



**Administrative Policies and Procedures: 16.7**

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Foster Family Recruitment and Retention</b>
<b>Authority:</b>	TCA 37-5-106; Multi-Ethnic Placement Act of 1994, Public Law 103 – 382; Inter-Ethnic Adoption Provision of the Small Business Job Protection Act of 1996, Public Law 104 – 188, Sec. 1808; Administration of Children, Youth and Family – 1M-CB-97-04
<b>Standards:</b>	None
<b>Application:</b>	DCS Foster Parent Support Staff, Supervisory Staff and Foster Parents
<b>Policy Statement:</b>	
DCS maintains an annual statewide recruitment plan for the recruitment and retention of DCS foster families.	
<b>Purpose:</b>	
To recruit and maintain a diverse pool of approved DCS foster families that ensure quality home placements for children in DCS custody.	
<b>Procedures:</b>	
<b>A. Targeted Recruitment Plan</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Central Office Foster Care Division will provide monitoring and oversight of the provider contract for statewide recruitment efforts. The contract provider will formalize an annual plan with specific strategies to market and recruit new foster parents statewide.</li> <li>2. The contract provider will utilize various methodologies of outreach to include, but not limited to, faith based and community engagement, marketing through social media, and options for face-to-face connections.</li> <li>3. The annual recruitment plan will address identified areas of need by region and consists of, at minimum, the following components: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) A demographic summary of the children and families served;</li> <li>b) A demographic summary of the foster homes served;</li> <li>c) A summary of gained foster home numbers and loss of foster home numbers;</li> <li>d) A summary of the current needs and priorities;</li> <li>e) A summary of planned general and targeted community awareness activities to meet current needs and priorities;</li> <li>f) An estimated timeframe to meet the need in each category;</li> <li>g) A plan for engaging more community partners; and,</li> <li>h) Through established base lines, measurable goals to determine recruitment of new homes within the region.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

<p><b>B. Retention of Foster Families</b></p>	<p>Retaining foster parents is a critical part of providing service to children and families. The following is available at minimum to foster families:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Opportunities for foster parents to partner with DCS staff at recruiting events;</li> <li>b) A procedure for foster parents to formally file a grievance if they believe the Foster Parent Bill of Rights has been violated (see <a href="#"><u>Protocol for Resolution of Disagreements and/or Conflicts Between Foster Parents and DCS</u></a>);</li> <li>c) Open door access for foster parents to the Regional Directors to address foster parent questions;</li> <li>d) Partnership with the TN Foster Parent Advocacy &amp; Mentorship Programs by offering training and support to traditional and kinship families;</li> <li>e) Monthly calendars of phone in dates to help ensure accurate board payments;</li> <li>f) In-service training opportunities for all foster parents through state and regional conferences;</li> <li>g) Annual recognition and appreciation events for foster parents; and</li> <li>h). Utilization of the Foster Parent Exit Survey outcomes to improve areas of need and to build strong relationships.</li> </ul>
<p><b>C. Annual Evaluation of Plan Outcomes</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Central Office Foster Care Division will provide oversight of the annual statewide recruitment plan and track outcomes by evaluating monthly reports, obtaining regional feedback and frequent direct communication with the contract agency.</li> <li>2. Information obtained through the above methods will be used to evaluate overall achievement of outcomes and adjust strategies to ensure recruitment needs are met.</li> </ul>
<p><b>D. Foster Parent Inquiry Process</b></p>	<p>The foster parent inquiry process is used to note the effectiveness of recruitment events and to monitor the progress of foster parent applicants. Steps in the inquiry process are outlined below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Enquires are received through the web, hotline, or the Adopt Us Kids (AUK) website.</li> <li>2. The contracted provider contacts each inquirer within five (5) business days in the form of a phone call, e-mail and/or regular mail. Follow up contact is made at 30, 60, and 90 day intervals. Documentation of the contact is recorded in a tracking log.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Forms:</b></p>	<p><b>None</b></p>
<p><b>Collateral documents:</b></p>	<p><b>None</b></p>