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	<b>Part No./Name</b>	6 - Post Certification Services for Certified Homes
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## I. STATEMENT OF POLICY

Specialized family foster homes shall meet or exceed the agency's minimum requirements for family foster homes. In addition, they should possess or develop skills and abilities that enable them to provide a specialized type of care to a specific category of children.

In most cases, persons interested in becoming specialized family foster homes are recruited from the population of certified family foster homes. However, there may be instances when a person who has special skills may be recruited prior to having experience as a foster parent.

Prior to developing additional specialized foster homes, the Home Development Worker (HDW ) shall contact the parish offices to confirm the types of specialized homes needed and to screen for persons already known to the parishes who could be approved to provide specialized services. The Home Development Worker shall also determine whether funds are available for additional specialized homes.

Each region shall be assigned a certain number of specialized family foster home slots depending on the limits of the agency's budget.

## II. PROCEDURES

### A. REGIONAL MANAGEMENT OF SPECIALIZED HOMES


Home Development staff is to maintain and provide a list of specialized homes for placing workers. This listing is to allow staff to be aware of each specialized home in the region and the special needs of a child for which the home is certified.

The HD worker \*\* will track the occupancy of the specialized homes (by checking the LARE 353 screen). The TIPS screen 306 (Provider Service Authorization) can be checked to see which children are placed in the home. The HDW can also contact specialized foster families to find out any changes in placement in order to prevent an under payment or over payment of the subsidy. Refer to TIPS policy Chapter 20, TIPS Payments, [13-300 Payment Corrections](#) and [13-100 Payment Transactions Remittance Advice](#).

All new service agreements should be updated no later than the first Monday of each month. The new service agreements should be updated as follows:


- Go to TIPS 303 (Provider Service Agreement) to enter provider number;
- Enter "A" to add the subsidy amount (\$200 per qualifying child);
- Enter the begin and end date; and
- Enter the responsible worker number.

If a home has not had a child with needs to match the specialization of the home for 60 days, then the \$200 stipend is to be immediately discontinued. The TIPS major/minor code 150/150

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on the TIPS 303 screen is to be ended and on LARE 352, the FS subtype is to be removed and the FH subtype is to become the primary subtype.

1. The Department of Children and Family Services shall use the home only for the specific purpose for which it is certified.
2. Department of Children and Family Services will pay a monthly stipend. The amount of the stipend will depend upon agency funding. The stipend is currently \$200 per qualifying child and shall not exceed \$800 per month; Compensation to specialized homes is based on the number of placements and is in addition to the monthly board rate for each child. The stipend is a fee for the difficulty of care services provided by the foster parents and for their securing any supplemental assistance which may be required in their supervising or working with the children.
3. Specialized homes must have a maximum capacity for at least four children.
4. Specialized homes may receive the stipend of \$200 for 60 days, if available for placement, but they do not have a child placed in the home that has the special need for which the home was certified, e.g., adolescent, emotional/behavioral problems, etc. After 60 days without a placement, State Office approval is required to maintain specialized certification. If a child without the special need is placed during this 60 day period, the \$200 stipend is still to be discontinued at the end of the 60 day period. The home can continue to provide regular foster care services for children but it will be without the additional stipend.
5. The \$200 stipend is considered non-taxable income if there is a child in the foster home; however, if there is not a child in the foster home on any day of a calendar month, the stipend is taxable.
6. Specialized homes have the flexibility of accepting one or two children for placement.
7. A child care plan shall be discussed and submitted by the specialized foster parent in order to have a designated back-up child care provider.
8. Specialized foster homes are eligible for paid respite care in accordance with policy guidelines. (Refer to Foster Care Policy Manual Section [6-920](#)).
9. Children placed in specialized family foster homes may be eligible for any service including special board compensation for which any other foster child is eligible, with the exception of those enumerated in this policy section. The foster parent shall be reimbursed mileage and other expenses at the same rate and under the same criteria as family foster homes.


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10. Special board compensation for children are to focus on the foster parent's time and efforts to meet the child's needs. The determination of a special board follows set criteria as referenced in Foster Care Policy Manual section [6-1605 C.](#)
11. Children placed in a specialized family foster home because of their special needs who improve to the extent that they no longer need specialized family foster home services may remain in the home depending on the best interests of the child. The decision to maintain or move the child shall be made by the Foster Care or Adoption Supervisor. The foster parent is expected to participate in team decision making and, if necessary, help the child move.
12. Specialized family foster homes shall be recertified and approved annually. The approval shall be dependent on the continuing need for the type of home, the quality of care provided by the foster parent, the adherence to the agency's minimum requirements, and the limits of the agency's budget. \*\*\* [CW Forms 427](#) and \*\*\* [CW Form 427 Supplement A.](#), agreement shall be negotiated each year as part of the approval process.
13. Specialized family foster homes shall maintain certification in CPR and first aid.
14. If at any time the agency or the foster parent wishes to dissolve the Agreement Contract, they may do so by giving 30 days notice.

## **B. CRITERIA TO MAINTAIN CERTIFICATION**

All re-certification requirements in Section [9-615](#) apply; however, the following also apply specifically to Specialized Family Foster Homes

1. A two-parent home is preferable to a single parent home.
2. The couple shall be legally married to one another with one designated as the primary caretaker.
3. In some instances, a one-parent home may be considered. This shall be determined on a case by case basis depending on the financial and personal resources of the single parent and the needs of the child. Personal resources include support systems available to the person, such as extended family members, friends, church, or other community support groups. The foster parent cannot be totally dependent on the specialized foster family home stipend as the only source of income.
4. Should the specialized parent(s) be employed outside the home, they must be able to meet each child's needs which includes, but not limited to: care giving, supervision, providing transportation, involvement with school, attending agency meetings, keeping scheduled appointments/activities such as therapy, camps, medical/dental appointments, family team conferences, court hearings, etc.

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5. Because of the specialized services required by the children needing specialized family foster homes, specialized homes shall adhere to certain restrictions regarding the age range, number, and extent of the special needs of the children placed in the home. Except for homes certified to provide care for large sibling groups, specialized family foster homes have a maximum capacity of four children.
7. If a single parent home or both parent(s) are employed, an alternate caregiver shall be identified and readily available for back-up assistance and meet each child's needs as described above.
8. The specialized parents are expected to possess special, proven personal qualities including but not limited to: understanding and acceptance of difficult behavior, sensitivity to children, imagination, resilience, and flexibility.
9. The foster parents are expected to provide more extensive services directly related to the special needs of the children in their care. They are expected to have knowledge and make full use of the resources in their community that are applicable to the children's needs.

### **C. TYPES OF SPECIALIZED FAMILY FOSTER HOMES**

The following are the types of specialized family foster homes and the criteria and restrictions for each:


#### **1. Specialized Family Foster Homes for Large Sibling Groups**

The purpose of this type of home is to provide a placement resource which can accommodate the special and differing needs of one large sibling group. The foster parent shall possess or develop skills to handle the differing health, educational, developmental, and emotional needs of the individual members of the sibling group. In addition, the foster parent should possess the ability to handle the intense dynamics and rivalries that are often present in sibling groups.

The minimum capacity for this type of home is two to three children and the maximum capacity is five. The maximum capacity may be increased temporarily to six children to keep a sibling group of six children together if there are no other foster children in the home and the agency's minimum requirements can be maintained, provided the foster parents can adequately meet the needs of all of the children. Approval for placing a sibling group of six shall be given by the Home Development Supervisor.

#### **2. Specialized Family Foster Homes for Children with Emotional and/or Behavioral Problems**

Foster parents certified to provide care in this category should possess the skills and

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abilities needed to provide therapeutic care for children with a variety of emotional and/or behavioral problems. They should also be able to work effectively with community resources involved in providing treatment services for these children.

The home shall be certified for a minimum capacity of one to two children and a maximum capacity of three.

### **3. Specialized Family Foster Homes for Children with Medical Problems, Handicapping Conditions, and/or Developmental Disabilities**

Foster parents certified to provide care in this category should possess the skills and abilities needed to provide adequate care and needed special services for the child who may have difficult medical problems and diagnosis, a physical handicap, or a developmental and/or intellectual disability (children who do not perform at their age appropriate level). The ability to physically handle a child who may not be able to assist should be assessed. The home environment should be one that can accommodate medical appliances such as wheel chairs, hospital beds, access ramps, special equipment to assist in the bathroom, etc.

The home shall be certified for a minimum capacity of one to two children and a maximum capacity of four.


### **4. Specialized Family Foster Homes for Adolescents**

Foster parents certified to provide care in this category should possess the skills and abilities to accept and encourage independence while providing consistent, reasonable rules and discipline, adequate care, and emotional support for those adolescents who can benefit from a family group living experience.

The foster parents should possess special skills and understanding of sexual abuse and sexually active behavior and the effect they have on the child. The foster parents should possess skills and comfort in helping adolescents deal with questions and issues of sexuality, \* sexual orientation, and/or gender identity expression. \*\*

Special criteria and restrictions for this type of home are as follows:

- The home shall be certified for a minimum capacity of one to two adolescents and the maximum capacity of four.
- The home shall have adequate space for each adolescent to have a secure and private place for his personal belongings.

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- It is recommended that the home have adequate space so that a child who has been sexually abused or is exhibiting sexually acting out behavior can have a room of his own.
- The home shall be certified to provide care for either \* biological \*\* males or females. Adolescents of the opposite sex shall not be placed in the same specialized family foster home. It is recommended that adolescents not be placed in specialized family foster homes which have their own adolescent children of the opposite sex. Upon approval of the Home Development Supervisor, adolescent siblings of the opposite sex may be placed in the home if it is their best interests to be kept together and would not be detrimental to other adolescents placed in the home. \* The needs of youth, who identify as transgender, should be fully discussed with the Home Development Supervisor. \*\*
- The foster parent must be willing to work with the adolescent and the agency in the delivery of independent living services.
- The home shall be certified for ages 13 to 21. In special cases a child younger than 13 may be placed in the home when it is the best interests of the child. Approval to lower the age range temporarily for that child shall be given by the Home Development Supervisor upon the recommendation of the Foster Care or Adoption Supervisor.

### III. FORMS AND INSTRUCTIONS

\*\*\* [CW 427 Supplement A.](#), Specialized Foster Family Care

\*\*\* [CW 427](#), Rights and Responsibilities of Foster/Adoptive Parents

### IV. REFERENCES

[Residential Licensing Chapter 73. Child Placing Agencies](#)