

## State Requirements for Foster/Adoptive Parent Licensing

Listed are some of the requirements for foster/adoptive parent licensing. A total list can be found in Wisconsin Administrative Code DCF-56, Foster Home Care for Children. This list, which is not all-inclusive, may help you assess your potential to become a foster/adoptive parent.

- An applicant must be a responsible, mature individual 21 years old or older who does not abuse drugs or alcohol. A person 18 to 21 years old may be licensed for a relative child.
- An applicant licensed to operate a foster home shall be in good health. Before licensing, physicals and TB tests will be required.
- An applicant shall have a stable income sufficient to meet the family's obligations without reliance on the basic maintenance payments received for the care of foster children and shall provide the licensing agency with verification of income.
- Applicants receiving Social Security payments must obtain documentation of the amount of monthly payments and the reason for the payments.
- The home must provide adequate space, a minimum of 200 square feet of living area for each household member, including each foster child.
- The home must have one complete bathroom for every eight household members including foster children.
- Each bedroom occupied by a foster child shall have a minimum floor space of 40 square feet per child.
- Each foster child shall be provided with a separate bed; however, two brothers or two sisters under 12 years old may share a double bed. No foster child one year of age or older may regularly share a bedroom with an adult unless a physician determines that it is medically necessary and the licensing agency approves. No foster child 6 years old or older may regularly share a bedroom with another child of the opposite sex.
- The home must be maintained and safe for all occupants.
- The home shall have at least one telephone in operating condition.
- Cats, dogs, and other pets vulnerable to rabies shall be vaccinated. Documentation of the vaccinations shall be provided to the licensing agency.
- The applicant must have homeowner's or renter's liability insurance.
- The applicant must have vehicle liability insurance.
- The applicant must provide favorable references from non-relatives and relatives.
- Criminal background and CPS checks will be conducted on all household members 10 years old and older. If the applicant or household member has a criminal history and the offense bars the license (DCF-12) or there is a substantiated child abuse or neglect finding, the home cannot be licensed.
- As part of the Department of Justice criminal background-check process, all applicants must be fingerprinted.
- The applicant should attend an informational meeting before being referred for licensing.
- The applicant must attend the required foster parent training within a prescribed time frame.