



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**

ROY COOPER • Governor

MANDY COHEN, MD, MPH • Secretary

SUSAN OSBORNE • Assistant Secretary for County Operations for
Human Services

April 16, 2020

**DEAR COUNTY DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL SERVICES
DEAR EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS OF PRIVATE LICENSED CHILD PLACING AGENCIES**

ATTENTION: Directors, Program Managers and Child Welfare Professionals

SUBJECT: WAIVER OF ADMINISTRATIVE RULE FOR LICENSING

REQUIRED ACTION: ___ Information Only __x__ Time Sensitive __x__ Immediate

NC DHHS recognizes that public and private agencies that license foster homes and provide foster care services have been greatly affected by the COVID-19 virus public health crisis. In an attempt to provide guidance and relief wherever possible, NC DHHS will approve waiver requests where allowable by statute or Executive Order regarding Administrative Rules for licensing.

ALL SUPERVISING AGENCIES (PUBLIC AND PRIVATE):

Fire inspections for foster families whose license is due to be renewed can be waived under the following circumstances; the home has had a satisfactory fire and building inspection completed within the previous 30 months and can attest to the standards set forth in 10A NCAC 70E .1108 (b). The supervising agency will provide a copy of the previously completed fire inspection and the attestation form (attached) to the foster home licensing office. Any foster home relicensed under these terms must obtain a fire inspection within 60 days of the termination of the governor's executive order number 130. Some fire inspectors are continuing to conduct inspections either in-person or by video conferencing.

Regarding medical exams for relicensing a family, 10A NCAC 70E .0704 (b) requires updated medical examinations of the members of the foster home to be completed and dated within 12 months prior to submitting materials for relicensure. Please encourage families who are due to be relicensed to contact their medical providers and request telehealth appointments for an updated medical exam or, if they have had a medical exam within the past 12 months, to request documentation of that exam. If the foster family is unable to obtain current medical exams the agency can submit a request for waiver of this rule on a case-by-case basis to the foster home licensing office with the license renewal request.

NC DSS will consider waivers for 10A NCAC 70E .1001 foster home capacity when children require emergency placement on a case-by-case basis. All capacity waiver requests should include specific information supporting the request and should be time limited.

NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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

MAILING ADDRESS: 2401 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-2401

www.ncdhhs.gov • TEL: 919-855-6335 • FAX: 919-334-1018

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

Quarterly visits with foster families for the purpose of assessing licensing requirements under 10A 70E .1113 and 70E .0704 (a-d) may take place via telephone, skype or facetime with an approved waiver.

PRIVATE AGENCIES:

Monthly face-to-face contact required under 10A NCAC 70G .0503 (m) and (q) between your agency's social worker or case manager with children in family foster care and therapeutic foster care and foster parents may take place using virtual video conference technology, that may include skype or facetime, with an approved waiver. The safety and well-being of the children must be adequately assessed during the virtual visit. Documentation of these visits should include the type of medium used for the virtual visit.

Sixty minutes of supervision to be provided weekly with therapeutic foster parents as required under 10A NCAC 70G .0503 (q) may be provided via telephone, skype or facetime with an approved waiver. Documentation of these visits should include the type of medium used for the virtual visit.

Requirements for medical and dental examinations under 10A NCAC 70G. 0510 to occur within specific parameters upon admission may occur outside of the required timeframes with an approved waiver.

Pre-populated waiver request forms containing the Administrative Rules noted above are attached and should be used to make a request for waiver of these Administrative Rules to the licensing authority or the foster home licensing office. Please add your agency information to the top section of the form. Submit requests for individual foster homes to the foster home licensing office. Submit the waiver request for private agency licensing requirements via email **to your assigned Program Consultant.**

We appreciate your patience as we work to provide consistent and comprehensive information. If you have questions or concerns, please contact your assigned Program Consultant or Linda Waite at linda.waite@dhhs.nc.gov or 704-341-7300.

As always, thank you for your dedication to serving children and families.

Sincerely,



Lisa Cauley, Deputy Director Child Welfare Services

Cc: Susan G. Osborne, Assistant Secretary for County Operations
Carla McNeill, Section Chief for Licensing and Regulatory
Teresa Strom, Section Chief for County Operations
Linda Waite, Regulatory and Licensing Program Administrator
Jodi Franck, Foster Home Licensing Manager

Attachment: Pre-populated waiver request forms
Fire inspection attestation

CWS-08-20