects. Form 04KI005E is modified as necessary to address the evolving needs of foster parents.

(1) Child care paid by OKDHS.

(A) Foster care. Services available to Bridge resource families include child care when both Bridge resource parents in a Bridge resource home are employed 20 hours a week or more and have the same work hours or when only one Bridge resource parent works and the other Bridge resource parent has a significant disability that precludes employment.  ■ 1

(i) Child care must be provided:

(II) in a licensed and contracted child care center or home; or

(II) by an approved in-home provider who cares for the child at the foster parent's home, per OAC 340:40-13-1 and 340:40-13-2.

(ii) The Bridge resource parent may request approval for child care by contacting the child's CW worker.

(iii) Child care paid by Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) must be approved before payment may occur. ■ 2

(iv) Child care services are available to tribal foster parents providing care for children in tribal custody meeting the same criteria. The tribal liaisons authorize the child care.

(v) Contract foster care may request child care services through the county of service.

(vi) Shelter host homes foster parents may be approved for child care paid by OKDHS.
(vii) Contracted emergency foster care agencies may request, on a case-by-case basis, approval from Children and Family Services Division (CFSD) Foster Care Section to access child care.

(viii) The foster parent must provide written verification of gainful employment that includes the number of hours and days the foster parent works. In a foster family, when one foster parent works days and the other foster parent works during normal night time sleep hours, refer to OAC 340:40-7-7 and 340:40-7-8. When the foster parent operates a child care home, the child in foster care is only approved to attend an out-of-home child care home or center when:

(I) the foster parent's child care home consistently operates at licensed capacity;

(II) caring for the child during business hours will place the foster parent over licensed capacity; and

(III) the foster parent's licensing specialist confirms this.

(B) Family Support Services Division (FSSD). Child care may be available through local OKDHS FSSD staff for child care, per OAC 340:40, to:

(i) foster parents who have finalized an adoption on a foster child;

(ii) non-paid foster parents who are caring for children in OKDHS custody; and

(iii) children in the custody of another state placed in a kinship home through the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC).

(2) Foster care child care not paid by OKDHS. Foster care child care is not paid when the:

(A) child is placed in therapeutic foster care;

(B) foster parent has an ownership interest in the child care center;

(C) foster parent owns the child care home that the child attends;

(D) foster parent attends school or participates in training;
(E) foster parent chooses ineligible child care providers, per OAC 340:40-5-1;

(F) foster parent chooses more than one child care provider to provide service to a child on the same day;

(G) foster parent's hours of employment interfere with the provision of suitable family life; or

(H) foster parent makes informal arrangements for child care.

(3) **Child care services for a child with disabilities.** Refer to OAC 340:75-6-91.

(4) **Electronic benefit transfer (EBT) responsibilities.** Refer to OAC 340:40-10 for information regarding the EBT system that includes the manual claim process. Foster parent responsibilities include:

(A) watching the EBT training video;

(B) signing Form 08MP001E, Request for Benefits and Services;

(C) swiping the EBT card every day the child attends child care;

(D) not swiping the EBT card for any day the child does not attend child care;

(E) checking the message on the point of service (POS) machine for correct times of attendance and approval;

(F) not giving the EBT card or personal identification number (PIN) to anyone, including the child care provider; and

(G) paying for care that OKDHS does not pay because:

(i) the EBT card was not swiped for the correct days and times the child attended child care;

(ii) swipes were denied and not corrected within ten days; or

(iii) the provider loses the weekly rate payment for absent days because the correct attendance for every day the child attended that month was not swiped.
(5) **Therapeutic child care services.** Therapeutic child care services are paid by OKDHS when recommended by a mental health professional and supporting documentation is provided. Prior authorization from CFSD Administrative Services Unit (ASU) is required. ASU makes the determination of the availability of funds. ■ 4

(6) **Overpayment of child care.** OKDHS seeks repayment for any child care paid in error to a licensed child care center, home, or professional in the foster parent's own home. The foster parent is responsible for reimbursing these costs to the child care provider when overpayment occurs due to the foster parent's ineligibility for child care paid through OKDHS. ■ 5

(7) **Informal arrangements or babysitting.** Bridge resource parents may make informal care arrangements with friends, neighbors, or relatives for the occasional care of children less than 12 hours, including before and after school hours.

   (A) The Bridge resource parent ensures that informal care providers possess the maturity and skills to address the needs of the child in foster care.

   (B) The foster parent secures prior authorization for informal care from the child's CW worker.

   (C) The resource specialist considers whether the needs of the child can be met in informal care.

   (D) Prior authorization may apply to multiple events using the same informal provider.

   (E) A person younger than 18 years of age living outside of the home may not be an informal provider.

   (F) An informal provider living in the home must be at least 16 years of age and related to the Bridge resource parent.

   (G) Informal providers must be notified how to reach the Bridge resource parent and other emergency contacts.

   (H) The Bridge resource parent does not permit a child in OKDHS custody to babysit a younger child, unless approved by the child's CW worker. ■ 6

   (I) The Bridge resource parent:
(i) may allow the child in OKDHS custody overnight stays with friends of the child;

(ii) knows the family;

(iii) reasonably believes the family and all people in the household are safe for the child to have a relationship with;

(iv) exchanges contact information, including name, address, and phone number; and

(v) uses the same discretion as to the safety and well-being of the child as with the foster parent’s own child.

(8) **Alternate care.** The Bridge resource family is required to identify an alternate provider who can care for the child in case of family emergencies, family vacations, or when the family needs a break. The alternate provider may be used for periods of time over 12 hours. The Bridge resource family is responsible for identifying an alternate provider and reimbursing the alternate provider. The alternate provider must be at least 21 years of age and willing to:

(A) submit to a background assessment by Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation (OSBI), per OAC 340:75-7-15;

(B) submit to a CW records search for past confirmations of child maltreatment involving the alternate provider, per OAC 340:75-7-15;

(C) submit to a search of Juvenile Justice Information System (JOLTS) records for any child older than 13 years of age living in the house, per OAC 340:75-7-15;

(D) engage in an evaluation of the home to assess the location, condition, and capacity to accommodate the child in foster care;

(E) provide one reference on Form 04AF026E, Alternate Caregiver Reference Letter; and

(F) comply with discipline policy, per OAC 340:75-7-38, and confidentiality policy, per OAC 340:75-1-42.

(9) **Insurance for Bridge resource homes.** Liability insurance is provided for Bridge resource families for damages incurred by children in OKDHS custody
pursuant to the terms of the policy. Questions related to Bridge resource parent liability insurance are referred to the designated insurance company. Bridge resource parents are responsible for the deductible. 8

(10) **Foster care associations.** OKDHS cooperates with and promotes the development of foster care associations for Bridge resource parents in each county. OKDHS provides names and addresses of Bridge resource families, who have provided written authorization for the release of this information, to persons who are developing a local foster care association. 9

(11) **Foster parent hotline.** The foster parent hotline, 1-800-376-9729, is maintained by the CW foster parent liaison. The foster parent liaison assists with problem resolution, policy clarification, and grievance information.

(12) **Foster parents' rights.** Foster parents' rights are found in Section 7206.1 of Title 10 of the Oklahoma Statutes. Information shared among CW staff, foster parents, and parents includes, but is not limited to:

- (A) the child's legal status;
- (B) upcoming court hearings;
- (C) reason for foster care placement;
- (D) the child's and parent(s)' prior and present living experiences; and
- (E) the child's medical, psychological, and behavioral information, current photographs, and educational records.

(13) **Foster care grievance procedures.** Bridge resource parents and children in foster care have access to OKDHS grievance procedures through the Office of Client Advocacy, per OAC 340:2-3.

(14) **Foster care mediation program.** Bridge resource parents have access to the foster care mediation program through the Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth (OCCY), per OAC 340:75-1-12.8.

(15) **Timely response to questions or needs.** OKDHS staff commits to responding to Bridge resource families' questions and inquiries within one working day. The resource specialist is the key person to provide necessary information to the Bridge resource family.
(16) **Information relevant to fostering.** Pre-service and in-service training is provided to enhance the Bridge resource family's skills, ability to foster, and interests. A quarterly newsletter is sent to all foster families informing of OKDHS, related issues, and articles with relevant information.

(17) **Travel reimbursement.** Bridge resource parents may be reimbursed for three trips per child per month for mileage incurred when providing transportation to a child in the custody of OKDHS placed in the Bridge resource home. Reimbursement can occur when the:

(A) CW worker would be required to provide transportation for the child if not provided by the Bridge resource parent, including:

   (i) visits with parent(s);

   (ii) visits with a sibling;

   (iii) court hearings; or

   (iv) medical, mental health, dental, or vision appointments.

(B) round trip for the single event is in excess of 25 miles.

(C) trip is documented on Form 10AD006E, Travel Claim, provided by a CW worker and processed through the local OKDHS office each month.

**INSTRUCTIONS TO STAFF 340:75-7-65**

Revised 6-1-09

1. **Bridge resource** parent with a significant disability. Medical documentation from the primary physician regarding the Bridge resource parent's disability is required and documented in the child's KIDS case and resource record. The Child Welfare (CW) worker and supervisor evaluate the need for child care every six months and document the need in the child's KIDS case and resource record.

2. Approval process for child care. When the Bridge resource parent contacts the resource specialist to request child care:

   (1) the resource specialist notifies the child's CW worker of the need for child care and provides information about local resources; and
(2) the child's CW worker:

(A) assesses the child to determine whether the child's needs can be met in a child care setting;

(B) refers to the Child Care and Child Care EBTU How To's in KIDS/Help/How To's;

(C) enters the request for child care in KIDS Child Care screens within 48 hours of the request, no exceptions allowed;

(D) completes Form 04MP041E, CW Application for Child Care, reviews with the Bridge resource family, and secures the Bridge resource parent's signature; and

(E) files the signed form in the resource record.

3. Child care in a one star center.

(1) The child's CW worker documents in KIDS Child Care screen and the CW supervisor approves the child care request when there are no one star plus, two, or three star centers in the community.

(2) The exceptions for child care, per OAC 340:75-7-65, are documented by the child's CW worker and approved by the CW supervisor in KIDS Child Care screen.

(3) Exceptions may be granted on a case-by-case basis by the CW supervisor. Prior to granting an exception, the procedures in this paragraph are completed.

(A) The child's CW worker:

(i) provides the Bridge resource parent a list of all contracted one star plus, two star, and three star centers and all contracted child care homes that meet the Bridge resource parent's search criteria;

(ii) uses Child Care Locator, available on the Infonet under OKDHS Tools, to generate this list;
(iii) prints a list of all military base or out-of-state contracted providers bordering the county, if applicable, from Outlook Public Folder/All Public Folders/STO.Child Care/Subsidy/Out of State/Military folder; and

(iv) instructs the Bridge resource parent to contact all providers on the Child Care Locator list to see if care is available during the hours needed.

(B) The Bridge resource parent notes on the list why care is not available at any of these locations or why they did not meet the Bridge resource parent's needs.

(C) The CW supervisor:

(i) reviews the Bridge resource parent's notes, if the Bridge resource parent does not find a provider from those on the list, to determine whether to grant an exception; and

(ii) documents in KIDS Child Care screen whether an exception was granted and the reasons.

(4) Exceptions may be granted when none of the providers on the Bridge resource parent's list:

(A) has an opening during the times care is needed. For example, the Bridge resource parent works during the evening or overnight and no one else provides care during those hours;

(B) is willing to meet the special needs of the child. For example, the provider is unable to meet the needs of a child with disabilities or provide transportation to and from the child's school; or

(C) is within a reasonable distance from the Bridge resource parent's home.

(5) If the CW supervisor agrees that an exception is warranted per OAC 340:75-7-65 Instructions to Staff 3(4), the child's CW worker gives the Bridge resource parent a list of one star center providers. If the Bridge resource parent finds a one star center that meets the Bridge resource family's needs, payment may be approved for child care at that facility.
4. Therapeutic child care.

(1) The child's CW worker requests approval for therapeutic child care on a case-by-case basis when:

(A) a letter from a mental health professional provider documents the:

(i) goal for the child;

(ii) therapy needed to reach the goal; and

(iii) expected time frame for this treatment; and

(B) the child's CW worker staffs the case with the CW supervisor and resource specialist, and all agree that therapeutic child care is required.

(2) The child's CW worker provides a memo to Children and Family Services Division Administrative Services Unit (ASU), along with the letter from the mental health professional. The memo includes the:

(A) name of the child requiring the service and case name;

(B) name of the child care facility;

(C) number of hours to be used per day;

(D) number of days to be used per week;

(E) name of the mental health professional recommending therapeutic child care;

(F) name of the Bridge resource parent; and

(G) reason for therapeutic child care.

(3) Upon determination, ASU sends a memo notifying the child's CW worker of the approval, with specific instructions regarding payment of services.

(4) The child's CW worker documents all circumstances and actions in
KIDS Contacts screen. No service line is entered in KIDS Child Care screen.

5. Repayment of child care services. Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) seeks repayment for any child care paid in error. The child's CW worker writes a memo to Finance Division that includes:

   (1) the child's case name and number;

   (2) the name and date of birth of the child who received care;

   (3) a short summary of the circumstances that led to the potential overpayment, including the original and new family share co-payment amounts, if applicable;

   (4) the time period covered by the overpayment; and

   (5) whether the overpayment was caused by agency, client, or provider error, per OAC 340:40-15-1 and 340:75-1-27.

6. Babysitting. The CW worker and the Bridge resource parent discuss in-depth the situation before a person, particularly a teen, babysits a child in OKDHS custody. The discussion helps assess the appropriateness of the person assuming responsibility for the child and ensures that the child's needs and well-being are considered.

7. Alternate care. The resource specialist:

   (1) obtains the name of the alternate provider at the time of initial assessment to facilitate future placement if a need is identified.

   (A) The resource specialist makes personal contact with the alternate provider to determine the person’s ability and willingness to provide temporary short-term care and determines if the alternate provider may experience the same family emergencies as the Bridge resource family.

   (B) The person recommended to provide temporary care, such as a relative or close friend, must be at least 21 years of age;

   (2) completes the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation (OSBI) name search, Department of Public Safety check, Sex **Offender** Registry check,
OKDHS records review, including CW records, and Juvenile Justice Information System (JOLTS) of all children older than 13 in the home. The results are documented on Form 04AF007E, Records Check, and filed in the resource record;

(3) obtains a copy of the prospective alternate provider's driver license;

(4) completes Form 04AF004E, House Assessment, and obtains sufficient information, including a recommendation from one reference for the provider on Form 04AF026E, Alternate Caregiver Reference Letter;

(5) makes a decision to approve or disapprove the alternate provider after assessing the information obtained and consultation with the CW supervisor; and

(6) informs the Bridge resource parent of the decision and records all related information in KIDS Resource Contacts screen and the resource paper record.

8. Foster Parent Liability Insurance. The resource specialist provides the current information about the liability insurance to the Bridge resource family. To access information about the liability insurance call Aspen Specialty Insurance at (617) 532-7358.

9. Foster care associations. The Bridge resource parent's written permission is filed in the resource paper record and documented in KIDS Resource Contacts screen.

10. Travel Reimbursement. The CW worker submits the approved Form 10AD006E, Travel Claim, directly to Finance claims.
340:75-7-280. Contract foster care

(a) Purpose. Contract foster care (CFC) is available to children who are in the legal custody of, or voluntarily placed in, Oklahoma Department of Human Service (OKDHS) care. CFC services are provided by a contract child placing agency to meet the child’s needs through service coordination and delivery in conjunction with OKDHS.

(b) Admissions.

(1) Therapeutic foster care (TFC) agencies. Requests are initiated by the TFC agency to the Children and Family Services Division (CFSD) liaison. To access CFC services, the child approved for TFC services must:

(A) no longer require TFC services and be ready to step down to traditional foster care;

(B) have a sibling(s) who needs traditional foster care; or

(C) be the parent of a child who needs traditional foster care. The therapeutic foster care agency considers the placement of the child stepping down or the placements of additional children into the home. When it is in the best interest of all children in the home, the therapeutic foster care agency makes a written request to the Children and Family Services Division (CFSD) liaison no less than three days prior to the need of the placement. Placement does not occur until written approval is received from the CFSD liaison. ■ 1

(2) Other sources for CFC use. Children under the age of six years whose legal jurisdiction is in Oklahoma, Tulsa, or Comanche Counties, are considered for CFC when ready for discharge from:

(A) a hospital;

(B) an OKDHS operated shelter; or

(C) an Emergency Foster Care (EFC) home. The CFSD foster care liaison and the CFC agency make a joint decision after considering information about the child and the placement possibilities. ■ 2

(c) Roles and responsibilities.
(1) Child Welfare (CW) worker. The CW worker remains the primary connection among the child, parent(s), CFC agency, CFC provider, OKDHS liaison, other service providers, and court while the child is in CFC. The CW worker:

(A) visits the child placed in CFC per OAC 340:75-6-48; and

(B) provides Form 04KI004E, Placement Provider Information, to the CFC provider at the time of admission or as soon as possible after placement, but no later than 30 days after the initial placement in out-of-home care or 14 days after subsequent placements in out-of-home care. This form includes, but is not limited to, the most recent information available regarding the health and education records of the child.

(2) CFSD liaison. The CFSD liaison is the contact person for the contract agency regarding certification of homes, determining eligibility of placements, and monitors the CFC contract.

(3) Foster Care liaison. The foster care liaison is the OKDHS contact person for determining appropriate placements for children who are admitted from sources other than the TFC agency.

(4) CFC agency. The CFC agency:

(A) ensures the availability of qualified and trained providers and staff;

(B) coordinates requests for placements with the CFSD and foster care liaisons;

(C) coordinates placement and discharges with the CW welfare;

(D) coordinates with the CW worker to afford the child all services that promote the child’s progress; and

(E) ensures the child’s total care needs are met while in placement.

(e) Discharge from CFC.

(1) Notice. When a child discharges from CFC, the CW worker coordinates with the CFC agency and advance notice is provided according to OAC 340:75-6-86(d).

(2) Information accompanies the child. All forms completed by the CFC provider while the child was in care are given to the new provider to:
(A) assist in helping the child adjust to the placement;
(B) provide information needed for continuity of care; and
(C) alert the new provider of the child’s special needs and strengths.

(3) Information and items given to the new provider include:
(A) all medications, with instructions for dosage and use;
(B) equipment or supplies required for the child’s special care;
(C) dates of any follow-up appointments;
(D) personal items or clothing purchased by OKDHS, including disposable diapers; and
(E) Women, Infants and Children (WIC) vouchers, non-perishable food, or other items obtained for the child.

INSTRUCTIONS TO STAFF 340:75-7-280

Issued 6-1-09

1. (a) Placement. The Children and Family Services Division (CFSD) liaison provides notification of the decision in writing to the:

   (1) Contract Foster Care (CFC) agency;

   (2) Child Welfare (CW) worker;

   (3) CW supervisor; and

   (4) foster care supervisor.

   (b) When placement is denied due to the lack of available beds, rules in OAC 340:75-7-19 are followed.

2. Placement decision. The CFSD foster care liaison notifies the CW worker of the placement availability and the CW worker coordinates the placement with the CFC agency.
3. Notification. The CFC agency notifies the CFSD liaison of all placements and discharges.
340:75-11-286. Requirements for specialized community home contractors

Revised 6-1-09

(a) Each specialized community home (SCH) contractor serves a specially defined target population of four children in Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) custody.

(1) Children served:
   (A) vary by age, gender, and behaviors exhibited; and
   (B) do not require 24-hour awake supervision.

(2) The contractor provides or obtains:
   (A) individually focused therapeutic interventions to meet the treatment needs of these children; and
   (B) educational and employment opportunities, cultural enrichment, and independent living skills consistent with each child's treatment plan. 1

(b) The SCH contractor must comply with:

   (1) children's rights per OAC 340:75-11-237;
   (2) all general requirements per OAC 340:75-11-240; and
   (3) any other requirements in the OKDHS contract.

(c) The SCH applicant must meet the requirements for OKDHS foster homes, per OAC 340:75-7.

(d) The SCH contractor must meet the requirements described in (1) through (4).

   (1) Education and experience. The SCH contractor meets one of the education and experience qualifications listed in (A) through (D).

      (A) A Master or Doctor of Philosophy in Social Work degree or other related area of study and one year direct experience working with children with comparable treatment needs to those requiring treatment in the SCH.
(B) A Bachelor in Social Work degree or other related area of study and two years direct experience working with children with comparable treatment needs to those requiring treatment in the SCH.

(C) An Associate degree in a social service field and four years direct experience working with children with comparable treatment needs to those requiring treatment in the SCH; or

(D) A high school diploma or General Educational Development (GED) and six years of direct experience working with children with comparable treatment needs to those requiring treatment in the SCH plus training hours pertinent to residential child care.

(2) Outside employment. The SCH contractor is not allowed other employment outside of the operation of the SCH contract and is not eligible for paid day care.

(3) Respite care provider. During the mutual family assessment process, the SCH contractor identifies a Child Welfare approved respite care provider to provide alternative care when the SCH provider takes leave from his or her SCH contract responsibilities.

(A) The SCH contractor identifies the respite care provider at the time of the initial assessment. The respite care provider:

   (i) must be at least 21 years of age; and

   (ii) is not an OKDHS foster parent, a Children and Family Services Division (CFSD), Child Welfare (CW), or Office of Juvenile Affairs employee, as the respite care provider must be available on short notice when the contractor takes leave.

(B) When the SCH contractor takes leave, he or she selects one of the three options listed in (i) through (iii).

   (i) The approved respite care provider utilizes the SCH to provide alternate care. Prior to approving the respite care provider, the CW worker in the county where the SCH home is located:

   (I) makes personal contact with the respite care provider and conducts a personal assessment of the provider to determine his or her ability and willingness to provide alternate care;
(II) discusses SCH policy, per OAC 340:75-11-286 through 340:75-11-289, and foster care policy, per OAC 340:75-7, with the respite care provider;

(III) contacts two references for and completes the background investigation of the respite care provider, including Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation (OSBI) name search, OSBI records search, and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) records search and fingerprinting per OAC 340:75-7-15; and

(IV) files the personal assessment of the respite care provider in the SCH resource record.

(ii) The children go to the home of the approved respite care provider for alternate care. ■ 2

(iii) The children go to their own homes or relative homes on planned leave approved by the CW county of jurisdiction workers.

(C) The SCH contractor is:

(i) encouraged to take two weeks planned time away from the home each year;

(ii) responsible for reimbursing the respite care provider from his or her salary; and

(iii) responsible for training the respite care provider.

(4) Mandatory training for SCH contractors. All SCH contractors must:

(A) prior to placement of children in the home, complete all training requirements for OKDHS foster parents, per OAC 340:75-7-14;

(B) be certified in a behavior management system directed at managing aggressive and non-aggressive acting out behavior described in OAC 340:75-11-237. Spouses or significant others must also be certified;

(C) obtain 21 hours of training each calendar year geared toward working with the children served in the SCH contract;

(D) attend the annual mandatory meetings for SCH contractors scheduled by CFSD that provide training hours; and
(E) participate in other training curricula required of OKDHS foster parents.

(e) CFSD does not enter into SCH contracts with any person related, either directly or through marriage, to:

(1) an OJA employee;

(2) a CFSD or CW employee in the county where the SCH home is located; or

(3) an OKDHS employee who substantially influenced the funding of the contract.

INSTRUCTIONS TO STAFF 340:75-11-286

Revised 6-1-09

1. SCH contract resources. Each specialized community home (SCH) contractor is listed in KIDS Resource Directory, category - Residential-State Office Authorized and type - Specialized Community Home.