

**Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services  
(CCDCFS)  
Policy Statement**

**Policy Chapter:** Substitute Care  
**Policy Number:** 6.07.02  
**Policy Name:** Out of Town Investigation (OTI)/Interstate Compact on the Placement (ICPC) Evaluation Process and Placement Supervision of Children from Other Jurisdictions

**Original Effective Date:** 06/02/2008  
**Revision Date(s):** 06/01/2019, 05/01/2016, 02/01/2013, 08/06/2009, 06/02/2008  
**Current Revision Date:** 06/01/2022  
**Approved By:** Cynthia G. Weiskittel

**PURPOSE:** To provide guidelines for conducting a Home Evaluation which have been identified as an Out of Town Investigation/Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (OTI/ICPC).

**SCOPE:** This policy governs all Assessors who perform OTI/ICPC Home Evaluations which applies to Biological Parents, Relatives/NonRelatives, Foster and Adoptive Caregivers who are requesting placement of a child(ren), who is in the custody of another state or Public Children Services Agency (PSCA) within the State of Ohio.

**POLICY**

CCDCFS will complete Home Evaluations for the possible placement of children who are in the custody of another (PCSA) located in another state or county. All Home Evaluations will be assessed for safety and the appropriateness of placement utilizing the procedures outlined below.

CCDCFS strongly believes in working cooperatively with other PCSAs when there is a need for collaboration in placement approval and courtesy supervision. It is in the best interest of children to respond timely to any request from another state or county. Child safety is best achieved through active, collaborative, and respectful engagement of parents, family, community members, agency stakeholders and all other child protective agencies within and outside the state.

If Cuyahoga County's OTI/ICPC Unit receives a request for a Foster or Adoption Home Evaluation, please refer to the Foster and Adoption Home Study Completion Policy (6.02.06)

## PROCEDURES

1. Upon the receipt of a written request from another county agency within the State of Ohio or another state, the OTI/ICPC Supervisor will review and assign the case to an OTI/ICPC Home Evaluation Assessor.
2. If the evaluation request is an ICPC assignment, the OTI/ICPC Supervisor will ensure that all required request information is included and screened-in through the National Electronic Interstate Compact Enterprise (NEICE) system. If the ICPC request is coming from a state that is not active or has live connectivity to NEICE, the supervisor will ensure that an Intake is entered into the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS). After assignment, the OTI/ICPC Assessor will ensure that the ICPC record is created in SACWIS. The ICPC record should be updated and maintained with current and accurate information throughout the life of the ICPC case. All evaluation and supervision reports must be uploaded into the ICPC record in SACWIS. If the request is a Courtesy Request from another PCSA within Ohio, an Intake will be created in SACWIS to document the Home Evaluation Request, and no ICPC record is required to be created in SACWIS.
3. Each Home Evaluation request will be assessed based upon the type of Home Evaluation requested and requirements of the Ohio Administrative Code (OAC). Prior and current social service, criminal history and additional background information will be assessed to determine the safety and appropriateness of the home. Providing the required information and/or documents does not imply approval for placement; however, the information submitted during the evaluation process is utilized to determine if the home can be approved and placement can be recommended.
4. The assigned OTI/ICPC Assessor will make contact with the parent/prospective caregiver within three (3) business days. During the initial conversation, an in-person visit should be scheduled to meet the family and share fingerprint scheduling process so that all adult household members can be fingerprinted.
5. The OTI/ICPC Assessor will send out an introductory letter and OTI/ICPC packet. The OTI/ ICPC packet will include:
  - (a) Identifying Data Form
  - (b) Fingerprint Process
  - (c) Employment Verification Form
  - (d) Financial Statement
  - (e) Social History Form
  - (f) Medical Statement (only if medical concerns have been disclosed)
    - an applicant or household member has suffered a serious illness or injury within the past year,
    - the applicant is receiving a disability benefit,
    - Assessor determines it to be necessary to ensure the safety, health, or care of any foster child who may be placed in the home.

- (g) Non-Conviction Statement
  - (h) Juvenile Authorization and Disclosure Forms
6. The Initial home visit will include:
    - (a) Discussion detailing the process of the home evaluation
    - (b) Safety assessment of the home
    - (c) Discussion regarding any areas of concern
    - (d) Discussion regarding all required paperwork/Releases of Information
    - (e) Sharing of information for the child(ren) to be placed
    - (f) Reviewing and completion of the Assessment of Relative or Nonrelative Substitute Caregiver Form (JFS 1447)
  7. All household members over the age of four (4) years shall be interviewed (unless the child has delays preventing him/her from being interviewed).
  8. The OTI/ICPC Assessor will assess the parent/prospective caregiver's suitability and willingness to provide care for the child(ren) in need of placement.
    - (a) A review of child protective service history of all household members will be conducted utilizing SACWIS to ensure that any social service history the prospective caregiver has, does not pose a threat to the child(ren). If the adult household members previously resided in other states, the assessor will request a check of the abuse and neglect registry from those states. The assessor will complete a search and screening of all adults in public records databases, including sex offender registry via website <https://nsopw.gov>.
    - (b) All adults in the home, 18 years and older, must be fingerprinted (**FBI & BCI**) by CCDCFS at the time the Caregiver is being considered for placement. A Non-Conviction Statement must be reviewed and signed by all adult household members.
    - (c) The parent/prospective caregiver must submit written notification if a person residing in their home is between the ages of 12–18 and has plead guilty or been convicted of certain criminal offenses or has been found to be delinquent.
  9. If the information gathered indicates the home is unsafe or inappropriate, the placement request will be denied. If the child(ren) has been placed in the home, without CCDCFS's recommendation, the OTI/ICPC Assessor will notify the Sending Agency/State's Interstate Compact Office of the illegal placement. When a parent/prospective caregiver is denied for placement, the OTI/ICPC Assessor will provide written notification of the denial.
  10. If the prospective caregiver had their parental rights involuntarily terminated, CCDCFS may deny the placement. Social service and criminal history will not automatically disqualify the caregiver from being recommended for placement.
  11. If the prospective caregiver or any adult in the home has a felony conviction for any disqualifying offenses listed in Appendix A of OAC 5101:2-42-18 AND the

offense is a non-rehabilitation offense, the placement shall not be approved and Rehabilitation Standards cannot be applied.

12. If the prospective caregiver or any adult in the home has been convicted of or plead guilty to any offense listed in Appendix A of OAC 5101:2-42-18, the home shall not be approved and recommended for placement; unless the agency finds and documents that the person has met all Rehabilitation Standards.
  - (a) If the conviction was a felony, it must be five (5) years from the date of conviction to consider the rehabilitation criteria. If the conviction has not been five (5) years or longer, placement cannot be approved.
  - (b) If the conviction is a misdemeanor, the rehabilitation criteria can be considered from the date of conviction.
  - (c) To determine if the rehabilitation standards are met, the OTI/ICPC Assessor must complete the Rehabilitation Standard Form.
13. If the home evaluation is for placement with a biological parent and the parent, and/or any adult in the parent's household, has been convicted of any of the offenses listed in Appendix A of OAC 5101:2-42-18, the biological parent may be denied for placement. The Rehabilitation Standard Form must be completed with a statement highlighting the reasoning placement is in the child(ren)'s best interest; evaluation of safety; social service history; and any other notable observations. A placement recommendation with a biological parent who has concerning criminal or social service history can only be approved by the Agency's Chain of Command.
14. If a minor with a criminal record resides in a caregiver's home, CCDCFS must review Juvenile Court records to determine if the criminal information poses a threat to the child(ren) being placed. Failure of the caregiver to cooperate with obtaining required information may result in a denial of placement. If the criminal information is of concern, the OTI/ICPC Assessor must consult with his/her immediate supervisor. If CCDCFS is unable to approve the home for placement, the OTI/ICPC Assessor must follow the steps for denial previously outlined in this policy.
15. If the fingerprint results reveal undisclosed convictions and they are not disclosed on the Non-Conviction Statement, the criminal history will be brought to the attention of the OTI/ICPC Supervisor. The Assessor and the Supervisor will determine if the criminal history poses a risk to the child(ren) who may be placed in the home.
16. The OTI/ICPC Assessor will complete a preliminary home evaluation within thirty (30) days to be submitted to the OTI/ICPC Supervisor for review and approval. The preliminary evaluation will be sent to the Sending Agency/State's Interstate Compact Office. At a minimum, the preliminary evaluation should include the following: the initiation of criminal background checks, the initial contact information and summary conditions of the home. If additional information has been obtained from the parent/caregiver(s), the information will be included.

17. If the OTI/ICPC Assessor is not able to complete the home evaluation within sixty (60) days, a follow up letter or email will be submitted to the Sending Agency/State's ICPC Office to provide a status update and barriers to completion.
18. After all information has been obtained and all interviews have been completed, the OTI/ICPC Assessor shall complete the final home evaluation report and submit all documentation to the OTI/ICPC Supervisor for review. The finalized evaluation will be submitted to the Sending State's Interstate Compact Office or the Sending Agency to be processed.
19. At the completion of the home evaluation process, the OTI/ICPC Assessor will notify the parent/prospective caregiver's in writing to inform them of the outcome of the evaluation.
20. If the Sending Agency places a child(ren) into the approved parent/prospective caregiver's home and the Sending Agency is outside the State of Ohio, Cuyahoga County ICPC Assessor will begin supervision services upon receipt of notification that the child(ren) has been placed.
21. If the Sending Agency is another PCSA within the State of Ohio, the sending PCSA can request courtesy supervision and support services; however, monthly visits and contact must be made by the sending PCSA who has full responsibility over the case planning and case management.
22. Upon notification that a child has been placed into an approved caregiver's home from another state, face to face contact will be attempted within 7 days of placement notification and, thereafter, face to face contact will be made every 30 days. More frequent visits may occur if situations or concerns arise that require additional support. Supervisory reports will be completed and sent to the sending state every quarter, or more frequently, if requested (in accordance with ICPC regulations).
23. Upon placement, Medicaid will be set up for each child placed; support service needs will be assessed and referrals will be made in efforts to stabilize the placement, strengthen the family unit and preserve the child(ren)'s placement.
24. For children placed through the ICPC process, the Sending State is to maintain financial responsibility for the care and education of the child(ren) and retain jurisdiction of the child(ren) until one of the following occurs:
  - (a) The child(ren) is adopted
  - (b) The child(ren) reaches the age of majority or is legally emancipated
  - (c) The child(ren) returns to home state
  - (d) The child(ren)'s custody is transferred, with concurrence from the receiving state.

25. On an annual basis (from the date the home was approved for placement), the assigned OTI/ICPC Assessor shall complete a re-assessment of the home to assure that the placement continues to meet the requirements outlined in this policy. If there are any new adults that moved into the home, the agency shall assess, conduct complete background checks and require fingerprinting. If the parent/prospective caregiver moves to a new address, the OTI/ICPC Assessor shall update and complete the existing assessment to ensure the new home meets safety requirements.

**SEE ALSO:**

Ohio Administrative Code 5101:2-52  
Ohio Administrative Code 5101:2-42-18  
Ohio Administrative Code 5101:2-7