

## DCF 56 – Foster Care Rule - Steering Committee Meeting 11.06.23 11:00 am – 12:00 pm

<b>STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS</b>				
<b>MEMBER</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Nominating Organization</b>	<b>Agency Employed</b>	<b>Area of Expertise</b>
Lisa Broll		Wisconsin County Human Services Association (WCHSA)	Walworth County Department of Human Services	Ongoing Child Welfare and Foster Care
Emily Coddington	x	Wisconsin Association of Family and Child Agencies (WAFCA)	Wisconsin Association of Family and Child Agencies (WAFCA)	Child Welfare
Jill Collins	x	Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services (DMCPS)	Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services (DMCPS)	Ongoing Child Welfare and Foster Care
Deanna Collins		Forest County Potawatomi Tribe	Forest County Potawatomi Tribe	Ongoing Child Welfare and Foster Care
Brent Ruehlow		WCHSA	Jefferson County Department of Health and Human Services	Ongoing Child Welfare and Foster Care
Mechele Shipman	x	WAFCA	ANU Family Services	Private Child Placing Agency

<b>Advisory Council Members</b>				
<b>Member</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Nominating Organization</b>	<b>Agency Employed</b>	<b>Area of Expertise</b>
<b>Kristen Agentin</b>		Public Adoptions	Children's Wisconsin	Foster Care and Adoptions
<b>Patty Baker</b>	x	Wisconsin Child Welfare Professional Development System (WCWPDS)	(WCWPDS)	Child Welfare Training
<b>Cassandra Eggert</b>		WCHSA	Outagamie County Human Services Department	Ongoing Child Welfare and Foster Care
<b>Laura Goba</b>		WAFCA	Children's Wisconsin	Private Child Placing Agency

<b>Katlyn Graebner</b>		WCHSA	Green County Health and Human Services	Ongoing Child Welfare and Foster Care
<b>Kate Gravel</b>		WCHSA	Dane County Health and Human Services	Ongoing Child Welfare and Foster Care
<b>Laura Halonen-Schultz</b>		DMCPS	Wellpoint	Congregate Care Facilities and Services
<b>Allison Higgins</b>		WAFCA	Foundations for Healthy Transitional Living	Private Child Placing Agency
<b>Julie Kay</b>		Forest County Potawatomi Tribe	Forest County Potawatomi Tribe	Ongoing Child Welfare and Foster Care
<b>Andrea Leaman</b>	x	DMCPS	Children's Wisconsin	Ongoing Child Welfare and Foster Care
<b>Michelle Lim</b>		WCHSA	Waukesha County Health and Human Services	Ongoing Child Welfare and Foster Care
<b>Tracy Schumacher</b>		WCHSA	Forest County Human Services	Ongoing Child Welfare and Foster Care
<b>Brittany Shellenberger</b>	x	WCHSA	Winnebago County Health and Human Services	Ongoing Child Welfare and Foster Care
<b>Julie Zidek</b>		Public Adoptions	Lutheran Social Services	Foster Care and Adoptions
<b>GUESTS</b>				
Amanda Hutchins (filling in for Katlyn Graebner)			Ongoing – Green County	

<b>DCF Staff</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Present</b>
Wendy Henderson	x	Elaine Pridgen	x
Emily Erickson	x	Jennifer Sailer	x
Dana Johnson	x	Britny Smuk	x
Shelby McCulley	x	Kristie Buwalda	x
Shannon Braden	x	Jay Warner	x
Lauren Washington - DMCPS		Mary Morse	x
Chuck Stephens	x	Jonathan Wilcoxen	x

- I. Call to Order, Welcome, and Introductions
  - a. Reviewed new public facing website for DCF Rule Revisions:  
<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/dsprulerevisions>
- II. Emily Erickson discussed the DCF 56 Advisory Council Charge Document
  - Recommended Change:**
    - Include licensors and workforce along with foster parents to those sharing both feedback and impacted by proposed future changes to rule.

**Working Agreements:**

**Recommended Change:**

- Rewrite "Focus on areas that impacts the majority rather than the minority of applicants or exceptions."
- Comment: Use data as well to inform decisions around revision to the rule.
- Comment: Centering activity around the data we do know; at the beginning of this process.
- Request to get materials before meetings so they can review and then share out materials afterwards so Advisory members can pass along information and get feedback from their nominating organization.
- *Question:* Are other foster care organizations being consulted such as WAFAPA. DCF has a communication plan of regular partner meetings. DCF intends to have regular feedback sessions and loop with multiple child welfare partners in addition to the Advisory and Steering Committees prior to the rule being released.

**Impacts to Partners & Families**

- There is some overlap with the charge. Rule has downstream effects

**Recommended Change:**

- Include in the document that more diverse applicants for licensure will be increased/enhanced
- Create more flexibility in the rule so people who may leave from foster parenting for a period, may return without having to reapply for licensure. Person's ability to manage needs as circumstances change is important for every day family experiences in deciding whether to have foster children placed in their care.
- Increased flexibility of licensing relatives and like-kin
- Include a section that identifies 'safety' has been ensured and that healing from trauma is important. *Question:* How can we make sure it is a positive and healing experience for all involved? Continue to consider how we minimize the negative impacts of foster care and maintain dignity and worth of all who are involved.
- Can we combine or explain in better terms the "Streamlined process for child welfare professionals" and "Decrease in administrative burden for applicants and professionals".
- Revise wording for "Transparent and understandable licensing, denial, and appeal process".

- “Prudent licensing” should be considered just as prudent parenting is in licensing and care of children in foster care.
- Dual licenses flexibilities: in order for both caregivers to adopt (when not married) not to have to close their foster care license to open an adoption license process, and then re-apply to open a foster care license process.

Note: The chart below is in DRAFT form and will be revised after this meeting.

### DCF 56 Advisory Council

#### Revision Charge

Significantly reduce the length of the rule	Establish clear and understandable expectations for foster parents	Eliminate redundancies/streamline workflow
Simplify the exceptions process and leverage flexibility to help people become licensed	Allow for diversity of home environments and family makeup/reduce barriers to licensing	Uphold a child’s identity and maintain a connection to biological and like-kin family

#### Working Agreements

Attend as many of the Advisory Council meetings as possible. All meetings are considered Public Meetings, and anyone can attend	Read materials prior to an upcoming meeting and have recommendations, questions, or other input <u>prepared</u>	Relay progress and information shared in the Advisory Council meetings with your nominating organization
Obtain feedback from your nominating organization to provide to the Advisory Council during meetings	Focus on areas that impact the majority rather than the minority of applicants or exceptions	Continuously monitor for all recommendations and revisions to fit within the Statement of Scope for our work together
Contribute to the conversation through appreciative inquiry, questions, and providing insight	All members should be able to articulate the processes used, options reviewed, and recommended actions of the Advisory Council regarding proposed changes to DCF 56	Keep in mind that the revisions to DCF 56 is not intended as the only option for reform to the child welfare system but is one lever to assist in making the child welfare system better for Wisconsin children and families

#### Impacts to Partners & Families

Transparent and understandable licensing, denial, and appeal process	More applicants and more approvals for licensure	Improved permanency for children, particularly with relatives who are licensed
Streamlined process for child welfare professionals	Improve number of placements in a child’s community of origin	Decrease in administrative burden for applicants and professionals

**III. Roles and Responsibilities document shared**

- DCF Internal DCF 56 Project Team
- Steering Members
- Advisory Members

**Roles and Responsibilities**

DCF INTERNAL DCF 56 PROJECT TEAM	STEERING MEMBERS	ADVISORY MEMBERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting agenda setting and facilitation</li> <li>• Public meeting notification &amp; public meeting hosting</li> <li>• Coordinates DCF 56 Rule changes through working project documents</li> <li>• Creates changes to DCF 56 using input from advisory and steering members and submits to Advisory Council for revision and input</li> <li>• Communicates recommendations to DCF 56 Project Sponsors, DCF Administrator’s Office, and the Secretary’s Office</li> <li>• Collaborates with Advisory Council on viewpoints, inquiries, and questions</li> <li>• Meets at least 2x monthly to coordinate progress and present to Sponsors for decision points</li> <li>• Coordinates additional stakeholder feedback sessions with varied stakeholders</li> <li>• Develops final DCF 56 Rule for introduction to the legislature at the end of the project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops Chapter 56 Advisory Council charge and working agreements</li> <li>• Coordinates internal meetings with nominated stakeholders to provide input and recommendations towards DCF 56 Rule changes</li> <li>• Attend quarterly Steering Member meetings to provide, input, inquiry, and receive updates as to the Advisory Council and Project Team’s work on DCF 56</li> <li>• Optional: Attend Advisory Member project meetings on a monthly schedule</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend monthly Council meetings to provide input, inquiry, and recommend changes to DCF 56 Rule</li> <li>• Provide written or spoken recommendations in Microsoft Word format and emailed to <a href="mailto:danal.johnson@wisconsin.gov">danal.johnson@wisconsin.gov</a> prior to Advisory Council meetings for addition to the project archive</li> <li>• Obtain feedback from nominating organization stakeholders to share with the Advisory Council to make recommendations for rule changes</li> <li>• Optional: Attend Steering Member meetings on a quarterly schedule</li> </ul>

No feedback or comments. Emily E shared that documents will be updated and reviewed with all who were not able to attend today.

**IV. Dana shared 10.18.23 Council meeting minutes**

- Reviewed areas of concern and discussed options for rule revision and language
- Presentation occurred on most exceptions and waivers received by DCF

- c. PDS & eWiSACWIS changes were shared with the group
  - d. Foster parent training and eligibility requirements were discussed
  - e. Next advisory council meeting 11.15 revisions will be reviewed re: sleeping arrangements and capacity (number of youth in a foster home and environmental safety/non-safety related items).
- V. **Mural:** Dana reviewed the organization of the mural document. Meeting schedule is right in the middle. Philosophy alignment is reviewed. Mural can be accessed at any time as a collaborative space for all to add to the document; including questions. (This document is only available to the project work team due to licensing rights).
- Discussion: No feedback from the Steering/Advisory members
- VI. Adjourned 11:55 am.

## DCF 56 Advisory Council

### Ideas

<b>PATHWAY TO LICENSURE:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hasten procedures towards licensure</li> <li>Revise DCF 56 Checklist</li> <li>Separate rule for licensing relatives</li> </ul>	<b>TRAINING:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support ongoing foster parent training beyond two years</li> <li>Training should be on comprehension and not solely on hours</li> <li>Exceptions for training given experience and discretionary approval or alternative training topics</li> </ul>	<b>HOME ENVIRONMENT:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Address secondary residences and renovations</li> <li>Eliminate requirements that can change over time or are standards set by one demographic</li> <li>Eliminate exception for 2 working parents (allow for employment)</li> <li>Video surveillance (review)</li> </ul>
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### Values

New rule should set clear expectations for foster parents	Maintain high standards	Reduce barriers towards licensing
Allow for diversity of home environments and family makeup	Focus on areas that impact the majority rather than the minority of applicants or exceptions	Eliminate judgement of families based on inherent bias of child welfare professionals
Flexibility to help people become licensed vs. focusing on why someone cannot become licensed	Review all changes to discern if it will unintentionally do harm	Uphold a child's identity and maintain a connection to biological and like-kin family
Local agency control is preferred		

### Impacts to Partners & Families

Remove bias in licensing process	More applicants and more approvals for licensure	Improved permanency for children, particularly with relatives who are licensed
Streamlined process for child welfare professionals	Improve number of placements in a child's community of origin	Decrease the number of placement disruptions
Transparent licensing, denial, an appeal process		

### Proposed Recommendations (50,000 ft. level)

Reduce the length of the rule	Clearer expectations set	Eliminate redundances in rule and in process
Simplify exceptions		

IV. Project Timeline and Next Steps in Rule Development

V. Adjourn