



NC DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES**

JOSH STEIN • Governor

DEV DUTTA SANGVAI • Secretary

LISA TUCKER CAULEY • Division Director, Human Services

February 13, 2025

**DEAR COUNTY DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

**ATTENTION: DIRECTORS, CHILD WELFARE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS, MANAGERS, SUPERVISORS,  
SOCIAL WORKERS, AND LICENSED CHILD PLACING AGENCIES**

**SUBJECT: KINSHIP LICENSURE UPDATE**

**REQUIRED ACTION:**  Information Only  Time Sensitive  Action Required

North Carolina Division of Social Services (NCDSS) acknowledges the significance of ongoing initiatives aimed at fostering a kinship first culture, encompassing both related and unrelated kin. Part of creating a kinship first culture is providing kinship families with a separate path to obtain a foster parent license while they are providing care for kin.

On September 28, 2023, Administration for Children and Families (ACF) published a final rule in the Federal Registry that allows states to adopt a separate licensing approval standard for all kinship foster family homes. Initially, NCDSS was unable to move forward because a kinship licensure track would not include unrelated kin. North Carolina General Statute (NCGS) 7B-101 defines a relative as an individual related to a juvenile by blood, marriage, or adoption, excluding non-relatives in this definition. NCDSS recognizes the importance of all relatives caring for children in foster care, including non-relative kin.

NCDSS has implemented the following changes for kinship licensure. NCGS 131D10.6A (a) requires that all foster families have a minimum of 30 hours of preservice training, however, NCGS allows an exception to this statute for relatives who are related to the juvenile by blood, marriage, or adoption. Agencies can request a waiver for relatives to complete a reduced pre-service training that is approved through NCDSS. The waiver request must be submitted through email [NC.Licensing@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:NC.Licensing@dhhs.nc.gov), Docvault or CWIS.

The National Training Development Curriculum (NTDC) Kinship pre-service training of 15 hours is approved for relative families as defined by NCGS 7B-101. **The NTDC Kinship pre-service training is the only NCDSS approved training with reduced training hours for kinship families.** At this time, the required 30 hours of pre-service training cannot be waived for non-relative kin, however, the NTDC 30 hour foster family pre-service, or another approved pre-service training can be utilized for non-relative kin. NCDSS will continue to provide waivers for relative and non-relative kinship families for North Carolina administrative rules that do not violate safety rules such as capacity, room arrangement, age, and financial means.

Additionally, a mutual home assessment specific to kinship families has been developed, the DSS-5016A: Kinship Home License Application. The DSS-5016A replaces the DSS-5016: Foster Home License Application and the DSS-5204: Comprehensive Provider Assessment for relative and non-relative kinship families seeking licensure. The update was necessary as the new DSS-5016A assists in obtaining the information required by statute and administrative rules for licensure. **Effectively immediately**, the DSS-5204: Comprehensive Provider Assessment will no longer be accepted as the document does not provide the required information for licensure. For your convenience, the new DSS-5016A is attached to this DCDL. Please use the attached document as we work to get the new form uploaded to the NCDHHS website.

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LOCATION: 820 S. Boylan Avenue, McBryde Building, Raleigh, NC 27603

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If you have any questions, please contact Jenny Millsaps, Foster Home Licensing Manager, at [jenny.millsaps@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:jenny.millsaps@dhhs.nc.gov).

Sincerely,

*Kimaree Sanders*

Kimaree Sanders, MSW, MPA  
Section Chief for Regulatory and Licensing  
Division of Social Services, Child Welfare  
North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

Cc: Lisa T. Cauley, Division Director, Human Services, Child, Family, and Adult, Regional Support  
Adrian Daye, Deputy Director for Child Welfare Practice  
Donna Fayko, Interim Deputy Director for County Operations  
Kathy Stone, Section Chief for Safety  
Peter West, Section Chief for County Operations  
Heather McAllister, Section Chief for Child and Family Services

Attachments: DSS-5016A

CWS- 08-2025

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