



August 22, 2022

Family, Children and Adult Services Procedure Letter No. 394

TO: Family, Children and Adult Services Manual Holders

FROM: Matt Damschroder, Director

SUBJECT: Rule and Practice Relaxations for Public and Private Certified and Approved Agencies

BACKGROUND

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) is issuing this Procedure Letter to temporarily allow flexibility in some rule and practice requirements to provide relief to the workforce in support of certified and approved public and private agencies.

The public and private agency workforce is an essential piece of achieving the best outcomes for Ohio's children and families. Historically, turnover rates in public and private agencies exceed typical work environments, and the current environment accentuates recruitment and retention challenges. Because of these challenges, workforce has been, and continues to be, a critical priority for ODJFS.

In the interest of reducing organizational red tape, as well as supporting the workforce of certified and approved public and private agencies, ODJFS has thoroughly considered where some policy and practice requirements can be temporarily relaxed while continuing to ensure child safety and meet Ohio Revised Code requirements.

The following rules and procedures will be effective from September 1, 2022 through August 31, 2023, unless otherwise determined by ODJFS.

SUMMARY

Non-rule Impacted ODJFS Procedures

Agencies that recommend foster homes:

ODJFS will revise the review procedure for foster home visits for agency recertifications by considering one or more of the following:

- Conduct visits virtually when available.

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- Coordinate visits with already scheduled visits required by agency staff when available.
- Conduct no more than 4 visits unless otherwise determined by OFC.

All Agency Types:

- ODJFS may conduct record reviews through electronic method rather than onsite if agency's technology/filing system allow for this approach.
- ODJFS may conduct the Reconciliation electronically rather than onsite if results of compliance appropriately allow a virtual meeting or phone call option.

All Function Types except Residential Functions

- ODJFS will temporarily discontinue additional visits during non-recertification years for any function type of certification other than residential for twelve months. The additional visit will be replaced with a technical assistance virtual meeting or phone call. For agencies that serve multiple functions including residential, only the residential function will receive an additional visit during this period.

Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) Rule-Impacted Procedures

Residential Facilities:

OAC 5101:2-9-02 (M)(1)-(3): Temporarily reduce the required number of residential staff training hours before being left alone with children. ODJFS will reduce the number of hours from 40 (20 orientation and 20 additional hours) to 20 hours of orientation training (plus CPR and First Aid) before being left alone with children. The new employee will need to complete the additional 20 hours of training within their first year of employment.

Agencies that recommend foster homes:

- Current rule requires submission of agency training plans every two years per OAC 5101:2-5-40 (B). ODJFS will only require an agency to submit the plans if they make a change instead of every two years during this period.

ADDITIONAL

In addition to the above rule-impacted and non-rule impacted procedures, ODJFS continues to explore alternative options in supporting certified agencies through the current workforce issues as many agencies face limited resources. ODJFS continues to explore opportunities for private agency staff to benefit from incentives rewarded for ongoing professional development. ODJFS also continues to explore opportunities to work with

our Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) partners to help streamline the background check process.

INSTRUCTIONS:

The following chart indicates what materials should be removed from the Family, Children and Adult Services Manual (FCASM) and what materials are to be inserted in the FCASM.

LOCATION	REMOVE AND FILE AS OBSOLETE	INSERT/REPLACEMENT
PROCEDURE LETTERS		FCASPL 394