



**Administrative Policies and Procedures: 16.4**

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Resource Home Approval</b>
<b>Authority:</b>	TCA 37-4-201 et seq, 37-5-105, 37-5-106, 39-17-1315; Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC); Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006, HR 4472; Adoption and Safe Families, P.L. 105-89; Safe and Timely Interstate Placement of Foster Children Act of 2006,P.L. 109-239 and the Social Security Act; Fostering Connections To Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008, P.L. 110-351
<b>Standards:</b>	<b>DCS Practice Standards:</b> 2-501, 2-502, 2-503, 2-602, 3-301, 3-102, 3-200, 3-201, 3-203, 3-204, 6-102, 6-200, 6-301, 6-505 B, 6-509 C, 6-513 C, 7-200 A, 7-203 A; <b>COA:</b> PA-FC 16
<b>Application:</b>	DCS Foster Care and Supervisory Staff and Private Provider Agency Staff

**Policy Statement:**

The Department of Children's Services is committed to providing temporary care or foster care for children who must be separated from their families. DCS shall recruit prospective resource parents who are able to provide for the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and are fully prepared to serve in this capacity. ■

**Purpose:**

To provide guidelines for selecting adequate resource homes for children/youth in DCS custody. If a child/youth must be separated from their family, DCS strives to place the child/youth with relatives and families capable of meeting their needs. Serving as a resource parent or resource family for children in Tennessee is a privilege, not a right.

**Procedures:**

<b>A. Requirements for becoming a resource parent</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Applicants who wish to become a DCS resource parent must meet the following criteria:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Twenty-one (21) years of age, unless he or she is applying to be a resource parent for a sibling or other blood relative. In this case, the relative applicant must be at least eighteen (18) years old;</li> <li>b) A legal resident of Tennessee for at least six (6)months;</li> <li>c) A United States citizen or have been approved by the United States Citizen and Immigration Service as a Legal Permanent Resident;</li> <li>d) May be married or single; and/or</li> <li>e) Applicants will be approved regardless of gender, race, color, or natural</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
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	<p>origin;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Approval is a mutual selection process and will be based on the applicant's ability to meet specific approval requirements and their ability to promote DCS Standards of Professional Practice.</li> <li>3. DCS or a Private Provider will accept a referral/request on an identified Tennessee resident who desires to become a resource parent for a child in the custody of another state. The referral/request or application must be submitted in compliance with the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) and this policy for a specific child/youth who is in the custody/guardianship/jurisdiction of another state, or who may live outside of Tennessee.</li> </ol> <p><b>Note:</b> All adult household members or significant others (Paramours, fiancés, or partners) that have regular day-to-day access to the children placed in the home or provide a parental role (child care, transportation, discipline, or other support to children) will need to enroll and complete PATH training at initial approval or moving into the home.</p>
<p><b>B. DCS response to prospective resource parents</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All inquiries will be responded to within seven (7) calendar days.</li> <li>2. Resource home referrals submitted to the region through the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) will be contacted or responded to by the assigned home study writer within seven (7) calendar days of the referral's entry into <b>TFACTS</b>.</li> <li>3. Staff responding to inquiries or referrals will give interested families an overview of resource parenting, the home study process and approval requirements.</li> <li>4. The opening of the inquiry/referral and documentation of the contact will be entered into <b>TFACTS</b>.</li> <li>5. DCS or Private Provider staff persons are responsible for assisting families in completing their application and initial paperwork during the Parents as Tender Healers (PATH) orientation session.</li> <li>6. The vast majority of children entering the guardianship of the State of Tennessee are adopted by their resource parents and the Department wants to maintain that stability for those children who cannot return home.</li> <li>7. DCS needs resource families expressing an interest in and willing to adopt older children in full guardianship with special needs. DCS should also engage families whose initial interest involved the placement of a child/youth in the custody/guardianship/jurisdiction of another public agency pursuant to the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC).</li> </ol>
<p><b>C. Orientation and schedule for Parents as Tender Healers (PATH)</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. At a minimum, DCS will schedule and offer at least one PATH course once a month in each region.</li> <li>2. Private Providers will offer orientation meetings as often as necessary to maintain a pool of families sufficient to meet their contract requirements.</li> <li>3. Although there can be no changes to the <i>PATH Curriculum</i>, DCS staff and/or</li> </ol>

	<p>Private Provider staff must complete and submit form <b>CS-0921, Waiver of Criminal Convictions, PATH Training Modifications, Non-Safety Issues and CPS Indications</b>, (obtain approval of a Path Modification, from the Regional Administrator or Private Provider Executive Director; the Director of Foster Care and Adoptions may be consulted, if necessary) if any of the following PATH training <i>formats</i> are needed to better meet the needs of the family:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Use of PATH training with one individual, rather than in a larger, group format.</li> <li>b) Substitution of other approved training and past fostering experiences accepted as PATH equivalent.</li> </ul> <p>4. For compliance with the ICPC, copies of any waivers documented on form <b>CS-0921, Waiver of Criminal Convictions, PATH Training Modifications, Non-Safety Issues and CPS Indications</b>, approved by the Regional Administrator or Private Provider Executive Director constitutes part of the completed resource home study record, used to support a decision for approval or denial. Refer to Section J of this policy for additional information.</p> <p>5. For resource homes wanting to be re-activated or re-classified, the <a href="#"><u>Protocol for Re-Activation and Re-Classification of Resource Homes</u></a> must be followed.</p>
<p><b>D. Opportunities for the consideration of relative/kinship resource home approval</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. When seeking to approve a relative or kin as a resource parent, certain <i>non-safety</i> approval standards (<i>Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act (H.R. 6893/P.L. 110-351)</i>) may be taken into consideration on a case-by-case basis during the approval process. These considerations may include, but not be limited to, the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Income standard;</li> <li>b) Minimum number of bedrooms per inhabitant;</li> <li>c) Use of a landline telephone; and</li> <li>d) Legal marital status (to finalize an adoption, all divorces must be completed).</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Other considerations identified that are not listed above will be documented in the home study narrative and carefully reviewed prior to the placement of children. This is in accordance with the federal law.</li> <li>3. Private Providers may also utilize relative or kinship homes in this manner. In cases of a Private Provider wishing to utilize a relative or kinship home after taking certain approval requirements under consideration, the provider is solely responsible for the review and waiver of otherwise mandatory requirements. Private Providers may only utilize relative and kinship homes once they are fully approved.</li> </ul>
<p><b>E. Home study process</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The home study process will begin with Session One of PATH training. This involves the collection of forms <b>CS-0688, Resource Home Application for</b></li> </ul>

**Parenting, CS-0668, Authorization for Release of Information to DCS, CS-0932, Resource Home Disclosure Acknowledgement** and the initial documentation distributed during the orientation meeting.

2. The home study writer must conduct at least four (4) planned interviews with the prospective resource parents (three (3) if a lone applicant), including one (1) home consultation and individual interviews with each person residing in the home. The interview process will begin immediately following PATH session three.
3. Interviews with those adults (*i.e.*, spouses, co-habitants, *etc.*) residing in the same home may be conducted during one visit. In other words, it is entirely possible that the four (4) required interviews could take place in three (3) visits if each adult inhabitant were interviewed separately in one visit.
4. Documentation of contacts by the home study writer identifying the progress and status of the study process will be entered on form **CS-0709, Resource Home Recording** throughout the home study process, summarized in the home study narrative, and documented in **TFACTS**.
5. Each resource parent applicant and each member of the family must provide a medical report from a licensed physician, nurse practitioner or equivalent health care professional documenting the acceptable physical and emotional health of all household members. Forms **CS-0678, Resource Parent Medical Report** and **CS-0427, Child's Medical Report** may be used to document the applicant's current medical status, and other adult, or child/youth household members.
6. In cases where a child/youth has had a well-baby check or physical examination for school within the last twelve (12) months, the applicants may submit the documentation from that appointment.
7. Verifications of valid handgun carry permit, driver's license, vehicle registration, current vehicle liability insurance, county vehicle inspection (if applicable), current marriage, any previous marriage annulments or divorces, births, adoptions and custody matters of children in the home, if applicable, must be provided. If the applicant does not have documentation of previous marriage annulments, legal separations, or divorces cannot be obtained, both members of the couple must be a party to the study process, or documentation must be obtained prior to final approval.
8. Copies of valid driver's license and (if applicable), vehicle registration, current vehicle liability insurance, and proof of county vehicle inspection must be obtained for any household member who might transport a child.
9. References must be obtained from three (3) individuals not related to the applicants, as well as one (1) relative reference from each of the applicants. The individuals providing references may not reside in the home of the applicants.
10. A decision on approval or denial regarding the home study will be made within ninety (90) days of the applicant's completion of PATH and any additional required pre-service training for applicants to Private Provider agencies.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11. In accordance with the <i>Safe and Timely Interstate Placement of Children in Foster Care Act of 2006</i>, an ICPC study, with a decision to approve or deny the resource home, will be issued within sixty (60) calendar days of the date of the ICPC referral.</li> <li>12. If completion of the study or issuance of a decision regarding the ICPC resource home cannot meet the sixty (60) day time line, the DCS home study writer or Private Provider agency personnel will document the reasons for the delay. They must also address action steps to be taken including a proposed date of completion in <b>TFACTS</b>. Follow-up documentation must be included every thirty (30) days until a decision is issued. Notice of the documentation will be forwarded to the DCS ICPC Office.</li> <li>13. The home study approval date and the resource home approval date in <b>TFACTS</b> will be the same date. The decision regarding the home study is not valid until signed by the DCS Team Coordinator and Team Leader. The date the DCS Team Coordinator reviews and signs the home study is the official approval date.</li> <li>14. In the case of Private Provider homes, the decision regarding the home study is not valid until signed by their Private Provider agency supervisor. The date the Private Provider agency supervisor reviews and signs the home study is the official approval date.</li> <li>15. If approved, DCS or Private Provider staff will:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Notify the applicants in writing using form <b>CS-0702, Resource Home Approval</b>;</li> <li>b) Ensure the new resource home is entered into <b>TFACTS</b> including ICPC resource homes; and</li> <li>c) The home study writer must ensure that any prospective resource family who is interested in adopting can register with <i>AdoptUSKids.org</i>. Interested families will be given form <b>CS-0950, ADOPTUSKIDS Information Acknowledgement</b>. A signed copy of the form must be placed in the resource home case file.</li> </ol> </li> <li>16. DCS/Private Provider staff may not approve any applications that do not meet the standards outlined in this policy and DCS Policy <a href="#">16.3, Desired Characteristics of Resource Parents</a>. If a resource family is denied, the procedures outlined in DCS Policy <a href="#">16.16, Denial or Closure of Resource Homes</a> must be followed.</li> </ol>
<p><b>F. Mandatory pre-service training</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. PATH will be co-led by a DCS consortium or Private Provider staff person along with a trained DCS or Private Provider resource parent. Youth co-leaders will also be included in PATH Training Sessions as identified and relevant to their expertise.</li> <li>2. All resource parent applicants and/or any adults living in the household who will have a significant parenting role must complete PATH training.</li> <li>3. A waiver request is not necessary for adults living in the resource home who have no significant parenting role. Clear documentation in the resource home record must be completed to explain why the individuals are exempt from the</li> </ol>

	<p>orientation session and PATH training and to justify the PATH waiver date recorded in <b>TFACTS</b>.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Older birth or adopted children, and post custody children who are living in the home of the resource parents that turn eighteen (18) years old after the parents are approved, will not have to complete PATH, unless they will have a significant parenting role.</li> <li>5. Resource homes that have been closed for less than two (2) years and were in good standing at the time of closure are not required to re-take initial PATH training. Those homes closed in good standing for a period in excess of two (2) years must re-take initial PATH training or a Department-approved equivalent.</li> <li>6. Those homes having completed PATH training but have remained in pending status for a period of more than one year must re-take PATH or a Department approved equivalent.</li> <li>7. Refer to the <a href="#"><u>Protocol for Re-Activation or Re-Classification of Resource Homes</u></a> when wishing to re-activate a home that is closed regardless of the closure status.</li> <li>8. Regions and Private Providers must consult with each other to exchange/share training and certification information.</li> <li>9. In addition to the completion of PATH training, an applicant must complete:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) CPR/First Aid (4 hours) non-certification class (medical professionals such as doctors or nurses who are certified due to employment can present their current/CPR/First Aid certification to the PATH trainer or home study writer instead of taking the course); and</li> <li>b) Medication Administration (4 hours) (medical personnel may take the modified version of medication Administration for medical Professionals provided by DCS nurses).</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
<p><b>G. General areas of assessment</b></p>	<p>During the home study, the writer will assess at least the following areas with the applicants:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All areas outlined in DCS Policy <a href="#"><u>16.3, Desired Characteristics of Resource Parents;</u></a></li> <li>2. Understanding of core components of PATH;</li> <li>3. Parenting strengths and abilities (refer to form <b>CS-0895, Resource Family Strengths /Needs Checklist</b>);</li> <li>4. Resource home capacity (refer to DCS Policy <a href="#"><u>16.46, Child/Youth Referral and Placement</u></a>); and</li> <li>5. During the home consultation, the writer must also assess safety and risk, documenting whether the prospective residence meets acceptable sanitary requirements utilizing form <b>CS-0676, Home Safety Checklist</b>. Although this list is not designed to be comprehensive, the following areas <b>must</b> be assessed and confirmed:</li> </ol>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Physical facilities must meet the needs of children based on age, gender, sibling group status and any other special needs;</li><li>b) The residence is free of hazards.</li><li>c) The residence has an adequate water supply:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Applicants who rely on well water will need to provide documentation of its safety;</li></ul></li><li>d) The residence has working toilet and bathroom facilities;</li><li>e) The residence has a working landline telephone;</li><li>f) The residence has adequate sewage disposal;</li><li>g) The residence has adequate sleeping space:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Unfinished attics, basements, hallways or other outbuildings may not be used as sleeping rooms;</li><li>◆ Children will have their own bed that includes a mattress, box springs(unless you have bunk beds) and bed frame;</li><li>◆ It is preferable that no more than two (2) children share a sleeping room. Exceptions may be granted, in writing, by the Team Leader or Private Provider supervisory staff, if it becomes necessary for more than two (2) children to share a sleeping room;</li><li>◆ Children three (3) years of age or older may not share the bedroom of the resource parent(s) except for brief periods of illness or emotional distress.</li><li>◆ Children of the opposite sex must not be allowed to share sleeping rooms, except in the case siblings where all siblings are age four (4) years old or under;</li></ul></li><li>h) The residence has adequate storage space:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Individual space must be provided for each child/youth's personal possessions.</li></ul></li></ul> <p>6. All family pets must be vaccinated as required by law. Documentation is required to verify that the vaccination is current.</p> <p>7. The exterior of the residence must be inspected for hazards.</p> <p>8. Resource parents who are gun owners must adhere to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Resource Parents in possession of a Hand Gun Carry Permit as per <i>TCA 39-17-1315</i> must provide DCS/Private Provider staff with a photo copy of the permit for the Resource Home Case File:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Each permit carrier will be responsible for the renewal of the permit every four (4) years;</li><li>◆ The permit holder will provide DCS/Private Provide staff with a copy of the gun permit at time of renewal;</li><li>◆ Resource Parents who possess a handgun permit and choose to carry a weapon in the presence of the children in their care must exercise</li></ul></li></ul>
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	<p>extreme caution at all times.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> Refer to form <b>CS-0670, Resource Parent Oath to Abide.</b></p> <p>b) All firearms, bows and arrows, hunting knives, and weapons of any variety must be housed and locked in a secure gun cabinet or other secure storage facility. Gun cabinets with glass enclosures or glass doors are not appropriate, unless specifically designed for the purpose of weapons display. Keys to the gun cabinet must be secured in a separate location. Trigger locks must be utilized on all firearms. Ammunition must be stored and locked separately.</p> <p>9. Swimming pools must be secured in accordance with city and/or county safety ordinances.</p> <p>10. Specific non-safety issues may be waived by the region during the approval process of the home. Any considerations for waiver must be documented on form <b>CS-0921, Waiver of Criminal Convictions, PATH Training Modifications, Non-Safety Issues and CPS Indications</b>, and clearly identified as a “non-safety issue”. Review of this waiver must be reviewed and approved by the Regional Administrator or the Private Provider Executive Director or his/her designee.</p>
<p><b>H. Fire safety</b></p>	<p>1. Prior to approval, resource homes must contain the following:</p> <p>a) UL-approved, operational smoke and carbon monoxide detectors on every level of the home:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors where children sleep must be located in the child/youth’s bedroom, or in the hallway adjacent to the child/youth’s bedroom.</li> </ul> <p>b) A functioning fire extinguisher for each floor of the residence.</p> <p>2. Applicants must prepare a floor plan of their home, which identifies the location of all smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, and fire extinguishers and illustrates evacuation routes in case there is a fire in the home. This plan must be posted in a prominent location once the home is approved and a copy placed within the region’s Resource Home case file.</p> <p>3. The home study writer may provide assistance in creating the floor plan. The home study writer will discuss a fire drill plan with the applicants during the home study process. Fire drill plan discussion will include:</p> <p>a) How fire drills might be conducted in the family home;</p> <p>b) How each family member would be made aware of the plan;</p> <p>c) The location where all families members would meet after the home is evacuated;</p> <p>d) Emergency phone numbers; and</p> <p>e) How family members with special needs will be assisted.</p>
<p><b>I. Assessment of relationships</b></p>	<p>1. The home study writer must assess the quality of an applicant’s current and past relationships. The study must include an assessment of the prospective</p>

	<p>resource parent’s ability to build and maintain trusting and stable relationships with persons including their own children, family members, friends and others significant to the applicant. This assessment must include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Reading the SAFE Questionnaire or resource parent’s autobiography;</li> <li>b) PATH training;</li> <li>c) Face to face interviews; and</li> <li>d) Contacting the references.</li> </ul> <p>2. Significant relationships will be assessed based on duration as well as the number of relationships over time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) A conversation will be held with each member of the household to assess their attitude about sharing their home with children from the child welfare system.</li> <li>b) A summary of these conversations must be included in the study narrative.</li> </ul>
<p><b>J. Background and criminal records clearance</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All adult household members must complete form <b>CS-0668 Authorization for Release of Information to DCS</b> by the conclusion of the first PATH session. Criminal background checks must begin immediately following Session One of PATH.</li> <li>2. A criminal history check to include local criminal records check from local law enforcement records for all residences of applicant within the immediate six (6) months preceding application for each applicant. These checks must also be conducted for any other adult member of the household taking into account current, maiden, and any other previous legal names. All criminal charges listed in the local criminal history check for which there is no final disposition (misdemeanor or felony) identified must be clarified by obtaining additional official documentation from the local court with jurisdiction.</li> <li>3. In situations where there are pending charges and no disposition, approval will be withheld until the charges have been resolved. <b>NO</b> waiver may be obtained for pending charges regardless of possible disposition outcome.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> Providers that utilize on-line services such as <b>Kroll, Intellacorp, Mycertifphi</b>, etc., may continue to use such services to obtain criminal records checks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. If learned during the approval process that there are children living in the household with delinquent behavior/charges, the DCS Regional Administrator or Private Provider Program Director may provide a waiver if a review of the circumstances determine that the applicant could work productively and constructively with children.</li> <li>5. All findings identified as a result of these checks must be documented on form <b>CS-0687, Criminal History and IV-E Eligibility Checklist</b>, with results attached. This documentation must be reported in the home study.</li> <li>6. DCS/Private Provider potential Resource Parents, as well as any other adult residing in the home, must report any arrest, indictment, or criminal</li> </ul>

	<p>conviction (either misdemeanor or felony).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>7. A TBI/FBI fingerprint check.</li><li>8. No applicant may be approved who has a felony conviction for the following:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Child Abuse and Neglect;</li><li>b) Spousal Abuse;</li><li>c) A crime against a child or children (including child pornography); or</li><li>d) A crime involving violence, including rape, sexual assault, or homicide, but not including other physical assault or battery.</li></ol></li><li>9. An applicant or person who has been convicted of any other felony designated as a crime against a person or any felony drug related offense may be granted a waiver if:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) The conviction occurred at least five (5) years prior to the applicant's hiring; and</li><li>b) The DCS Regional Administrator or Private Provider Program Director and the Executive Director of Child Permanency/ designee personally reviews the circumstances of the applicant and determines that the applicant could work productively and constructively with children.</li></ol></li><li>10. Other felony convictions not of the type detailed in items 8 and 9 above may be eligible for waiver. These applicants may be considered within the following parameters:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) The conviction occurred <b>at least five (5) years prior to the applicant's application;</b></li><li>b) The DCS Regional Administrator or Private Provider Program Director and the Executive Director of Child Permanency/ designee personally reviews the circumstances of the applicant and determines that the applicant could work productively and constructively with children (see waiver process).</li></ol></li><li>11. Prior misdemeanor convictions may be waived if:-<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) The offense does not relate to a child safety or domestic violence issue; and</li><li>b) The DCS Regional Administrator or Private Provider Program Director personally reviews the circumstances and determines that the potential caregiver could provide quality care for the identified child/youth.</li><li>c) DCS form <b>CS-0921, Waiver of Criminal Convictions, PATH Training Modifications, Non-Safety Issues and CPS Indications</b>, must be approved and properly documented.</li><li>d) Misdemeanor offenses related to traffic violations, except for DUI offenses, are not required to be waived. However, such offenses must be evaluated as to any safety risk associated with resource parent responsibility.</li></ol></li><li>12. Specific consideration will be made as to the appropriateness of</li></ol>
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becoming a resource parent with an excess of five (5) convictions (either misdemeanor or felony). Waivers on such cases must be reviewed and approved by the Executive Director of Child Permanency or his or her designee.

13. An Internet Records Clearance must be completed for all household members age eighteen (18) years or older. This search must be conducted taking into account current, maiden, and any other previous legal names. This documentation must include the following:

- a) A **National Sexual Offender Registry Clearance**- The Internet Website: <http://www.nsopw.gov>
- b) A **Tennessee Department of Health Abuse Registry Clearance** Website: <http://health.state.tn.us/AbuseRegistry/default.aspx>

**Note:** All registry checks must be completed in accordance with policy to ensure timely assessment of resource homes. However, findings of non-compliance on an assessed resource home can be rectified by re-running the checks appropriately. Checks that show no results will be considered compliant within the assessment period. Checks that show charges or convictions within the findings will be deemed non-compliant.

Any Private Provider agency using an internet service to complete the required background checks for potential resource parents and/or other adult household members is responsible for assuring that such provider accesses the internet searches listed above. Doing so will preclude the need for the provider to complete each individual internet search.

Failure to verify that the chosen internet service use the exact sites listed above for each check will result in that check being considered invalid. This may cause a home to be identified as noncompliant and result in monetary penalties.

14. A **DCS Records Check** must include a check of CPS records in **TFACTS** and a **Social Service Management System (SSMS)** check. The appropriate designated DCS staff member must complete the records check using form **CS-0741, Database Search Results**. This is to determine if there is a past Child Protective Service (CPS) indication identifying the applicant as an indicated perpetrator of child abuse or neglect.

- a) No applicant will be approved as a resource parent who has been determined to be an indicated perpetrator of child abuse or neglect unless a waiver is granted as outlined in DCS Policy [14.24, Child Protective Services Background Checks](#).
- b) Specific information related to CPS findings and records involving an applicant must be maintained in the resource parent file and addressed in the home study.
- c) This waiver may only be approved by the Executive Director of the Office of Child Safety or his or her designee. Form **CS-0921, Waiver of Criminal Convictions, PATH Training Modifications, Non-Safety Issues and CPS Indications**, must be approved and properly documented.

	<p>15. Older birth, adopted, or post custody children who are living in the home of the resource parents, and who turn eighteen (18) years old after the parents are approved, must complete all criminal background clearances, including fingerprints, within six (6) months of their eighteenth birthday. Any home with adult children residing in the home who have not completed the background checks will not maintain approved status.</p> <p>16. Internet Records Clearance, CPS checks, and local background checks must be completed for all adults living on the resource parent's property having the same mailing address. This includes those living in other dwellings (<i>i.e.</i>, over-the-road trucks, buildings, campers, mobile trailers, <i>etc</i>) as well as other adults living in the main residence. If any causes for concern are noted, fingerprinting must be completed on the individual(s) that prompted the concern.</p> <p>17. A driving record check/moving violation record check must be completed for each resource parent that provides transportation for DCS children. Documentation of all returned information from background and driving record/moving violation record checks must be discussed in the home study, and any concerns must be resolved prior to approval.</p>
<p><b>K. Documentation and home study requirements</b></p>	<p>1. The entire resource home study record, including the application, autobiography, all PATH forms, and all supporting documentation (medical statements, criminal background checks/clearances, references, <i>etc.</i>) constitute a completed study. This collection of information must become part of the resource home case file (refer to DCS Policy <a href="#">16.23, Resource Home Case Files</a>) along with the home study writer's recommendation. Upon completion of the home study, the home study writer will submit the file to his or her supervisor and team coordinator. The entire resource home study record will be reviewed for approval or denial. Private Provider agency's home studies must also have <u>two levels of supervisory review/approval</u> upon submission.</p> <p>a) A resource home study completed in response to an ICPC request must be child-specific to each child/youth identified on form <b>CS-0525, Interstate Compact Placement Request (100A)</b> and include a statement regarding the certification of the resource home as eligible under DCS standards for federal IV-E financial assistance.</p> <p>b) All resource homes will have form <b>CS-0871, Resource Home Disaster Plan</b> completed as a part of the home study.</p> <p>2. All completed home study narratives must include a recommendation statement that clearly defines the age range, number, and gender of children for which the family is approved to parent. The recommendation statement must also include information regarding the type of physical, emotional, behavioral, and personality traits of children the family will be most successful in parenting. In cases where the study was initially intended for a kinship care placement, a statement regarding the family's capability to meet that <i>specific</i> child/youth's needs must also be included.</p> <p>3. It must be documented in the resource home record that the discipline policy has been explained, and that the applicants agree to the discipline policy</p>

	<p>guidelines by signing form <b>CS-0553, Discipline Policy</b>.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Resource home approval information <b>must</b> be entered into <b>TFACTS</b> in a timely manner following the approval of the home study. In addition, any change that will affect the status of the home’s continued approval must be recorded <i>in a timely manner both in the resource home record and in TFACTS</i>.</li> <li>5. All applicants must agree to read and sign form <b>CS-0670, Resource Parent Oath to Abide</b>, prior to approval.</li> <li>6. The resource home record must contain form <b>CS-0702, Resource Home Approval</b>, which indicates the number and type of children for whom the home is approved as well as the approval date.</li> <li>7. The resource parent approval for a home studied in compliance to an ICPC referral-must also include a statement regarding approval of the specific child/youth identified in the ICPC documents and include a statement regarding the certification of the resource home as eligible under DCS standards for federal IV-E financial assistance. In cases where the study was requested for an ICPC placement, a statement regarding the family’s capability to meet that <i>specific</i> child/youth’s needs must also be included.</li> </ol>
<p><b>L. Home study maintenance</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Once an applicant is approved as a resource family, the resource home study record must be maintained in accordance with DCS Policy <a href="#"><u>16.23, Resource Home Case Files</u></a>.</li> <li>2. In order to remain approved, the resource family must maintain compliance with DCS Policy <a href="#"><u>16.8, Responsibilities of Approved Resource Homes</u></a> and all other applicable DCS policies.</li> </ol>
<p><b>M. Types of resource homes defined</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Once all the above requirements are met and the agency has issued an approval letter, the applicant is considered an approved resource family and is permitted to accept placements for kinship care, foster care, or adoption.</li> <li>2. An approved resource family may also parent children who are adjudicated delinquent, provided they complete the specialized training requirements outlined in DCS Policy <a href="#"><u>16.8, Responsibilities of Approved Resource Homes</u></a>.</li> <li>3. An approved resource family may also be considered to serve as respite, mentoring, transportation, visitation, or other resource services deemed necessary by DCS.</li> <li>4. Anyone who applies to become a resource parent after the effective date of this policy who wishes to provide therapeutic care, or care for medically fragile children must apply to a Private Provider, unless an arrangement can be made in compliance with DCS Policy <a href="#"><u>16.11, Shared Resource Homes</u></a>.</li> </ol>
<p><b>N. Resource home eligibility teams (RHET)</b></p>	<p>In order to ensure that federal IV-E safety requirements are met for funding purposes, the Resource Home Eligibility Team (RHET) will review the documentation used to support the resource home approval decision. The DCS Child Placement and Private Provider Unit (CPPP) in Central Office manages RHET. Safety documents for Private Provider and DCS resource homes will be</p>

uploaded in TFACTS and attached to the resource home's current assessment. (Refer to the [Departmental Resource Home Eligibility \(D-RHET\) Protocol](#) and [Resource Home Eligibility Team \(RHET\) Protocol](#)).

**Forms:**

[CS-0431, Monthly Family Income and Expenditures](#)

[CS-0427, Child's Medical Record](#) (for all children in the home)

[CS-0544, Resource Home Placement Checklist](#)

[CS-0553, Discipline Policy](#)

[CS-0668, Authorization for Release of Information](#) (for all adults in the home)

[CS-0670, Resource Parent Oath To Abide](#)

[CS-0676, Home Safety Checklist](#)

[CS-0678, Resource Parent Medical Report](#)

[CS-0741, Database Search Results](#)

[CS-0871, Resource Home Disaster Plan](#)

[CS-0688, Resource Home Application for Parenting](#)

[CS-0687, Criminal History and IV-E Eligibility Checklist](#)

[CS-0690, Resource Home Study and Family Update Checklist](#)

[CS-0691 Fingerprint Card Information](#) (for all adults in the home)

[CS-0950, ADOPTUSKIDS Information Acknowledgement](#)

[CS-0702, Resource Home Approval](#)

[CS-0709, Resource Home Recording](#)

[CS- 0842, Substitute W-9](#)

[CS-0895, Resource Parent Strengths /Needs Checklist](#)

[CS-0932, Resource Home Disclosure Acknowledgement](#)

[CS-0921, Waiver of Criminal Convictions, PATH Training Modifications, Non-Safety Issues and CPS Indications.](#)

**Note: Private Provider Agencies may use equivalent forms, provided the content of the forms capture the content of the forms listed above.**

<b>Collateral documents:</b>	<p><i>Autobiography for Each Applicant/SAFE Questionnaire</i></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Departmental Resource Home Eligibility Team (D-RHET) Protocol</u></a></p> <p><i>Eco Map</i></p> <p><i>Individual Interview (Work Aid)</i></p> <p><i>Parenting Strengths Checklist</i></p> <p><i>Proof of all Reported Income</i></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Protocol for Re-activation or Re-Classification of Resource Homes</u></a></p> <p><i>Reference Letters</i></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Resource Home Eligibility Team (RHET) Protocol</u></a></p> <p><i>Resource Parent Home Study Outline (Work Aid)</i></p> <p><i>Results from Police Records Checks</i></p> <p><i>SAFE Family Home Study Outline (Work Aid)</i></p> <p><a href="#"><u>The Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children Practice and Procedure Manual</u></a></p>
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<b>Glossary:</b>	
<b>Driving Record Check/Moving Violation Record:</b>	Each region has designated specific Resource Parent Support Staff who are able to access the Moving Violation Records through an understanding with the Tennessee Department of Safety. This access provides DCS with driving records for each resource parent/individual that provides transportation for DCS children. The report will show speeding and DUI charges and other moving violations. In an attempt to keep DCS children safe while in foster care, these reports will be completed during annual re-assessments of resource homes and will also be completed prior to approval of a new resource home.
<b>Parenting Role:</b>	The assumption of the primary responsibility for promoting and supporting the physical, emotional, social and intellectual development of a child from infancy to adulthood by an adult member/members of a household. Parenting refers to the activity of raising a child and is not specific to a biological connection. The nurturing parent can be an stepparent, adoptive parent or guardian.
<b>Household Member or Significant Others</b>	A relative or anyone that has an important connection to the applicant via blood or relation. This would include anyone living in the home and involved in the day-to-day affairs or has access to children placed in the home.