

Options Available for Foster/ Adoptive Families

Parent(s) may choose to foster only, or to become dually licensed for both foster care and adoption. While some families ultimately desire to adopt, in both cases, the families are required to work with SCJFS on reunification plans with birth families; and to obtain a license from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. This license permits foster/adoptive parent(s) to take placement of children who are in the temporary custody or permanent care/custody of SCJFS into their homes.

Getting Started with the Initial Application and Homestudy

If you are interested in fostering and/or adoption, and you meet the requirements listed in this brochure, we encourage you to contact Children Services. The agency will review the program requirements with you and provide an application for child placement. Within 30 days of receipt of your completed application, Children Services will begin a homestudy assessment. This assessment will be completed within 180 days of receipt of your completed application. If everything is in order you will be approved to become an adoptive family, or a licensed foster home, and you will then be considered for placements.

For a copy of the Ohio Adoption Guide, you can visit the following website:
www.odjfs.state.oh.us/forms/findform.asp?formnum=01675

Additional information can be found at the following websites:
starkjfs.org/children-services-division
jfs.ohio.gov/factsheets/Adoption.pdf
adoptionphotolistingohio.org

Stark County Job & Family Services

Human Services Division

221 3rd Street S.E.
Canton, OH 44702
Cash, Food & Medical Assistance
Customer Service: 330.451.8861
Customer Service e-mail:
stark_csc@jfs.ohio.gov
New Applications: 330.451.8500
Child Care: 330.452.4661

Children Services Division

402 2nd Street S.E.
Canton, OH 44702
Child Abuse/Neglect Report Line:
330.455.KIDS (5437)
Foster/Adopt:
330.451.8789

Child Support Division

221 3rd Street S.E.
Canton, OH 44702
Customer Service: 330.451.8930
Payment information:
jfs.ohio.gov/ocs

SCJFS Executive Offices

221 3rd Street S.E.
Canton, OH 44702
330.452.4661



starkjfs.org



04/20



Getting Started: Foster Care & Adoption

Children Services Division



**Stark County
Job & Family Services**

The Need for Foster and Adoptive Parents

There is significant need in Stark County for foster and adoptive parents. Thank you for your interest.

There are children in our community who experience events that jeopardize their safety and well-being. Sometimes it is necessary for them to be removed from their homes and placed in an alternate setting. These children are in need of safe and loving homes, and families to care for them.

Stark County Job and Family Services (SCJFS) works very hard to place these children with family or friends. If there are no approved relatives or friends, then placement in a licensed foster home is necessary. Children are placed with foster/adoptive families in which they can flourish, feel secure and be nurtured with love and care.

SCJFS does not deny any person the opportunity to become a foster or adoptive parent on the basis of race, color, or national origin of the person, or of any foster child or children involved. Same-sex couples are welcome to become foster/adoptive parents. Foster/adoptive parents are not required to be married, or to own their own homes.

Children with Special Needs

No two children in need of foster and adoptive parents are the same, and each child has different needs. Some children have greater needs than others so we are also in need of foster and adoptive parents who are willing to accept children with special needs. The term special needs child may refer to:

- a sibling group of two or more children who must be placed together;
- a child over the age of two;
- a child who is a member of a minority group;
- a child with an identified or anticipated physical, mental, developmental, emotional or behavioral challenge,
- a child with a psychological attachment to the foster caregiver with whom s/he has been placed for a year or more.



Foster/Adoption Requirements

*Applicants to become foster/adoptive parents must:

- be at least 21 years of age and have sufficient income to meet the family's needs;
- have appropriate child care experience;
- have been living together for at least one year, if applying as a couple;
- complete physical exams for everyone living in the home (reports may also be required from additional physicians, psychologists, or other certified or licensed professionals);
- meet with an assessor for face-to-face interviews with all household members over the age of four;
- provide four letters of reference and complete criminal background checks for all adults in the home;
- have a phone and transportation available;
- have appropriate sleeping arrangements for foster/adopted children;
- complete and pass a home fire and safety audit;
- complete a Child Characteristic Checklist;
- successfully complete 36 hours of foster parent pre-service training;
- attend 20 hours of training annually once licensed.

**This is not a comprehensive list.*