

ADOPTION LISTING SERVICES

March 20, 2003 – P.T. 2003.11

Section 309.40 Adoption Listing Service

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a) Functions of the Adoption Listing Service (ALS)

The Adoption Listing Service (ALS) manages the statewide listing of Illinois children in need of adoptive resources as well as a listing of licensed Illinois foster and adoptive families who wish to adopt. It also provides links to specific recruitment opportunities in television, newspaper and newsletter features, and other ALS publications. The ALS provides children and families with matching opportunities through the listing service, national adoption exchanges, and the Internet.

The Adoption Information Center of Illinois (AICI) manages the Adoption Listing Service. Forms referenced throughout these procedures can be obtained from:

Adoption Information Center of Illinois
120 West Madison, Suite 800
Chicago, IL. 60602
Telephone (312) 346-1516 or (800) 572-2390

The primary responsibilities of Adoption Listing Service include:

1) The Production of the ALS Book

The ALS Book is used by Department staff, private agency staff and prospective adoptive families to match waiting children with potential adoptive families. Both children whose parental rights have been terminated as well as those for whom adoption is the permanency goal but parental rights have not been terminated are included. The ALS Book is updated monthly.

Distribution is limited to DCFS and private child welfare agency staff and licensed families registered as waiting families with AICI. It may also be used by families who have not yet been licensed but who have taken all the following steps and are considered to have demonstrated a commitment to proceed with the adoption preparation and assessment process in order to adopt a waiting child:

- Made an initial inquiry;
- Attended an orientation session;
- Had an in-home consultation and been informed about the non-negotiable licensing requirements;
- Had fingerprints taken; passed a CANTS check;
- Returned their completed licensing application, including medical examination forms;
- Had been referred to Foster Pride/Adopt Pride or Adopt-only Training, as appropriate.

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Department or private agency staff should work with families to help them appropriately use the ALS Book and its contents to determine if there are any available children whom they are interested in adopting.

2) Management of Collateral Listing Resources

ALS provides profiles of waiting children on a regular basis to television, newspaper and newsletter features and national adoption exchanges. It also posts profiles of waiting children on the AICI web page, <http://www.adoptinfo-il.org>.

3) Initial Matching of Listed Children and Families

On a weekly basis, the ALS runs a computer match comparing the characteristics of the listed waiting children with the characteristics requested by licensed waiting families. The child's caseworker is alerted to all initial computer matches to determine whether the match is, in fact, appropriate for the child. The family and the family's worker are also alerted to all suggested computer matches.

b) Procedures for Listing Children

1) Children Who Must Be Listed

A child must be listed when two basic criteria are met:

- The child needs an adoptive resource; and
- A legal screening, as described in paragraph (C) below, has determined that it is appropriate to pursue adoption.

These two criteria do not necessarily occur in sequence. Nor may they happen only once in the life of a case. The more common path would be a determination that the child needs an adoptive resource followed by a referral for legal screening. But a child may also have an adoptive resource initially identified at a family meeting, have the legal screening determine that sufficient grounds for termination exist and that adoption is in the child's best interest, and then, for some reason, the adoptive placement fails. In these situations, a second family meeting and the **CFS 1443, Permanency Commitment by Foster Parent/Relative Caregiver** form is also appropriate and necessary even though it occurs **after** the legal screening. In some jurisdictions, a second legal screening may also be desired and/or required. If the caregiver refuses to sign the **CFS 1443** form, see the note following **Sub section (b)(2)(A)** of these procedures for directions on how to resolve such conflicts.

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A) Verification of the Need for an Adoptive Resource

Workers must follow the procedures regarding completion of the **CFS 1443**, (instructions are attached to **Rule Section 309.80**) to determine whether the child's current placement is an appropriate adoptive resource. The fact that the current caregiver is unwilling to provide an adoptive placement must be verified on the **CFS 1443** form. "Pre-adoptive placements" where the caregiver had previously committed to adopt but is no longer interested or able to adopt shall also be documented on the **CFS 1443**. If the caregiver refuses to sign the **CFS 1443**, see the note following **Sub section (b)(2)(A)** of these procedures for directions on how to resolve such conflicts.

B) Legal Screening Supports the Pursuit of Adoption

All children's cases must have a legal screening to determine that adoption is in the child's best interest and that there are sufficient grounds to recommend termination of parental rights. If the outcome of the legal screening determines that adoption is appropriate and the child does not have an identified adoptive resource as confirmed by the completed **CFS 1443** form, the worker must complete the Procedures for Listing Children (**Sub section (b)(4), The Listing of Children**) within two (2) weeks of the legal screening.

If it is determined that an identified adoptive resource will not be able to honor their commitment after the legal screening, a family meeting shall be held to discuss the issue and a subsequent **CFS 1443** form shall be completed that documents the fact that the current caregiver is not an adoptive resource. Since the legal screening has already occurred, the worker must complete the Procedures for Listing Children (**section b(4), The Listing of Children**) within two (2) weeks of the signed **CFS 1443** form documenting that the child does not have an adoptive resource. If the caregiver refuses to sign the **CFS 1443** form, see the note following **Sub section (b)(2)(A)** of these procedures for directions on how to resolve such conflicts.

C) Legal Screening

This process varies slightly between Cook and Downstate Regions.

Downstate

The regional screening determines that it is in the best interests of the child and that there are sufficient grounds to refer to the State's Attorney for termination of parental rights (TPR).

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Cook County

A permanency legal prescreening has been conducted with the Department's Office of Legal Services and determined that adoption is in the best interests of the child, that there are sufficient grounds for TPR and a screening date has been set with the State's Attorney's office.

Workers may occasionally be directed by Child Welfare Administrative Case Reviewers or various court personnel to list a child. When this occurs, workers should promptly follow the requirements of this section to secure the **CFS 1443** form and present the child's case at a legal screening before proceeding to list the child within the timeframe established by the Court or ACR. If a legal screening has already occurred, but a previously identified adoptive resource is not able to proceed to adoption, the worker shall secure a signed **CFS 1443** form indicating that the child does not have an adoptive resource and proceed to list the child.

2) Children Who Should Not Be Listed

Children should not be listed if any of the following is true.

- The status of the current caregiver's intent to adopt is uncertain. (See the Note following **Sub section (b)(2)(A)** for directions on how to resolve uncertainties);
- The child's case has not "passed" legal screening;
- The child does not need an adoptive resource; and/or
- The pursuit of adoption is not appropriate for the child.

A) Children for Whom There is a Potential Adoptive Resource but the Status of this Resource is Uncertain.

Reasons for the uncertainty may include but are not limited to the following circumstances:

- i) The family has not made a final determination that they are willing to adopt;
- ii) The family is not yet licensed;
- iii) The family has not been assessed for adoption;
- iv) There are licensing issues that must be resolved;
- v) There are Interstate Compact issues that must be resolved;

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- vi) Other adoption related issues must be resolved such as age, capacity of the potential adoptive parent, subsidy issues, etc.

NOTE: In situations of uncertainty, the caseworker and adoption worker shall develop a plan and timetable to address the outstanding issues in order to decide whether the family shall be considered an adoptive resource. Such plans shall not exceed 90 days in duration. If the issue has not been resolved within 90 days, the child shall be considered in need of an adoptive resource. A written summary of the family meeting(s) and other efforts to resolve the issue shall be documented by the caseworker in a memo to his or her supervisor. If the supervisor concurs with the worker's assessment, he or she shall date and initial the memo. This memo can be presented in lieu of the signed CFS 1443 form at the legal screening. If the supervisor does not concur with the worker's written assessment, the worker may be allowed an additional 30 days to address the supervisor's concerns.

B) Children Who Should Not Be Listed Due to Adoptive Resource Issues Include Children Where:

- i) The current caregivers, following a family meeting, have indicated on a **CFS 1443** form that they are interested in adoption; or
- ii) A licensed foster or adoptive family is having pre-placement visits with the child; or
- iii) The parents have executed a Specific Consent that specifies a resource family whom they want to adopt the child and this family meets Department qualifications.

C) Children Who Should Not Be Listed Due to Permanency Goal Issues:

- i) A child with a goal of return home or guardianship; or
- ii) The adoption goal has been changed to guardianship or return home per **Rule 315, Permanency Services**; or
- iii) When Independence is the goal, and the concurrent plan for the child has been changed from adoption to guardianship or return home. Note: If the goal is Independence and adoption remains a concurrent plan, the youth should be listed.

3) Waiver to the Listing of Children

When the worker can demonstrate that it would be contrary to the child's best interests to list the child with the ALS due to a mental health condition, the Regional Administrator or POS Agency Director may, after a clinical staffing with the DCFS or POS Clinical Coordinator, approve a waiver to this policy. The waiver must be supported by appropriate documentation by a mental health professional. The waiver must be reviewed and re-approved every six months.

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Waivers documented on the **CFS 430, ALS Listing Waiver** form (See Appendix A) may be used for the following two reasons during the listing process:

- To defer the initial listing of the child; or
- To place a child on “hold calls” status when a mental health issue prevents the active pursuit of an adoptive resource.

The use of a waiver to “hold calls” may be appropriate when an adoptive placement disrupts or a child is placed in a residential or psychiatric treatment facility. These events, however, should **not** automatically trigger a waiver request. Documentation of the child’s condition by a mental health professional and a determination that it is not in the child’s best interest to be listed is still required.

The waiver shall be re-determined by the Regional Administrator or POS Agency Director at least every six months. Within five (5) business days of a decision to grant a waiver, the worker shall send documentation of each approved waiver and re-determination to:

Department of Children and Family Services
Deputy Director, Division of Foster Care and Permanency Services
406 E. Monroe #225
Springfield, Ill. 62701

4) The Listing of Children

The child’s worker shall complete the following tasks to list a child with the ALS within two (2) weeks of the decision of the legal screening to recommend that adoption be pursued or the signing of a subsequent CFS 1443 form indicating that the child does not have an adoptive resource if the legal screening has already occurred:

- A) Complete the **ALS-1, Child Registration Form** for listing children;

Please Note: The Guardian’s consent is required for **all** children, whether TPR has occurred or not. The **ALS-1** must be signed by the authorized agent of the Guardianship Administrator (see Consent for ALS Listing). If TPR has occurred, the Guardian’s consent is required a second time on the **ALS-1** in order to use the child’s photo for recruitment purposes.

- B) The form must be signed by the supervisor to verify that documentation of diagnosed disabilities exists in the child’s record;
- C) Complete the **ALS-1a, Listing Eligibility Form**;
- D) Children age **12 or older** must sign a **CFS 600-3, Consent for Release of Information** form to consent to their mental health information appearing in the ALS Book. The **CFS 600-3** form must be submitted with the **ALS-1** when it is required;

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- E) For children whose parental rights have been terminated or whose rights will be terminated within 60 days, arrange for a listing photograph to be taken. Complete the **ALS-6, Professional Photographer Form** (See **Sub section (b)(5), Obtaining Listing Photographs**, below, for detailed instructions.) Submit a photo of children only after their parental rights have been terminated;
- F) Mail or fax the **ALS-1a, Listing Eligibility Form**, a copy of the completed and signed **CFS 1443** form (indicating the child's need for an adoptive resource), and the **ALS-1, Child Registration Form**, within ten (10) working days of the child becoming eligible for listing. Include the **CFS 600-3** if necessary. The listing form and the photograph are to be mailed or delivered to:

Adoption Information Center of Illinois
120 West Madison, Suite 800
Chicago, Illinois 60602
Telephone (312) 346-1516 or (800) 572-2390
FAX (312) 346-0004

- G) Agencies will be notified by the ALS when listings are received. The notice will indicate if the listing is complete or will identify which information is missing. Also, the ALS will inform workers that they have two weeks to supply the missing information in order to be in compliance with the listing time frame. See **Subsection (b)(1)(B)**.

5) **Obtaining Listing Photographs**

The following procedures apply for all photographs used by the ALS listing service.

A) **General Requirements**

Charges for the production of one print of the size and type delineated below are eligible for payment.

- i) The photograph must be taken by a professional photographer;
- ii) Photographs shall be color glossy measuring 7" tall by 5" wide for one child or 5" tall by 7" wide for sibling groups;
- iii) **Do not** fasten the photograph with staples or paper clips to any paperwork as this can damage the image;
- iv) Write or type the child's name and ID number on a label and fasten to the reverse of the photo. Do not write directly on the photo as the writing can bleed through and affect the image;

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- v) Payment for a color photograph shall not exceed \$35.00 for an individual child, or \$40.00 for a sibling group of four or less. For sibling groups of five or more, the cost per sibling shall not exceed \$10.00.

B) Direct Payment to Professional Photographers

- i) The worker shall complete an **ALS-6**, in triplicate prior to photographing;
- ii) The worker shall file the pink copy of the **ALS-6** in the child's case record;
- iii) The worker shall present the white and yellow copies of the completed **ALS-6** to the photographer prior to or at the time of the photo session;
- iv) Photographers must submit the following items to the ALS in order to be reimbursed;
 - o Child's photograph (with child's first name and DCFS ID number written on a label adhered to the back of the photo), as soon as available;
 - o Completed white copy of the **ALS-6** with the signed copyright release; and
 - o Photographer's statement of charges for a color photograph, not to exceed \$35.00 for an individual child, \$40.00 for a color photograph of a sibling group of four or less, or \$10.00 per sibling for groups of five or more.

C) Reimbursement for Department Store or School Photographs

The ALS will reimburse caregivers or agency workers directly for the actual cost of school or department store photographs up to \$35.00 for a single child, \$40.00 for a sibling group of four or less, and \$10.00 per sibling for groups of five or more. For reimbursement the following shall be submitted to the ALS:

- i) When direct contact with the photographer is possible (for example, Department Store photographs), complete the **ALS-6** and obtain the signed copyright release from the photographer. The pink copy should be forwarded to the child's worker to be placed in the case file. The photographer retains the yellow copy. The white copy should be sent to the ALS with the photograph;

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- ii) When direct access to the photographer is not possible (for example, school photographs), please include the name and address of the photographer. The ALS will contact the photographer directly and obtain the copyright release;
- iii) The color photograph of the child or sibling group per the specifications indicated above;
- iv) Receipt or proof of payment for the photograph; and
- v) Full name and address of the person to be reimbursed.

D) Obtaining Photographs through the ALS

The ALS contracts with photographers and will arrange photo sessions as follows:

- i) When a group of children is available to be photographed (Note: locations over 30 miles from Cook County require a minimum of 10 children in order to schedule a group photo session);
- ii) When a child's disability is severe enough to prevent him/her from reasonably being transported to a photo studio or ALS photo session. The ALS will send a photographer to the child's residence or to another mutually agreeable location.

In order to register a child for a group photo session or arrange for an individual session, call the ALS and ask for the Listing Writer. The ALS will handle the payment directly and will obtain the copyright release.

6) Changing/Updating Listings, Placing a Listed Child on "Hold Calls" Status, and Withdrawing the Listing.

A) Adoption Listing Service Monthly Tracking Report

In order to maintain accurate information on the children in the ALS, it is extremely important to report any pertinent changes of the child's status on a regular basis. For this purpose, the ALS generates the **ALS Monthly Tracking Report**, which includes all children listed with the ALS by agency. This Report is sent to each DCFS and POS agency's ALS liaison by the 15th of each month. The report indicates basic information of the listed child and notes when an annual update is due. It can also be used to prompt:

- i) Monthly status changes;
- ii) "Hold Calls" requests; and
- iii) Withdrawal requests.

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If needed changes or requests for “Hold Calls” or withdrawals are reported on the **ALS-3, Change Notice Form**, and submitted in the time frames specified below, the ALS will enter the information in the listing database in time for the next month’s report to reflect changes submitted the prior month. The changes will also occur in the next published listing book.

In addition to providing listing information on the child, the Tracking Report will highlight information such as:

- i) Incomplete **ALS-1** submissions;
- ii) Overdue Annual Updates;
- iii) Children on “hold” status 6 months or more;

The report will indicate whether the required update information is 30, 60 or 90 days overdue.

B) Monthly Status Changes.

For a monthly status change, the child’s caseworker shall note any significant changes in the child’s status on the **ALS-3**, and mail or fax the information to the ALS. The **ALS-3** may be completed as soon as the change occurs, but no later than five working days after the receipt of the Tracking Report. Significant changes include:

- i) Change in legal status (see note);
- ii) Change of placement;
- iii) Change of agency;
- iv) Change of worker;
- v) Change of permanency goal;
- vi) Change in school grade or classroom (e.g. special ed to regular class);
- vii) Changed relationships with siblings (i.e. addition or deletion of siblings from ALS listing, see note.)

Note: A change in legal status to TPR requires a listing photo. Similarly, the addition or withdrawal of a sibling requires a new sibling photo.

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C) Annual Update

An **annual update** is required in the month prior to the annual anniversary of the child's listing. The date of the annual update is noted on the ALS Monthly Tracking Report. To complete the annual update, the worker shall review the previous **ALS-1** and note any changes. Workers should then complete a new **ALS-1**, include the child's **ALS number**, and mark "**annual update**" on the first page of the form.

If parental rights have been terminated within the prior year, a second signature from the Guardianship Administrator is required on the **ALS-1** for the **Consent for Recruitment Using Child's Photo**. If the guardianship status has not changed, a new signature of the guardian is not required. The worker's supervisor must also sign the annual update to ensure that any disability noted on the **ALS-1** has been diagnosed and is documented in the children's record. It is important to report any change in the level of indicated disability. The compliance procedures outlined above in **Subsection (b)(4), The Listing of Children**, will also be used for incomplete or overdue annual updates.

Note: It is critical to maintain accurate and updated information about a waiting child; therefore, the annual update of listings is mandatory. At Administrative Case Reviews (ACR), workers shall demonstrate that the child's listing is current by including a photocopy of the child's listing page from the most recent edition of the ALS Book in the child's case record, and showing the child's listing page at the ACR.

D) Placing a "Hold Calls" Request on a Listed Child

There are times when it is appropriate to take a child's listing out of active circulation in the ALS Book. A child shall be placed on "Hold Calls" by the child's worker as soon as:

- i) The child is having pre-placement visits with a licensed foster or adoptive family with the intent to adopt;
- ii) The child has been on runaway for more than 30 days and the results of the actions required by **Procedures 329, Locating and Returning Missing, Runaway, and Abducted Children** have not revealed his or her whereabouts;
- iii) A waiver has been approved by the Regional Administrator or Agency Director following a clinical review.

Workers will review the ALS Monthly Tracking Report and note any children who meet the criteria for "Hold Calls". To put the child's listing on hold, note the reason for the "Hold Calls" on the **ALS-3**, and submit by mail or fax within five working days of receipt of the Tracking Report.

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“Hold Calls” status will be reviewed every 6 months to determine whether it is still appropriate. This six-month review will be highlighted in the Monthly Tracking Report.

E) **Withdrawing a Child Listing**

When a child is no longer available for adoption, it is very important to promptly remove the child’s listing from the ALS in order to maintain the integrity of the ALS. Events that prompt withdrawing a child from the ALS are:

- i) Interim order for adoption entered; or
- ii) Guardianship has been given to the caregivers by the court; or
- iii) The child has been returned home by the court; or
- iv) The court has changed the goal from adoption to return home or guardianship, or cannot be provided for in a home environment or independence without a concurrent adoption plan; or
- v) The child’s case is closed; or
- vi) The child has been adjudicated delinquent and sentenced to the Illinois Department of Corrections.

Workers will review the monthly tickler and note any children who meet the criteria for “Withdrawal”. To withdraw a child’s listing, note the reason for the request in the “Withdrawal” section of the **ALS-3** and submit to the ALS by mail or fax within five working days of the receipt of the tickler report.

Note: If the withdrawal affects one or several members of a sibling group listed on the ALS and the other siblings remain active, be sure to update the listing for the remaining siblings at the same time.

c) **Listing Licensed Illinois Families Who Wish to Adopt Illinois’ Waiting Children**

The ALS registers families in a database of licensed Illinois families who are interested in adopting the State’s waiting children.

1) **Families Who May Be Listed in the ALS Database**

Families licensed by the Department in good standing (i.e. not under investigation or on hold for any reason) who have expressed an interest in adopting Illinois’ waiting children who are wards of DCFS as documented on the **CFS 448, Adoption Listing Service Family Registration Agreement** form (Please refer to Appendix B) must be given the opportunity to be listed in the ALS database.

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2) Families Who Should Not Be Listed in the ALS Database

The following are circumstances when it is not appropriate for a family to be listed. They include:

- A) A child has been identified or has been placed with the family for the purpose of adoption;
- B) The family does not wish to be listed as documented on the **CFS 448** form;
- C) The family is not licensed;
- D) The family does not want to adopt a waiting child;
- E) The family's foster care license has expired, been revoked, or is on hold or suspended for any reason;
- F) The family has moved out of state.

3) Procedures for Listing Families in the ALS Database

The following steps are required for the family to be listed:

- A) Licensing workers must offer families who have completed the **CFS 448** form, indicating their interest in adopting a waiting child, the opportunity to be listed with ALS within 10 days of the family's receipt of a license;
- B) The listing can be facilitated through the family's caseworker, licensing worker or family development specialist;
- C) Families holding a valid foster care license who wish to adopt a waiting child can contact the ALS directly to be listed at any time;
- D) The worker or family shall complete the **ALS-2, Adoptive Family Registration Form**. Forms may be obtained from AICI. The family must sign the form authorizing the listing. The **ALS-2** should be mailed to:

Adoption Information Center of Illinois
120 West Madison, Suite 800
Chicago, IL. 60602
Telephone (312) 346-1516 or (800) 572-2390

- E) Immediately upon receipt of the completed **ALS-2**, the ALS will enter the family's information in the Family Listing Database and assign a Family Listing Worker (FLW) to the family;
- F) If the family has listed themselves directly, the ALS will mail the family's agency a copy of the **ALS-2**;

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- G)** If the family's license is on hold, suspended or expired, the agency worker shall notify the ALS and the family immediately.

4) Procedures for "Hold Calls" or Withdrawing, and Updating Family Listings

There are times when it is appropriate to take a family's listing out of active circulation. The criteria and process for an annual update, placing a family on "Hold Calls" status, or withdrawing them from the listing are as follows:

A) Procedures for "Hold Calls"

The family or their worker may request "Hold Calls" status when:

- i) The family is not ready for a placement;
- ii) A placement is pending for the family;
- iii) Other reasons, as specified by the family.

The worker shall submit the "Hold Calls" request to the ALS on the **ALS-3**. The family can initiate the "Hold Calls" status directly by writing or calling the ALS.

Families on "Hold Calls" status shall be reviewed every 6 months. The ALS will call and write the family, asking them to confirm that the "Hold Calls" status is still appropriate. These families will also be listed in the Family Tracking Report that is mailed quarterly to the family's agency. The family's agency will also be requested to verify the "Hold Calls" status.

B) Procedures to Withdraw a Family from the ALS Database

The family or their worker may request to withdraw from the ALS database when the family:

- i) Is no longer interested in adoption;
- ii) Is no longer licensed;
- iii) Wishes to be withdrawn;
- iv) Has moved out of state;
- v) Is no longer interested in adopting Illinois' waiting children;
- vi) Has a license on hold or suspended; or
- vii) Other (specify).

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The worker shall complete an **ALS-3** when a family meets any of the above criteria. The family can initiate the withdrawal directly by writing or calling the ALS.

C) Procedures for the Annual Update of the Family Information

The annual update information is required in the month prior to the annual anniversary of the family's listing in the database. The date of the annual update is noted on the Family Tracking Report. The ALS will notify the family when an update of their information is due. Families will be informed that if their information is not updated, they will be removed from the database and will no longer receive the ALS Book or computer matches. Families will also be informed that they can re-list themselves at a later time. To complete the annual update, the family shall review their previous **ALS-2** and note any changes. Families should then complete a new **ALS-2** and return it to the ALS. The ALS will mail a copy of the family's updated **ALS-2** to the family's agency.

D) Family Transferring their License to a Different Agency

When a family's license is transferred to a different agency, the family's transferring agency should submit a change notice (**ALS-3**) to the ALS. Families may also phone or write the ALS with this information. Whoever notifies the ALS should indicate the name and address of the new supervising agency.

E) Quarterly Tracking Report of Family Listings

The ALS will produce a report of family listings by agency on a quarterly basis. The family report will be sent to the agency's licensing supervisor. The report will inform the agency of families licensed by them that are listed in the ALS database. Agencies should notify the ALS on the **ALS-3** if any of the listed families meet the criteria for a "Hold Calls" or "withdrawal of listing" status as indicated above. The agency will also be asked to confirm the "Hold Calls" status for any family who has been listed in this category for 6 months or more.

d) Using the Listings to Match Children and Families for Adoption

The ALS uses its computerized listings of waiting children and potential families to make an initial computer "match" on a regular basis. The following procedures govern this process:

- 1)** The ALS shall match listed children with listed families on a weekly basis;
- 2)** The ALS will verify with the child's worker that the child is still available for adoption;

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- 3)** The ALS will notify the child's worker, the family's worker and the family within three business days of any suggested matches that are found. The ALS will share a copy of the **ALS-1** information with the family's worker, and a copy of the ALS-2 with the child's worker;
- 4)** The child's and family's workers shall respond to match notifications and ALS inquiries:
 - A)** Within three business days to inquiries on their listed children and/or families;
 - B)** Exchange written background information with the child's worker or the family's worker within five business days after the phone conversation which determines whether the potential match is appropriate;
 - C)** Notify the family worker of a decision about a potential placement within fifteen business days of receiving the information.
- 5)** Any decisions to proceed to pre-placement visits or placement that require a "Hold Calls" status shall be reported to the ALS according to the procedures listed above;
- 6)** The ALS staff shall track all suggested matches made to agencies and note them on the Child Activity Report. The Child Activity Report is mailed semi-annually to workers of listed children.

e) Inquiring about Listed Children

To request information on a listed child call the ALS c/o AICI at (800) 572-2390 between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., CST, Monday through Friday and 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays. The ALS staff shall inform, in writing, workers and licensed foster or adoptive parents who inquire about listed children of at least the following:

- Name of the contact person for the child; and
- Agency name, address and phone number.

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APPENDIX B

State of Illinois
Department of Children & Family Services

Adoption Listing Service Family Registration Agreement

I have discussed, with my worker, the following benefits of registering as a waiting family with the Adoption Listing Service of Illinois:

- 1) Being on the mailing list to receive the "Adopt Me" newsletter and the Adoption Listing Service Book.
- 2) Being entered into the Adoption Listing Service family database and included in weekly computer match searches with waiting children.
- 3) Receiving, along with my worker, directly from ALS, notices of matches made with our family and waiting children.

I understand that I can register as a waiting family with ALS at any time, or my worker, at my request, may register me.

At this time (please check one):

- I wish to **register myself** as a waiting family with the Adoption Listing Service.
- I wish to have **my worker register me** as a waiting family with the Adoption Listing Service.
- I **decline** to be registered as a waiting family with the Adoption Listing Service.
-

Printed Name of Person being Interviewed

Telephone Number

Signature

Date

Signature of Worker

Date

Name of Agency

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CFS 448/S
Rev 3/2003

Estado de Illinois
Departamento de Servicios para Niños y Familias

Acuerdo de inscripción de familia en el servicio de listados de adopción

He analizado con mi trabajador social los siguientes beneficios de inscribirnos como una familia en espera en el Servicio de listados de adopción (ALS) de Illinois.

- 1) Estar en la lista de correo para recibir la publicación AdoptMe y el "Adoption Listing Service Matching Book" (Libro de correspondencia del servicio de listados de adopción).
- 2) Ser inscritos en el Servicio de listados de adopción y en la base de datos de familia e incluidos en las búsquedas de correspondencia semanales con los niños en espera.
- 3) Recibir junto con mi trabajador social, directamente del ALS, notificaciones de correspondencias realizadas entre nuestra familia y niños en espera.

Yo comprendo que puedo inscribirme en el ALS como una familia en espera en cualquier momento, o que mi trabajador social puede inscribirme si así lo solicito.

En este momento (sírvese marcar una):

- Deseo **inscribirme** como una familia en espera en el Servicio de listados de adopción.
- Deseo que **mi trabajador social me inscriba** como una familia en espera en el Servicio de listados de adopción.
- No deseo** inscribirme como una familia en espera en el Servicio de listados de adopción.
-

Nombre en letra de imprenta de la persona entrevistada

Nº telefónico

Firma

Fecha

Firma del trabajador social

Fecha

Nombre de la Agencia

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Section 309.130 Placement Considerations

1) New Caregiver

When a child's permanency worker is considering a new caregiver as a possible adoption placement, the worker or adoption worker shall prepare a narrative social assessment of the child's needs and the family's strengths and abilities to meet those needs, following the outline format provided in the **CFS 485, Individual Assessment of a Child for Purposes of Adoption**.

Using the narrative social assessment, the worker shall also document the new caregiver's ability to meet the individual needs of the child on **CFS 2017, Child/Caregiver Matching Tool**. If the child has been in substitute care previous to the adoption placement, the child's portion of the **CFS 2017** should be reviewed and updated, if necessary. If no **CFS 2017** exists for the child, one must be completed now.

2) Adoption Conversion

When a child's permanency worker is considering the child's current caregiver as a possible adoption placement, the worker shall prepare a narrative social assessment of the child's needs and the family's strengths and abilities to meet those needs, following the outline format provided in the **CFS 486, Adoption Conversion Assessment Form**.

In addition, the worker shall update the **CFS 2017** that was completed when the child was placed with the current caregiver. If a **CFS 2017** was not previously completed and the current caregiver is being considered as an adoptive placement, the worker shall complete a **CFS 2017** to document the child's individual needs and the caregivers' abilities to meet those needs.

3) Inter- Ethnic Placement Act Considerations

If race, culture, or national origin are raised as factors in selecting a particular child's adoption placement, including adoption conversions, per the procedures contained in **Procedures 301, Placement and Visitation Services, Section 301.60, Placement Selection** an individualized assessment must be made and must be based on concerns arising out of the circumstances of the individual case. The **CFS 2018** is used to document this individualized assessment.

4) Written Report for the Court

The worker or the adoption worker must also prepare a written report to the court in the child's adoption proceedings.

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Section 309.170 Post Adoption and Guardianship Services

a) Purpose of Post Adoption and Guardianship Services

The primary purpose of post adoption and guardianship services is to support the goal of permanency in adoption or guardianship. The service needs of families following adoption finalization or guardianship transfer vary greatly. Some families will never need outside intervention; some families will require minimal assistance; and a small percent of the families will require a greater array of more intensive services. A continuum of post adoption and guardianship services is needed because of the differences in families' service needs. Even though the Department is a partner in the development, funding and provision of post adoption and guardianship services, some services are not free of charge. The cost to the client, if any, can be found following the service description.

Post adoption and guardianship services can be preventative, as when provided at the time of adoption finalization, with ongoing support services and adoption assistance, or at the time of the guardianship transfer, through subsidized guardianship. Services are also provided in times of crisis, as in adoption and guardianship preservation services. Services to assist the members of the adoption or guardianship triad obtain information about each other is also available, including identifying information, provided all parties involved agree to release such information.

b) Providing Post Adoption and Guardianship Services

1) Post Adoption and Guardianship Information and Referral Services

The Department funds a Post Adoption and Guardianship Information and Referral Service (I & R) through the Adoption Information Center of Illinois (AICI) This service is staffed with bilingual capabilities. Through this service, families are able to obtain information about available post adoption and guardianship services and providers such as support and networking groups, mental health providers, therapists, intensive support services from adoption and guardianship preservation providers. AICI may also provide non-identifying information about birth families, as well as search reunification services through the Midwest Adoption Center and Internet sites on adoption, guardianship and other related services.

At the time of the adoption finalization or guardianship transfer, families are also given contact information, including name, number and mailing address of the Post Adoption and Guardianship Subsidy Unit or worker.

2) Adoption Assistance

Adoption assistance services, which are a type of post adoption financial support service, shall be provided to families on behalf of eligible children in accordance with the instructions contained in **Procedures 302, Section 302.310, Adoption Assistance Agreements.**

3) Subsidized Guardianship

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Subsidized guardianship services, which are a type of post guardianship financial services, shall be provided to families on behalf of eligible children in accordance with the instructions contained in **Procedures 302, Section 302.405, Subsidized Guardianship.**

4) Child and Family Education

The Department provides the following educational services and opportunities for adoptive and guardianship families and children:

A) Educational Advocacy

This program provides access to an Educational Advisor, an Educational Assistant and a volunteer Educational Advocate to assist adoptive and guardianship families in working with the schools. Families may contact the Regional Educational Advisor's office serving the region where the child attends school. (See Procedures 314, Educational Services, for additional information.)

B) In-Site Training

The DCFS Training Division offers a variety of training opportunities throughout the state for adoptive and guardianship families. Families can request a printed training schedule from the DCFS Division of Training and Development or through one of the eight DCFS Foster/Adoptive Parent Training Coordinating Colleges serving the area where the family resides.

C) DCFS Lending Library

DCFS maintains a Lending Library service offering books, cassettes, and videos for adoptive and guardianship families, as well as foster families. Catalogs listing titles and descriptions by topic are available through the eight DCFS Foster/Adoptive Parent Training Coordinating Colleges and on the DCFS website. All books, cassettes and videos are available, may be borrowed free of charge and are mailed to the requesting family with a return envelope enclosed.

D) Scholarships

Youth formerly under DCFS legal responsibility who are now adopted or living with guardians are eligible to apply for DCFS college scholarships. Post Adoption and Guardianship Information and Referral and the Post Adoption and Guardianship Subsidy Unit Worker shall refer interested individuals to the Division of Education and Transitional Services.

5) Post Adoption and Guardianship Supports

The Department provides funding to eligible Purchase of Service (POS) agencies and DCFS regions for the purpose of administering a post adoption and guardianship supports program. This program offers information and support to families who have adopted or assumed guardianship of a child who was under the

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guardianship of DCFS and served by a DCFS region or by a private agency through a Purchase of Service (POS) contract.

The eligible POS agencies and DCFS regions initially are asked to provide two components as part of the commitment to the supports:

- A) **Contact person for the Agency:** This person will be able to assist families in the future with needs that may arise. The contact person is familiar with services that may be available to the family through the DCFS region or POS agency, the community, or other service providers; and,
- B) **Support Groups:** The agency provides an opportunity for the families they serve, or once served, to be part of support groups within the agency. The support groups offer the family the ability to establish relationships based on mutual interests and experiences, to identify problem areas, and suggest problem resolution techniques. Professionals within the community may attend the sessions to discuss areas of particular interest to the group.

6) Local Area Networks (LANs)

A LAN is a geographically defined area of the state. Each LAN is comprised of service providers who work together to serve children and families within their own communities. Adoptive and guardianship families who have a particular need such as respite care, tutoring, etc. can contact their local LAN to apply for funding/implementation of such services when the services are not available through another resource.

The family may contact the appropriate DCFS regional LAN liaison, serving their area to answer any questions the family may have about the LAN and to assist with the application process.

7) Adoption and Guardianship Preservation Services

A) Who is Eligible

A family shall be eligible if;

- there is at least one child under the age of 18;
- the child is adopted or guardianship of the child was transferred through DCFS; and
- the child is residing in the home at the time of referral; or
- for whom the plan is to transition the child back into the home.

or;

- there is at least one child under the age of 18;

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- the child had been adopted or guardianship of the child had been transferred through DCFS;
- the child's permanency was disrupted either because of the death, or disability of the adoptive parent or guardian; and
- the child is residing in the home of an adult who expresses interest in becoming the adoptive parent or guardian at the time of the referral; or
- the plan is to transition the child into the home of that adult.

B) Inclusions/Exclusions

Inclusions: Illinois families meeting the eligibility criteria will be accepted on a no decline basis unless the contract is full. To be served, a family must have either a child who was adopted or for whom they are named as guardian, and they must either accept the service or express a willingness to begin receiving services.

The following are examples of the types of problems that are symptomatic of the adoption/guardianship placement or placement history that would be appropriate for Adoption/Guardianship Preservation Services:

- i) child or children experiencing significant emotional or behavioral issues;
- ii) child experiencing loss/grief/separation issues;
- iii) medical/organic/neurological disabilities, e.g. Fetal Alcohol Syndrome effects, Mood Disorders, Attachment Disorders, and other psychiatric diagnoses; and adjustment issues and/or developmental stages relating to adoption/guardianship.

Exclusions: A preliminary assessment is required on all official referrals before the family can be excluded from services. The adoption/guardianship preservation provider shall ensure that referrals are made to appropriate resources to meet the needs of families excluded from this program where such referrals are applicable and when services are available. Any family may be excluded based on non-cooperation (e.g. failure to keep appointments, or failure to engage in the agreed treatment plan). Families who do not meet the eligibility criteria may be excluded from service. Exclusion can occur under the following conditions:

- i) a child who is a chronic runaway, is on the run at the time of the referral for service, and whereabouts are unknown;
- ii) a child who is entrenched in gang activity and not amenable to service;

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- iii) severe cognitive impairment of a parent or child resulting in their inability to benefit from service;
- iv) the family is no longer willing to parent the child and has ruled out any services to stabilize the placement;
- v) substance abuse by a parent/child, which results in his/her inability to benefit from service; and
- vi) services requested are not related to adoption or guardianship issues

C) Service Components

Adoption and Guardianship Preservation Services are intensive services provided by local community-based providers under contract with the Department and may include the following:

- emergency response;
- risk assessment;
- initial intensive home-based family assessment and intervention;
- clinical services;
- parent and child support groups;
- case planning;
- case management; and
- cash assistance.

Other support services may be offered at the agency's discretion, and availability of services/funding.

D) Service Requests

Requests for Adoption and Guardianship Preservation Services are to be forwarded to the appropriate Adoption/Guardianship Preservation Services provider of the geographical region in which the family resides. Families contact the above directly to request services. The person receiving the initial request will complete a preliminary assessment of the family's request that includes gathering basic information and determining eligibility. The Adoption and Guardianship Preservation Services will be explained to the family and the referral made if such services are deemed appropriate and

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less intensive post adoption and guardianship services cannot meet the needs of the family.

E) Service Time Frames

A service period is considered a period of 180 days, beginning on the day that services start. A family may receive up to 360 days of service (two service periods) in any 24-month period. Provisions are made in the program plan for exception to maximum periods.

Post adoption and guardianship cases shall be closed at the completion of service or at the end of the 360 days (or up to 540 days with an approved "Request for Extension"), whichever comes first.

A family may be readmitted to the Adoption and Guardianship Preservation Program one year after the end of their last service period.

8) Non-Identifying Information, Search and Reunion Services, and Confidential Intermediary Service of Illinois

A) Requests for Non-Identifying Information

The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services offers post/adoption and guardianship services to adoptees or youth under guardianship; adoptive parents or guardians; and birth family members seeking non-identifying information from their adoption or guardianship files and/or search and reunion services. DCFS has contracted with Midwest Adoption Center to provide this service.

B) Who May Use The Service

Any adult adoptee, adoptive parent or biological parent who was provided adoption or guardianship services through any office of DCFS or POS agency may request service through this program. For purposes of this program, an adult is defined as any individual who has attained the age of 21 years. Adoptees between the ages of 18 and 21 may request service with the signature of an adoptive parent or guardian.

Adoptees or youth who are under subsidized guardianship and/or adoptive parents or guardian of a minor requesting non-identifying information will receive a written summary of the data found in their files. The amount and type of information in Department files varies from very little to extensive recording of social and medical history.

There is no fee for this service.

C) Requests for Search/Reunion Services

Adoptees and youth under guardianship and/or adoptive parents and guardians of a minor may request a search for one birth relative through this program. If that relative is found to be deceased, a search for one additional

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relative may be initiated. Birth parents may request one search for a minor child; however, contact will first be made with the adoptive parents or guardian who must give consent in writing. If the adopted person or previous youth under guardianship is an adult, contact may be made directly with him/her and the consent of the adoptive parents or guardian is not required.

D) Confidential Intermediary Service of Illinois

The Department has contracted with Midwest Adoption Center to train and certify individuals to serve as Confidential Intermediaries (CI) and to coordinate the services throughout the state. Midwest Adoption Center consults with an adult adoptee to determine the most appropriate service route to meet their needs.

Confidential Intermediary Services is among the options available to an adoptee who is attempting to locate a birth parent to obtain medical or psychological information. Adoption/Guardianship Information and Referral and Post Adoption and Guardianship Subsidy staff will refer an adult adoptee to Midwest Adoption Center. Midwest Adoption Center will provide consultation regarding options available, which may result in a recommendation to pursue CI services. The adoptee will be further informed of the procedures regarding the filing of a petition with the court requesting the appointment of an intermediary. If the court grants the request, the CI will have access to all the sealed information and to any adoption agency files to help him/her locate the birth family on behalf of the adoptee.

There is a fee of \$425 for this service. The fee includes a search for both the maternal and paternal side of the family. It includes all hours spent and the expenses incurred by the intermediary in the course of the search.

E) Adoption Registry

The post adoption worker shall refer persons requesting information or services from the Adoption Registry in accordance with Rule 309.190. The Illinois Department of Public Health maintains the registry. It is a confidential cross-reference file of birth parents, adult adoptees and siblings. Individuals provide identifying information and may authorize the release of this information to birth parents, adult adoptees, and siblings. When a request is made, a computer searches the registry for a match. The Adoption Registry shall release identifying information only when both parties have given written authorization for its release.

This service is free if the Medical Information form is completed, and an authorization to release information is signed. The Medical Information form may be obtained by contacting the Adoption Registry at (877) 323-5299 toll free within Illinois, or (217) 557-5159. However, if no Medical Information form is completed, there is a \$40 fee for this service. The fee includes a search for both the maternal and paternal side

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of the family. It includes all hours spent and also the expenses incurred by the intermediary in the course of the search.

9) Other Services

Post adoption staff shall refer members of the adoption or guardianship triad to the Adoption and Guardianship Information and Referral Service for other services available in the community, when such services are appropriate. These services include but are not limited to: therapists sensitive to the issues of adoption and guardianship, education services, mental health agencies, child welfare agencies offering post adoption and guardianship services, financial information and post adoption support groups.

Post adoption and guardianship staff shall refer adoptive and guardianship families to the Department of Human Services for such services as day care, and in-home services to enable children with disabilities to remain at home. The Social Security Administration may also be a referral source for adoptive and guardianship families.

Families can be referred to the Department of Public Health for teen pregnancy services and birth certificates.

Referrals can be made to the Department of Human Services for 21 year olds who are developmentally or physically disabled for financial and medical services.

A) Directory of Services

The Post Adoption and Guardianship Information and Referral Service shall maintain a directory of services that identifies the post adoption and guardianship services available in the State. I&R staff will meet monthly with DCFS regional post adoption and guardianship staff to update information available locally. Post adoption and guardianship workers shall be knowledgeable about the post adoption and guardianship services available in their community. Information on available Post Adoption and Guardianship Services shall be made available to persons upon request.

B) Post Adoption and Guardianship Services Booklet

Booklets detailing the Department's post adoption and guardianship services, supports, contact names, and phone numbers are available to families. Appropriate Department or POS staff will provide a copy of the booklet to a family prior the finalization of an adoption or transfer of guardianship. Periodically an updated copy of the booklet will be sent to families receiving an adoption assistance or subsidized guardianship. Staff can obtain this booklet by placing a request through the Central Stores liaison. It can also be access through the DCFS website.