

Level I Licensure of Relatives and Non-Relatives

Courtney M. Smith, Adoption and Permanency Manager,
Office of Child Welfare

Teanna J. Houston, Statewide Foster Home Licensing
Specialist, Office of Child Welfare

Recent History of Foster Home Licensing

July 2018

In July 2018, changes were made to Florida's foster care licensing policy with the addition of new language in Florida Statutes to include level I licensure.

April 2019

FSFN functionality was updated to support the documentation of the new levels of licensure.

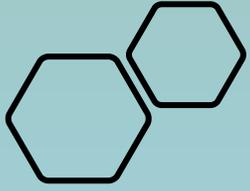
Florida Statutes were updated related to Foster Home Licensing which allowed certain criteria for level I licensure to be modified.

July 2019

Levels of Licensure

- Level I-Child Specific Foster Homes
- Level II-Non-Child Specific Foster Homes
- Level III-Safe foster homes for victims of human trafficking
- Level IV-Therapeutic Foster Homes
- Level V-Medical Foster Homes





Initial Licensing Home Requirements/Process



STEP ONE:
BACKGROUND
SCREENINGS



STEP TWO:
EDUCATIONAL
RESOURCES



STEP THREE: HOME
EVALUATION/HOME
STUDY



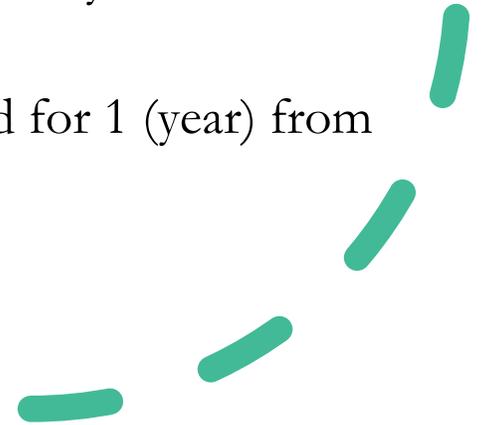
STEP FOUR: NON-
SAFETY WAIVABLE
REQUIREMENTS



STEP FIVE: LICENSE
APPROVAL

Background Screenings

- All level I caregivers and household members ages 12 and up are required to be screened;
- Level I caregivers and adult household members will submit to state and federal criminal records checks through fingerprinting;
 - Fingerprinting for level I caregivers will be assessed using the same standards applied to relative and non-relative caregivers;
- **FINGERPRINT RESULTS** for level I caregivers CAN be the results from the Emergency Placement checks completed by the Child Protective Investigator.
 - Results documented in the Unified Home Study or a FSFN chronological note is sufficient.
- Fingerprint results for level I caregivers are valid for 1 (year) from the screening date.



Additional Background Screenings

- Local criminal records checks (adult household members);
- 911 Call outs (adult household members)
- Abuse and neglect records checks (household members 12 and older);
- Records check of the Florida Sexual Offenders and Predators registry (adult household members)
- Civil records check (adult household members)
- Juvenile records checks are only required for children in the household ages 12-17.

Educational Resources

Who completes?

- Educational Resources hours must be completed for each caregiver of the child placed.

How many educational resource hours are required?

- Each caregiver is required to complete two (2) hours of educational resources.

How can caregivers access the educational resource hours?

- The child welfare professional will provide the caregiver(s) the link to the online resource.

Are there additional educational resource hours required for level I?

- Yes, if the family has a child on psychotropic medication or has a pool or lives near a body of water additional hours are required.

Home Evaluation/Home Study

- An assessment must be completed for each level I home;
- During the assessment, the child welfare professional will build upon information collected by the Child Protective Investigator prior to the emergency placement;
- The home study completed is child specific, meaning the study can only be used for the children that the level I caregiver is seeking licensure;
- Level I caregivers have the ability to waive certain non-safety waivable requirements.



Non-Safety Waivable Requirements

- Non-safety waivable items are licensing requirements waivable under the Level I-Child Specific Foster Home license;
- When a non-safety requirement is waived, you must provide a justification;
- Any licensing requirements waived for a level I foster home, must be documented on the licensing/relicensing checklist in FSFN;
- The requirements documented must be approved by the regional licensing authority;
- A complete list of waivable requirements is outlined in CFOP 170-11, Chapter 12.



License Approval

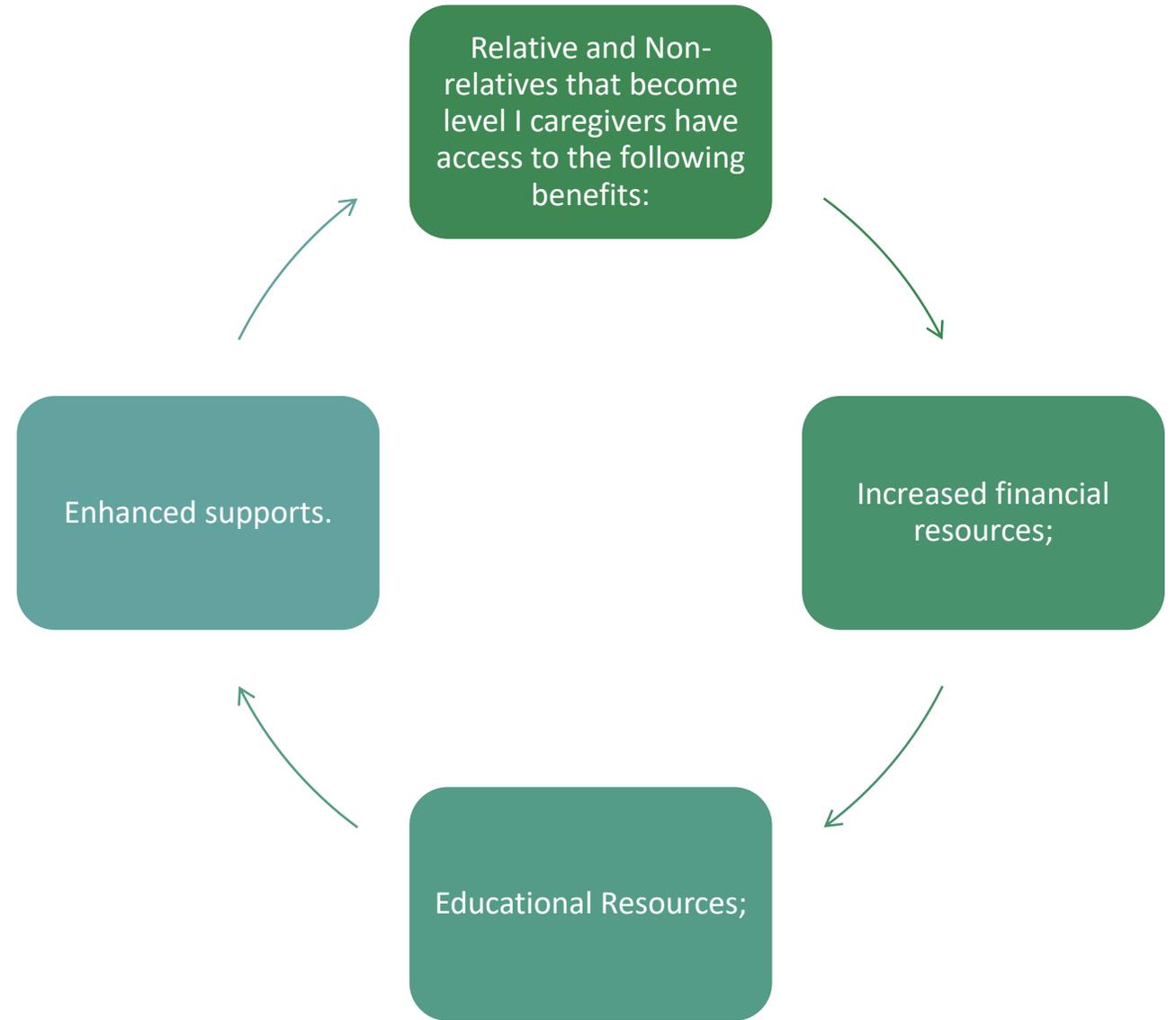
- Once the child welfare professional has completed the home evaluation/home study, obtained supporting information and documentation, the recommendation is provided to the regional licensing authority;
- The regional licensing authority will review and either issue an approval or denial of the level I license;
- The approved license is sent to the CBC and the licensed caregiver.



APPROVED



Benefits to Level I Licensure



Supports for level I licensed caregivers

- Relative and Non-relative caregivers that become licensed caregivers may have access to:
 - Foster parent support groups;
 - Service resources for children placed in the home;
 - Foster Parent mentors; and
 - Service resources for caregivers.
- Quarterly contacts must occur for level I caregivers. Contact includes but is not limited to: telephone calls, emails, or face to face visits.

Level I Initial Licensing Changes

Additional licensing updates
have been made to initial
licensing requirements;

For more information on the
proposed changes, please see
the “What’s New with Foster
Home Licensing” Child
Protection Summit presentation.



Level I Relicensure

Relicensing Background Screenings

- Resubmission of fingerprints for state and federal criminal records checks;
- Local law enforcement and 911 call outs to the home;
- Abuse and neglect records checks;
- Civil records checks;
- Sex offender and predator records checks;
- Juvenile records checks.



Level I Relicensing Requirements

Each caregiver will be required to completed a minimum of one (1) inservice educational resource hour;

Must complete at least one face to face home visit;

The interior and exterior areas of the home will be assessed to ensure continued compliance with licensing standards;



Home Health Inspections

- Updated language has been added surrounding Home Health Inspections;
- If a home inspection was deemed satisfactory at initial licensure, a new home inspection is not required for five (5) years unless a change to the home has been identified;
- If the home inspection was unsatisfactory at initial licensure (applicable to only level I homes) licensing will reassess to ensure there are no changes to the home.

Additional Relicensing Requirements

- Level I caregivers will be required to sign a new “Application for License to Provide Out-of-Home Care for Dependent Children”;
- Caregivers will also be required to review and sign the Unified Home Study;
- Review of driver’s license must be completed. This can be completed using <https://services.flhsmv.gov/DLCheck/> to verify the applicant has a valid license;
- Documentation of valid auto insurance.

What was removed for level I relicensure?

- All references to include:
 - The Foster parents review of the case manager;
 - The Case managers review of the foster parent;
 - Quality of Licensed Caregiver's Home-Community input form;
 - Documentation of exit interviews;
- 8 hours of inservice reduced to 1 hour;
- Review of the partnership plan;
- Fire drill logs.



Best Practices for Level I Licensure

- Water testing should be completed by a licensing specialist trained on the overall home health inspection process and not sent to a lab for testing;
- Licensing staff should do as much to aide caregivers in the licensing process to include completing as much of the process during the home visit;
- Holding off on any agency specific licensing activities not required for initial licensure (etc. discipline policies, animal assessments, etc.);
- Level I licensing staff and supervisor should have regular discussions about moving families forward in the process timely.

