

Updated August 10, 2020 – Updated Q1, Q2, Q5, Q6, Q12, Q14, Q15, Q18, Q22, Q23, Q25, Q26, Q38 and added Q41.

Updated May 20, 2020 – Updated Q6 and Q40

Updated May 5, 2020 – Added 1 general topic FAQ on stimulus checks (new Q33) before the CFS Training Center Topics section

Updated April 7, 2020 – Added 1 general topic FAQ and 7 CFS Training Center FAQ section

Children & Family Services Division – Foster Care Coronavirus (COVID-19) Frequently Asked Questions

- Q1. During this time, if a currently licensed foster home is due to be relicensed, we will be as flexible as possible to allow the requirements that are affected by delays and cancellations caused by COVID-19 to be remedied?** (Published March 19, 2020 and revised March 26, 2020. **Revised August 10, 2020**)

If a currently licensed foster home is due to be re-licensed and challenges arise, we will be as flexible as possible to allow the requirements that are affected by delays and cancellations caused by COVID-19 to be remedied.

If a family does not have all the training hours completed because trainings were postponed, cancelled, or family was ill/social distancing, the license can still be renewed.

A simple MOU can be put in place with a reasonable amount of time given to complete the training hours. All re-licensure paperwork and discussion can be completed telephonically. The actual physical home onsite visitation by the licensing worker can be delayed until a time when the issues of illness and/or social distancing surrounding COVID-19 have lessened. If the MOU issued needs to be extended, the Department will consider these extensions if appropriate.

- Q2. What do I do if I am in the process of getting a new foster parent license?** (Published March 19, 2020 and revised March 24, 2020. **Revised August 10, 2020**)

A new prospective foster family should contact current agency or Human Service Zone licensure staff to discuss how far into the process the study is, and if the process should continue or be put on hold until COVID-19 issues have lessened. Licensing workers need to discuss the progress with their supervisor and contact the NDDHS Regional Representative to further discuss how far into the process the study is, and if the process should continue or be put on hold until COVID-19 issues have lessened.

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Due to safety reasons/requirements, the Department cannot waive all the in-person meetings and inspections.

Physical inspections of the home cannot be completed virtually, the process may have to be put on hold until the review requirements are accomplished. However, for the home studies that are in progress it will depend on how far along the licensing worker is in the process. Given the current “social distancing” request it will limit the ability to get into the home to ensure safety of the home/bedrooms/grounds.

In some cases, the onsite structural review is already done, while one or two of the onsite home visits were completed as well. If that is the case, the remainder of the visits could be done **virtually/interactively** (FaceTime, Skype, Zoom, etc.)

At minimum, the Department requires **at least one** onsite inspection and walk through of the property to view the physical structure. If that has occurred, the remaining home study interviews can occur virtually.

If the home inspection has not been completed and a worker wants to continue to go into the home, or do the minimum physical safety visit, they should follow the health screening guidelines that have been given for home/face to face visitation. These questions and procedures should help mitigate risk for all parties.

Q3. What happens if a foster parent or household member becomes ill and cannot care for the foster child? *(Published March 19, 2020)*

If the foster parent’s illness does not involve symptoms related to COVID-19, the circumstance will be addressed via normal operating procedures; the case manager will help arrange for respite care for foster children in case of family illness.

If the foster parent’s illness involves symptoms related to COVID-19 (fever over 100.4, persistent cough, shortness of breath) and, the results of the DOH screening checklist indicate that the person should seek further testing, regardless of whether or not the parent is able to actually get tested, the case manager will work to help the family “shelter in place for a period of 14 days.

The case manager will provide additional supports to the family, connecting them to community resources they need during the isolation period, and working with regional reps and state office to identify the additional resources needed to help the family navigate the situation.

Q4. What happens if a foster parent needs to be hospitalized? Will respite be available for the foster child(ren)? *(Published March 19, 2020 and revised March 24, 2020)*

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If the parent's hospitalization is related to symptoms associated with COVID-19, the family should work with the case manager and state staff to identify options for the continued care of the child(ren).

At this time, all opportunities to "shelter in place" with other adults in the home should be considered. If the child must be moved from the primary placement all efforts shall be made to locate and identify another foster home willing and able to isolate the child from others for temporary quarantine.

If the hospitalization is related to an issue that is not typically associated with COVID-19, normal foster care operating practices related to respite will apply.

Q5. I am a foster parent and I have a need for childcare for my foster child(ren) given school closures. What are my options? *(Published March 19, 2020. Revised August 10, 2020)*

Local case management should work with the foster care provider to secure licensed childcare when needed. **In April and May 2020, NDDHS funded child care with general funds to support foster parents and relative caregivers with the unexpected cost of unexpected child care needs when schools closed.** If it is determined necessary again in fall of 2020, DHS will assist in finding ways to support the solution.

Q6. Are children in foster care still going to have face-to-face visitation with case managers? *(Published March 19, 2020, first revised March 25, 2020, revised May 20, 2020; Updated August 10, 2020.)*

Face-to-face visitation to ensure a child's safety and well-being is still best practice AND will continue whenever possible. However, it is understood that this may not be possible in all scenarios because of illness, social distancing considerations, and/or quarantine.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the federal government has granted a temporary waiver to allow the use of virtual or telecommunication options that allow **video conferencing** in efforts to complete face-to-face visits for this designated period of time. Video conferencing allows the case manager to "see" the child and talk to those who are old enough to engage in conversation, while observe infants and toddlers. It is suggested that video conference meetings occur when the child is awake, this will allow for observation of the child playing, eating, etc. Such electronic measures to engage in virtual meetings are limited to situations that are beyond the control of the caseworker, child, or foster family, such as a declaration of an emergency that prohibits or strongly discourages person-to-person contact for public health reasons; such as COVID-19. Even in the face of such challenges, agencies must find ways to continue to comply with the monthly caseworker visit requirement.

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Documentation Example: Face-to-face visitation can still be entered into the FRAME system under “face to face.” Workers must note in the comments section, *“Unable to complete face to face visitation this month due to the facility restricting visitation due to COVID-19 pandemic. A Skype call was completed with the child alone, the case manager at the facility and ended the virtual meeting with all three of us together. I was able to see and talk to the child. The child presented as happy, clean and was in good spirits during our video conference call.”* Further detail of quality, safety, permanency and well-being for the child would be documented and all other “regular” requirements must be completed during the visitation.

Q7. Do we need to do Child and Family Team Meetings (CFTMs)? (Published March 19, 2020)

While in person meetings are best practice when possible, currently alternative meeting methods are acceptable that are non-public facing remote communication. This includes telephonic, Zoom, Skype, video conferencing etc. Documentation of the meeting should continue as it has been for these meetings.

Q8. Do I still have to complete all the paperwork I normally would to determine if a child is eligible for foster care? (Published March 19, 2020)

All of the paperwork that needs to be completed for an eligibility determination can be completed remotely, either via online forms or via email/scanning.

The SFN 641 “Title IV-E Title XIX Application-Foster Care” can be obtained online and is savable. Applicants should be directed to obtain the form online, complete, save and email the completed form to the case manager or eligibility worker for processing. If the family does not have computer access, the case manager should telephone the applicant and complete the form accordingly. The case manager should sign the form and indicate the information was provided by the applicant through a phone call.

Q9. Will determination of foster care eligibility be delayed because of delays in the courts? Do we still need a valid court order to proceed? (Published March 19, 2020)

At this time, there have not been any federal waivers granted for foster care eligibility. The federal requirements continue as outlined in policy and law.

All foster care judicial determinations obtained by a judge must be received according to existing timeframes. If there is not a timely, required judicial finding, the case may not be eligible or reimbursable with federal foster care funds.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, ND Courts have the discretion to conduct hearings and extend orders in a modified fashion, such as electronic hearings or paper reviews.

Q10. Given recommendations around social distancing, will young people still have access to Chafee Program services? (Published March 19, 2020)

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The Department is working with our contracted vendor (PATH) to ensure young people actively involved in the Chafee Program continue to receive services with modifications as determined by their specific situation.

Staff will both follow recommended home visit precautions and will implement screening practices for face-to-face office visits.

Q11. When college campuses make decisions to close, what happens to foster youth who are students there? (Updated March 19, 2020. Revised August 10, 2020)

The custodial case manager is responsible to ensure that any foster youth (18+ Continued Care clients) currently residing on a college campus does not encounter homelessness. The custodial case manager may work in conjunction with supervised independent living settings or family foster homes to secure alternative arrangements. In addition, Nexus-PATH continues to hold the contract for Chafee Transition Program.

Q12. Will QRTPs stay open through the COVID-19 pandemic? (Published March 19, 2020. Revised August 10, 2020.)

All of North Dakota QRTP's must comply with NDAC 75-03-40-21 and 75-03-40-40 regarding the outbreak of serious communicable disease. For the full NDAC 75-03-40 click here <https://www.legis.nd.gov/information/acdata/pdf/75-03-40.pdf>

As licensed facilities, all ND QRTP's have policy and procedures in place including, but not limited to pre-screen before entry into the facility and restrictions of visitors for precautionary measures for the safety of residents and staff. Ascend is continuing to complete initial assessments and continued stay reviews on behalf of the Department. **Assessments completed by the qualified individual will be completed via zoom, rather than face-to-face, until further notice. Telephone interviews are not allowed.**

Q13. Can a child who is placed at a QRTP receive visitors? (Published March 19, 2020)

If a custodian has a child placed in a QRTP and there are visitor restrictions at the facility, the custodian may complete an alternative method to a face to face such as, zoom meeting, skype, or phone call. (Please see the foster care "face to face visitation" section of this document for further guidance.)

Documentation Example: Case Activity Log Example "Unable to complete face to face this month due to the facility restricting visitation due to COVID-19. Skype call completed with resident."

Q14. Will DHS continue re-licensing work for QRTPs and Supervised Independent Living Programs (SILP) as scheduled for this spring? (Updated March 19, 2020 and Revised August 10, 2020)

A. At this time, the department's Licensing Administrator will be in contact with

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the facilities individually to determine the most appropriate course of action, including but not limited to extending the license for a period of time until a full on-site review can be completed in a safe and healthy manner for all parties.

Q15. Do we expect disruptions in establishment of guardianships due to COVID-19?

(Updated March 19, 2020, Revised August 10, 2020.)

A. No delays are occurring from NDDHS Children and Family Services eligibility or application review. The Human Service Zone, DJS and Tribes will need to confirm with the local State's Attorney that guardianship hearings and reviews are still being held in their jurisdiction.

Q16. How should we handle permissions for children in foster care to visit their parents/siblings? *(Updated March 20, 2020)*

A. It is best practice and in the child's best interest to maintain family connections and for custodians to allow for visitation. However, given our current circumstance with C-19, custodians must make it a priority to review visitation frequency and duration on a case by case basis. Face-to-face visitation may be limited for health reasons and to mitigate risk for all parties (child, parents, foster care provider, prospective adoptive family, etc). Review the Home and Community Visit Precaution Guidelines form can be used to determine health/risk if visitation should be considered.

Q17. Are foster care court hearings being postponed? *(Updated March 20, 2020)*

A. ND Courts have the discretion to conduct hearings and extend orders in a modified fashion, such as electronic hearings or paper reviews. A paper review or desk hearing will not negatively impact foster care funding, however the federal requirements for judicial determinations continue to be required as outlined in policy and law.

Q18. Foster parents are faced with child care providers and facilities closing due to C-19, but the setting will be charging them to keep their spots. Will we be able to pay for this through foster care funds? *(Updated March 20, 2020. Revised August 10, 2020.)*

NDDHS continues to make a final decision regarding excess child care costs. At this time, case managers are to document need and review steps below on a case by case basis.

Foster care funds cannot reimburse from CCWIPS for two child care providers at the same time, nor can an unlicensed child care provider (relative, neighbor, friend) be reimbursed for the cost of child care with foster care funds. Before a formal request is sent to Children and Family Services to consider for alternative payment, the custodial case manager must consider and provide details regarding:

- Copy of the temporary closure notice in writing from the child care setting
- Review the daily care needed to support child care needs
- Present a plan for child care: While the child care setting is temporarily closed; are the foster parent/s working or telecommuting for work at their home, review family options to care for the foster children, determine if there

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is a group of foster parents who are not working, who may assist if primary foster parents are still working?

- What is the cost of the child care needed in addition to the primary child care cost?
- Is the second child care provider licensed?

Also of note: On March 26, the Governor announced the State’s Childcare Emergency Operating Grant (CEOG) initiative. **The CEOG was extended until Sept. 25, 2020. Watch the child care site for further updates and access to CEOG funds for licensed child care providers.**

Q19. Are foster care court hearings being postponed? *(Published March 20, 2020)*

ND Courts have the discretion to conduct hearings and extend orders in a modified fashion, such as electronic hearings or paper reviews. A paper review or desk hearing will not negatively impact foster care funding, however the federal requirements for judicial determinations continue to be required as outlined in policy and law.

Q20. Our office continues to brainstorm ideas about housing of kids during this crisis. We have already had - and project to have - more foster parents who state that they will not take new placements at this time or some who have asked for kids to be taken from their home as children or foster parents may be positive for the virus. Are there any incentives that we can offer foster parents to keep kids during this time? *(Published March 20, 2020)*

Children and Family Services supports the local custodial agencies in making placement decisions that best meet the needs of the children in public custody.

There are not additional “incentive” payments to keep children in the current foster home, unless the child is exhibiting medical symptoms that would warrant additional cares. At that time, a case manager could consider an EMP for children who become ill during this time. However, a reminder that it is not appropriate to use an EMP as an incentive, rather to offset additional maintenance costs associated with caring for a foster child.

If a foster family is presenting COVID-19 symptoms and is not able to care for a foster child, custodians shall work with other foster homes to care for the child/ren or if consider appropriate the child’s parents or relatives for an extended home visit with ongoing Skype/FaceTime supports to the family during this time.

Q21. We are told that PATH is not taking placements at this time? *(Published March 24, 2020)*

Children and Family Services is in continued communications with PATH and can confirm that PATH is fully operating, taking placements, completing visits, and offering clinical services through their clinic in Fargo.

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If you have placement or therapeutic needs related to PATH's work with therapeutic foster care, please contact the local PATH office or the Fargo PATH Clinic at 701-551-6301.

Q22. We are told that QRTP's are not accepting new placements during this time?
(Published March 24, 2020. Revised August 10, 2020.)

All QRTP's are currently accepting placements. The QRTP's have criteria for admissions including temperature checks and questions that comply with CDC guidelines.

Q23. Are non-safety related licensing regulations being waived by the Department at this time when re-licensing the foster home? (Published March 24, 2020; revised March 26, 2020. Revised August 10, 2020)

Yes, with a formal MOU on file to remedy the situation as soon as possible. Non-safety related waivers could include pet vaccinations, fire safety, etc. It is the Department's goal to not delay or deny the renewal of a foster parent license during this time. Contact the regional office to discuss outstanding documents and possible MOU's to reduce delays of the licensing process for foster parents.

It is recommended that non-safety related needs for licensing be **granted a MOU** with a reasonable amount of time. If the MOU needs to be extended, the Department will consider these extensions if appropriate.

Q24. We have foster homes with college students moving home unexpectedly and they are now age 18; we do not have a formal background check on file. What should we do? (Published March 24, 2020)

Children and Family Services is aware of colleges and universities closing their dorms, which may result in a former household member temporarily moving home. If the young person is not expected to reside in the home as a household member indefinitely, they are not required to have the formal fingerprint-based background check on file. They would be viewed as "visiting" such as Christmas break/summer break. ND Courts and child abuse and neglect index check may be completed as a safety measure.

Q25. During this time, has foster care policy 624-05-15-49 and reference to substitute care 622-05-05 been relaxed to allow a foster child to be temporarily babysat by a person under the age of 21? (Published March 24, 2020. Revised August 10, 2020)

No waiver required as the policy titled "Babysitting" 624-05-15-49 states:
"Babysitting is the short-term care of foster children when the foster parents are temporarily away, however still available to respond if needed. A babysitter can be a responsible individual, between the ages of 14 and 21, secured to provide care and supervision for no more than eight consecutive hours in one day".

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The Department will continue to monitor alternative measures, as needed, to offset the costs for foster parents/relative caregivers maintaining work-life balance during school closures requiring increased daycare costs, etc.

Q26. During this time, if a currently licensed foster home is due to be relicensed, we will be as flexible as possible to allow the requirements that are affected by delays and cancellations caused by COVID-19 to be remedied? (Published March 24, 2020, revised March 26, 2020. Revised August 10, 2020.)

Yes. If a family does not have all the training hours completed because trainings were postponed, cancelled, or family was ill/social distancing, the license can still be renewed.

A MOU can be put in place with a reasonable amount of time given to complete the training hours. All re-licensure paperwork and discussion can be completed telephonically. The actual physical home onsite visitation by the licensing worker can be delayed until a time when the issues of illness and/or social distancing surrounding COVID-19 have lessened.

It is recommended that non- safety related needs for licensing be dated to complete/obtain **within a reasonable amount of time**. If the MOU needs to be extended, the Department will consider these extensions if appropriate.

Q27. When, or for what reasons, would we suspend parenting time for children in Foster Care? (Published March 26, 2020)

Answered in Q 29 below.

Q28. The FAQ about parenting time/visitations mentions frequency and duration should be considered. Is there more detail that can be provided on what that actually means for workers making the decision to allow for visitation? Are there examples or a better definition? (Published March 26, 2020)

It is best practice, and in the child's best interest, to maintain family connections and for custodians to allow for visitation.

However, given our current circumstance with COVID-19, custodians must make it a priority to review each child's visitation schedule, access to visitation space, health of all parties, and the ability of the parent to engage in alternate visitation measures during this time. If not proceeding with face-to-face visitation at this time, offering interactive telephonic, Zoom, Skype, video conferencing etc. would remain an expectation.

Frequency.

- Is the parent connecting with their child regularly (weekly or every other week) either by phone or in person and is the current frequency sufficient to accomplish the case goals?
- Does the number of times the child and parent interact need to increase to support family connections and reunification efforts or given COVID-19

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would a temporary break from in person visitation be warranted because mom has expressed financial stress, the desire to drink and a need for increased social support leaving her anxious to have one-on-one visitation with her son.

Each case is different and case managers must assess the parent's ability to engage in visitation, the foster parent's level of support for visitation as well as greatest priority being on the need of the child to see and hear from his/her parent.

Quality.

Case managers will want to ensure the visitation provides for privacy so parent-child bonding can occur and discussions about family interests, daily schedules and school/activities can occur.

Case managers will want to review the length of visits and determine if the length is appropriate to ensure parent-child bonding. If the case manager has approved in home visits, has an assessment been completed to ensure the children remain safe while at the home of their parent, what is the safety plan and does the child understand how to engage in the safety plan?

The case manager will want to review the quality and satisfaction by discussing the successes and challenges of the visit with the parent and offer assistance to remedy concern or offer support, as well as gain feedback from the child about quality of the visit with his/her parent.

Q29. What measurements should agencies consider when determining to limit/suspend parenting time and visitation? (Published March 26, 2020)

It is best practice, and in the child's best interest, to maintain family connections and for custodians to allow for visitation.

However, given our current circumstance with COVID-19, custodians might measure case-by-case decisions by considering each child's visitation schedule, access to visitation space, health of all parties, and the ability of the parent to engage in alternate visitation measures during this time.

Case managers may consider temporarily suspending parent-child or child-sibling visitation if any party (child, parent, sibling, foster parent, etc) is exhibiting symptoms that would put others at risk.

In addition, while social distancing recommendations remain active, case managers must work with the child's parent and foster care provider to increase virtual/telephonic visitation options (ex: two times per week in lieu of weekly face-to-face visitation or weekend home visits).

Lastly, it may be an option to not suspend parent-child visitation and instead fully support it; see Q30 for further guidance.

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Q30. Parent -child visitation has been an ongoing conversation during COVID-19, is it appropriate to consider a trial home visit or re-engagement with the parents for an extended visit during this time? *(Published March 26, 2020)*

Legal custodians have the authority and knowledge to make placement decisions that best meet the needs of the child in care.

Instead of suspending parent-child visitation, the discussion and review may present an opportunity to fully support it. If imminent risk or safety concerns are no longer a primary concern and ongoing home visits and weekend stays have been occurring, the temporary plan to maintain the child in the home of the parent during this time could occur if the custodian feels necessary.

The case manager would need to determine appropriateness, assess safety, offer additional contact through FaceTime/Skype/Zoom virtual visits, and needed supports to the parent to ensure safety and well-being of the child.

Q31. What measurement should agencies consider when determining when to resume normal practice and face-to-face interactions with children and families? Are we looking at number of positive cases, number of people hospitalized etc? *(Published March 26, 2020)*

Children and Family Services recommends agency follow the guidance provided by the CDC, ND Department of Health and Governor's office.

If the social distancing recommendations are lifted and reintegration of face-to-face interactions increases, information will be dispersed statewide for agency use.

Q32. How does the Department suggest foster parents best engage in self quarantine or isolation if a member of the household tests positive to COVID-19? *(Published April 7, 2020)*

It is recommended that the foster parents follow the guidance provided by the CDC, ND Department of Health and medical professionals. Recognizing isolation in a family home may be difficult, physical separation and personal isolation for the individual who tested positive is required in efforts to minimize risk to others. This may include rearranging sleeping quarters for members of the household. It is requested that foster parents connect with the foster care case manager/s to develop a plan if sleeping spaces are effected or could impact the current license. Foster parents and case managers can consult with licensing workers to determine if a licensing MOU/variances may be required.

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Q33. Our agency had custody of a child in 2018 or 2019, and that child has since been reunified with the parents. The foster parents were eligible to claim the child on their 2018 or 2019 taxes and did so. This means those foster parents may receive the federal tax stimulus check issued due to COVID-19. We have both biological parents and foster parents asking who should “get” the payment for that child. What should we do? *(Published May 4, 2020)*

The CARES Act will utilize tax returns from the year 2018, or 2019 if already filed, in determining the stimulus provided to each qualifying family. Foster parents may have claimed a foster child living in their home as a dependent according to IRS Tax guidelines for a “qualifying child”. This means foster parents may receive a stimulus payment for a qualifying foster child who resided in their home in 2018 or 2019, but who has since been reunified or placed with another foster family. While there is no clear guidance yet from the IRS on what to do in this situation, the department encourages foster parents to consult with their tax professional if they receive stimulus money for a child no longer in their home. The intent of this stimulus package is to provide financial support to alleviate the issues currently present in our country due to COVID-19. The former foster parents who have received the stimulus check may want to consider giving this check to the family who is currently caring for the child and is experiencing financial issues surrounding COVID-19. This can be accomplished by contacting the case manager or custodial agency that they worked with while the foster child was placed in their home.

Q34. How do we accommodate the current PRIDE pre-service trainings that are scheduled face-to-face from now until May 31, 2020? *(Published April 7, 2020)*

UND CFSTC and Children and Family Services division met to discuss alternate measures to ensure training can continue for prospective foster parents during this time. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the decision has been made to discontinue face-to-face trainings until further notice and instead allow alternative opportunities to complete pre-service training.

For cohorts with six or less sessions remaining; the remaining sessions will be allowed to be completed online with no additional meetings with the PRIDE Team. **For cohorts which have not started,** PRIDE Team Leaders will have the option to:

- Reschedule for a face-to-face round of PRIDE pre-service for a later date
OR
- Schedule another round of PRIDE that will be delivered as follows through May 31st:
 - Set up a virtual meeting (60 minutes) to introduce the plan and educate prospective foster parents on how to engage in online training.
 - After the virtual meeting, the PRIDE Team will request individual accounts for each prospective resource parent to begin the online PRIDE training.

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- Give a select parameter of time to for prospective resource parents to complete the online training (Ex: up to 3 weeks)
- Finish the cohort with a final virtual meeting (90 minutes – 2 hours) to wrap up and have closure with the PRIDE Team.

Q35. I have a family who has completed all home study requirements to become foster parents; however, they have not completed PRIDE pre-service training. Can we proceed with licensure and issue a training MOU to allow the family to get licensed at this time? *(Published April 7, 2020)*

Yes. Completion of PRIDE pre-service training prior to placements is best practice, however delays in training completion should not prohibit a family from being licensed. The Department has historically allowed for a family to be licensed before the PRIDE pre-service training is completed if discussed and pre-approved by the regional office. The Department is allowed to waive the advanced completion if certain circumstances warrant flexibility. For example, the family is an identified relative to a foster child, the child's needs are not excessive, the family has received other training through their education (special ed teacher, counselor, psychologists etc.) that allows for comfortability in accepting a placement, etc. Policy 622-05-40-45 speaks to this allowance and requires a MOU be signed with the family outlining expectations for when the family will complete PRIDE pre-service training.

Q36. Our Zone has new staff going through UND Children and Family Services Training Center's Child Welfare Certification Training. Will the training continue virtually during COVID-19? *(Published April 7, 2020)*

Yes. The Child Welfare Certification's two weeks of training to review legal and permanency topics have both been rescheduled and will be held online. The CFSTC will be contacting registered participants and their supervisors to inform of their virtual classroom, dates, and schedule.

Q37. Will all face-to-face trainings be suspended until further notice? *(Published April 7, 2020)*

Yes. All previously scheduled trainings offered by Children and Family Services Training Center or NDDHS Children and Family Services division will be reviewed. The trainings will either be postponed or transitioned to a virtual option.

Q38. Will the Children and Family Services Conference previously scheduled for July 2020 continue as planned? *(Published April 7, 2020. Revised August 10, 2020)*

The statewide conference scheduled for July 2020 was cancelled. All face-to-face trainings have been suspended through 2020 and will continue to be monitored as we approach January 2021.

Q39. Our agency is concerned that foster parents are not going to get their required annual training hours completed prior to their licensure renewal, will there be any flexibility or trainings offered virtually? *(Published April 7, 2020)*

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Yes. The Department is offering flexibility to allow a foster care licensing renewal to include a MOU detailing the need for more time to complete the training requirements. In addition, the University of North Dakota Children and Family Services Training Center does offer connections to foster parents for virtual education. CFSTC offers regular online training for foster parents, which will continue during this time. CFSTC can also connect foster parents with additional training opportunities, such as <https://www.fosterparentcollege.com> and reimburse for costs associated with enrollment after training is completed. Contact CFSTC at either und.cfstc@und.edu or 701-777-3442 for questions or assistance in seeking online trainings.

Q40. Will there be additional online or virtual foster parent trainings offered to our foster parents on how to cope and manage a household during this COVID-19 period of time? *(Published April 7, 2020 and revised May 20, 2020)*

Yes. CFSTC offered a series of online support trainings for foster parents, caregivers and case managers (if desired). The online trainings can be found on the CFSTC website at <https://und.edu/cfstc/calendar.html>. The trainings are recorded and can be located for viewing under “Resource Parents - Archived Webinars.”

Q41. Back to school schedules are under review and with COVID cases increasing in North Dakota, how do we approach the topic of foster parents making a decision or advocating for their foster children to attend school online or in person? *(Published August 10, 2020)*

Custodial case managers are to work collectively within the agency to develop a plan and make an informed case-by-case decision to best support the local school district schedule, foster parents desires and child’s educational needs.

CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

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