

Child and Family Services PROGRAM STANDARDS MANUAL	Section: 543	Effective: Oct 1/88 Revised: Dec 1/99	Page: 1
Subject: SELECTION SERVICES			

STANDARDS

543.1 **Adoption home selection**

All applicants for a permanent ward are selected through referral by the Central Adoption Registry. All procedures set down by the Central Adoption Registry are followed (see Procedures).

543.2 **Selection factors**

Factors considered in the selection of adoptive applicants for a child include:

- preferences of birth parents to be considered if in the best interests of the child
- sex, age and race of child
- cultural and social background - exposure of the child
- physical and personal characteristics
- religion
- educational opportunities
- geographical location
- sibling and family relationships
- other significant relationships
- special needs of the child (availability of resources)
- date of application

543.3 **Foster parent applications**

Foster parents are the placement of choice for a permanent ward in their care providing the following criteria are met:

- the child is registered with the Central Adoption Registry
- the child has lived with the foster parents for at least one continuous year
- the foster parents have applied to adopt the child and have been approved and registered with the Central Adoption Registry
- all relevant program standards have been met

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If the child has not lived with the foster parents for one continuous year, the foster parents application is given the same status as all other applications.

543.4 **Applicant's role**

Adoptive applicants selected for a particular child have the opportunity to decide whether the child is suitable for them.

543.5 **Worker's role**

The worker first ascertains the adoptive applicant's present situation and any changes or events which may affect their readiness to accept a child at this time.

543.6 **Sharing information on the child**

When the adoptive applicants and the agency are ready to proceed, the adoptive applicants are given pertinent information about the child before seeing him/her. This helps adoptive applicants understand the child and his/her special needs or problems, understand and feel comfortable about the birth parents and the reasons the child is to be adopted. The information will help them assist the child to understand the adoption.

543.7 **Information shared**

The information given includes the child's past and current development, personality and temperament, medical history, and hereditary or other conditions that may affect development. It also includes non-identifying and general information about the child's birth parents and their families.

In the case of an older child, the information addresses the birth family's situation, former foster parents and other meaningful relationships. The adoptive applicant must know why and how the child came into the care of the agency.

543.8 **Outside consultation**

Adoptive applicants, in considering a child, may obtain advice from physicians, pediatricians or other specialists of their own choice, especially in the case of a child with medical or developmental problems or adverse hereditary factors.

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543.9 **Decision to present child**

The decision to proceed with the presentation of a child to adoptive applicants is made within **five working days** of receiving and reviewing all referral material from the child's guardian agency.

543.10 **Child not presented**

The reasons to not present a child to particular adoptive applicants are documented and shared with the referring agency and the Central Adoption Registry **within two working days** of the decision being made.

543.11 **Placement decision**

The decision to place or not place a child with particular adoptive applicants after the child has been presented is made **within 15 working days** of the presentation.

543.12 **Decision process**

A minimum of two staff, one of whom is a supervisor and the other the child's worker, make the decision to either delay, not to place, or place a child with particular adoptive applicants.

543.13 **Decision documented**

The reasons for not placing a child with particular adoptive applicants is documented and shared with the child's guardian agency and the Central Adoption Registry **within two working days** of the decision being made.

543.14 **Appropriate counselling**

If a proposed adoption placement does not seem appropriate, either because of the child's reluctance or the adoptive applicants' inability to accept the child, the worker offers counselling sensitive to the feelings and reactions of all concerned.

The case worker is ready to offer adoptive applicants skilled casework to support a decision not to proceed, whether this is their decision or the agency's.

543.14 **Appropriate counselling (cont.)**

Adoptive applicants who have decided against adopting a child presented to them are assured their home will be considered for another child (if realistic) and that another adoptive home will be sought for the child.

543.15 **Placement planning**

After a decision to proceed towards adoption placement of the child is made, the placement plan is determined by the age of the child and his/her particular needs and the needs of the adoptive applicants. This plan addresses the number and location of the meetings and the duration of the process.

543.16 **Preplacement visits**

The preplacement visits:

- allow the child to become acquainted with his/her new family
- offer the child continuity during transition into the adoptive family
- allow the adoptive applicants to become familiar with the child

When the child is old enough to have a part in the adoption decision, he/she is involved in setting the pace for the preplacement process.

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PROCEDURES

Registry operation

1. **Suitable applicants**

Upon receipt of the child's registration the registrar refers suitable approved adoption homes with due regard to:

- the preferences of the birth parents
- the needs of the child
- the suitability of the adoptive applicants
- the home suggested by the agency
- fairness in terms of the date of application

Referrals are contacted in the order by which the applicants are referred. Further referrals are obtained from the registry if the initial referrals do not meet the preferences of the birth parents or the needs of the child.

2. **Contact between agencies**

The child's agency telephones the applicant's agency and initiates discussions leading to possible placement of the child.

If the applicant is not suitable or does not want the particular child:

- move on to the next home on the list
- telephone the Central Adoption Registry giving the reason why the applicants were not suitable

This must be done as soon as possible in order that applicants are replaced on the Central Adoption Registry without any undue delay.

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3. **Notification to Director**

When a definite placement is arranged the child's agency notifies the Central Adoption Registry that a placement has been agreed upon, supplying the names of child and applicant. This must be done as soon as possible so that other applicants are placed back on the Central Adoption Registry.

4. **Paternity Registry**

The child's agency calls the Paternity Registry at Child and Family Support to do a paternity check not earlier than **24 hours** prior to the proposed adoption placement.

5. **Placement report**

A copy of the Adoption Placement Agreement (Form AA-6) is sent to the Central Adoption Registry **within five working days**.

6. **Director's approval**

The Central Adoption Registry prepares the Approval from information reported on the Adoption Placement Agreement form and mails three copies to the child's agency. It is the responsibility of the child's agency to forward the court copy (original) and the applicants' agency copy to the applicants' agency along with information on the child and all necessary legal forms.

7. **No suitable applicants**

The Central Adoption Registrar informs the child's agency where there are no suitable applicants registered.

The Registrar publishes the child's registration form in the Manitoba Adoption Bulletin which is circulated to all Manitoba agencies providing adoption services. If any of these agencies have a home in the process of study which appears suitable, the applicant's worker contacts the Registrar.

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8. **Removal prior to order granted**

If the applicant's agency is not also the guardian agency of the child, they consult with the child's agency to effect a suitable plan. Adoptive parents' agency prepares a Notice of Removal of Child from Adoption Home form and sends the original to the Central Adoption Registrar, one copy to the child's agency and files one copy on the adoption file.

If the child is to be placed in another adoption home the procedure for registering a child is followed.

If the applicants wish another placement, and upon reassessment of their home this appears appropriate, reregister the application in the normal manner. Their original date of application is in effect.

A Notice of Removal of Child From Adoption Home form must be completed when **any** child placed for adoption under Division 1, 2 or 3 is removed from the home prior to an adoption order being granted.