

# Adoption Selection Staffings

**Paige Casteel, SWA CRSA**

**Nicole Sims, SWA WISA**

**Stephanie Clark, Adoption  
Program Manager**

**Melissa Clifton, SWS CRSA**

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Health and  
Human Services



# Agenda

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Overview of the changes to the Iowa adoption selection process

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Role of ongoing supervisor and SWCM

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Importance and expectations regarding relative notices

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Review of documentation updates and their role in the appeal process

# Poll

Have you participated in an adoption selection staffing?

# Adoption Selection Staffings

## Legal Basis

441 IAC 200.4(3)

Gives HHS the authority as guardian to select an adoptive home.

# Key Motivations for Process Change

## Workgroup in June 2024

- Focus on the adoption selection process and summary

## Guidance from the AG

- Enhance transparency in HHS decision making during the selection process

Implement enhanced and focused internal reviews of concurrent plans

Review of appellate orders that removed HHS as guardian

# Revisions to the Adoption Selection Process

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Implementation December 2024

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Statewide standardization of prospective family interview questions

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Adoption selection summary redesign

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No change to the single-family path selection process

# Guiding Principles

- ▶ Value the best interest of the child(ren)
- ▶ Family selection based on an assessment of each child's needs
- ▶ The child(ren)'s need for family connections will be valued.
  - Separation of siblings should be avoided

# Placement Priority

**The Selection Committee will consider placement priority as outlined in Iowa Code § 232.117 which includes:**

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An adult relative of the child(ren), including but not limited to adult siblings or parents of siblings

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Fictive kin, defined as an adult person who is not related to the child within four degrees of consanguinity (blood) or affinity (marriage) to the child(ren) in care but who has an emotionally significant relationship with the child(ren) or the child(ren)'s biological family.

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A child-placing agency or other suitable private agency, facility, or institution which is licensed or otherwise authorized by law to receive and to provide care for the child(ren).

# Adoption Pathways

## Single Family Path

- ▶ One family with an approved adoption or interstate compact home study will be considered
- ▶ Internal HHS selection staffing process implemented
- ▶ No interviews are required

## Multiple Family Path

- ▶ All interested families with an approved adoption or interstate compact home study offered interviews
- ▶ Utilize the same statewide standardized questions for each family

# Multifamily Adoption Selection Committee

## Required

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Adoption SWCMs  
(minimum of 2)

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Adoption supervisor

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Prior ongoing SWCM (if  
still employed with HHS)

## Optional

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SWA (may elect to be part  
of the team)

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Prior ongoing supervisor  
(must participate in entire  
process)

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GAL (may participate in  
interviews but not  
deliberations)

# Consensus Decision

Reached through negotiation and compromise



Disagreements are discussed and debated



Final decision when the committee comes to a general agreement

# Family Finding

## Family finding

- Intentional and strategic practice
- Identify, locate and engage connections
- Begin within 30 days
- Continue throughout the life of the case

## Opportunity to create general support for child

- Not just child placement

# Iowa Code §232.84(2)

**Within thirty days** after the entry of an order under this chapter transferring custody of a child to an agency for placement, the agency shall exercise due diligence in identifying and **providing notice to the child's grandparents, aunts, uncles, adult siblings, parents of the child's siblings, and adult relatives suggested by the child's parents**, subject to exceptions due to the presence of family or domestic violence.

# Documentation Redesign

- ▶ Form 470-5615 Adoption Family Interview Questions
- ▶ Form 470-0774 Adoption Selection Summary
  - Send to committee members
  - Upload to JARVIS
  - Designated scribe types Adoption Selection Summary
  - Scribe disseminates summary to all selection committee participants for review
  - Each participant must email scribe noting consensus which are retained.
- ▶ All hand-written notes must be destroyed

### Adoption Selection Summary

Single Family Path

Multiple Family Path

Child(ren) [REDACTED]	Child(ren) DOB [REDACTED]
Date of Adoption Selection Decision [REDACTED]	Prospective family/families & relationship to child(ren) [REDACTED]
HHS Selection Committee Members [REDACTED]	Family Selected [REDACTED]

Identify ICWA eligibility if applicable: Identify status of any legal intervention:

[REDACTED]

Explain status of sibling placement: If sibling are not placed together, explain why:

[REDACTED]

Status of current sibling contact:

[REDACTED]

Discuss each prospective family's plan for sibling contact:

[REDACTED]

Discuss the child(ren)'s relationship with each prospective family:

[REDACTED]

Discuss the child(ren)'s current and potential developmental needs.

[REDACTED]

Discuss the child(ren)'s current and potential medical needs.

[REDACTED]

Discuss the child(ren)'s current and potential emotional needs.

[REDACTED]

Discuss the child(ren)'s current and potential educational needs.

[REDACTED]

Discuss the child(ren)'s current and potential cultural needs.

[REDACTED]

Discuss the strengths of each prospective family in meeting the identified needs of the child(ren)

[REDACTED]

# Adoption Selection Summary

Discuss any concerns of each prospective family in meeting the identified needs of the child(ren)

█

Identify additional supports the family may require to meet each child(ren)'s individual needs:

█

Describe the family's commitment to being a forever home for the children despite current or future challenges? Describe the family's strategies to mitigate possible future struggles with emotional, mental and behavioral health:

Identify if the selection of prospective family will delay permanency: Identify how a delay in permanency may affect the individual needs of each child(ren):

█

Document the guardian ad litem participation in interviews if applicable:

█

Describe any feedback and/or pertinent information received from the guardian ad litem:

Description of the guardian ad litem's observations of the child with each prospective placement: Identify how recent were the observations took place:

█

Describe the guardian ad litem's interactions with each prospective placement: Describe how recent the interactions took place:

█

Describe any additional information provided by guardian ad litem:

█

Identify how HHS Adoption Selection Staffing Process Guiding Principles were followed:

Describe how Adoptive Selection Staffing Process valued the best interest of the child(ren):

█

Describe the Selection Committee considered placement priority which includes:

- An adult relative of the child(ren), including but not limited to adult siblings or parents of siblings
- Fictive kin, defined as an adult person who is not related to the child within four degrees of consanguinity (blood) or affinity (marriage) to the child(ren) in care but who has an emotionally significant relationship with the child(ren) or the child(ren)'s biological family.
- A child-placing agency or other suitable private agency, facility, or institution which is licensed or otherwise authorized by law to receive and to provide care for the child(ren)

█



Describe the rationale and information considered (including strengths and weaknesses for each prospective family) that the selection committee utilized in making the adoption selection decision for the child(ren).

██████████

Describe how the child(ren)'s need for family connections was valued:

██████████

Describe reasonable efforts made to maintain contact between siblings:

██████████

Describe how the selected family will be able to nurture and accept the child(ren) as a fully integrated member of the family.

██████████

Selection Team members in consensus with the final decision:

Date: ██████████

Signatures:

# Questions



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