

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)



Date Issued:

February 6, 2020

Proposals Due:

**Open/Ongoing through
December 31, 2020**

**Interested parties must
submit qualifications to:**

**Request for Adoption
Assessor Qualifications
c/o Nathan Keirns
PO Box 5030
74 South 2nd Street
Newark, Ohio 43058-5030**

OR

Electronically:

Nathan.Keirns@jfs.ohio.gov
Include subject line:
Adoption Assessor RFQ

Adoption Assessor Home Study Assistance

PURPOSE/BACKGROUND

Licking County Job and Family Services (LCJFS) Children Services is responsible for providing services to protect abused and neglected children. Children Services provides investigations of reports of suspected abuse or neglect, ongoing case management, therapeutic services, foster care, kinship care (i.e., relative placement), and adoption services.

While family preservation and reunification are the primary goals of Children Services, circumstances and conditions may exist that prevent a child from remaining safely in their home. When the court determines that a child cannot return home due to ongoing safety concerns, the child may be placed in the permanent custody of the county.

Children in the permanent custody of the agency become available for adoption. Adoption provides permanency for the child in the form of a forever family.

Extensive home studies are conducted to ensure that the adoptive placement is a good fit for both the adoptive parent(s) and the child(ren).

To assist with this process, LCJFS is seeking to establish a prequalification list of potential agencies and/or individuals who wish to complete adoptive home studies for specific children in the permanent custody of Licking County.

The inclusion on the prequalified list does not guarantee the individual or agency will be selected to provide services.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Ohio Revised Code (ORC) 3107.014 establishes the qualifications required to conduct the functions of adoption assessor in the State of Ohio. To be eligible for the prequalified list, an agency or individual must also carry adequate liability insurance.

ORC 3107.014 currently outlines the following qualifications:

(A) Except as provided in division (B) of this section, only an individual who meets all of the following requirements may perform the duties of an assessor under sections 3107.031, 3107.032, 3107.082, 3107.09, 3107.101, 3107.12, 5103.0324, and 5103.152 of the Revised Code:

(1) The individual must be in the employ of, appointed by, or under contract with a court, public children services agency, private child placing agency, or private noncustodial agency;

(2) The individual must be one of the following:

(a) A licensed professional clinical counselor, licensed professional counselor, independent social worker, social worker, independent marriage and family therapist, or marriage and family therapist licensed under Chapter 4757. of the Revised Code;

(b) A psychologist licensed under Chapter 4732. of the Revised Code;

(c) A student working to earn a four-year, post-secondary degree, or higher, in a social or behavior science, or both, who conducts assessor's duties under the supervision of a licensed professional clinical counselor, licensed professional counselor, independent social worker, social worker, independent marriage and family therapist, or marriage and family therapist licensed under Chapter 4757. of the Revised Code or a psychologist licensed under Chapter 4732. of the Revised Code. Beginning July 1, 2009, a student is eligible under this division only if the supervising licensed professional clinical counselor, licensed professional counselor, independent social worker, social worker, independent marriage and family therapist, marriage and family therapist, or psychologist has completed training in accordance with rules adopted under section 3107.015 of the Revised Code.

(d) A civil service employee engaging in social work without a license under Chapter 4757. of the Revised Code, as permitted by division (A)(5) of section 4757.41 of the Revised Code;

(e) A former employee of a public children services agency who, while so employed, conducted the duties of an assessor;

(f) An employee of a court or public children services agency who is employed to conduct the duties of an assessor.

(3) The individual must complete training in accordance with rules adopted under section 3107.015 of the Revised Code.

(B) An individual in the employ of, appointed by, or under contract with a court prior to September 18, 1996, to conduct adoption investigations of prospective adoptive parents may perform the duties of an assessor under sections 3107.031, 3107.032, 3107.082, 3107.09, 3107.101, 3107.12, 5103.0324, and 5103.152 of the Revised Code if the individual complies with division (A)(3) of this section regardless of whether the individual meets the requirement of division (A)(2) of this section.

(C) A court, public children services agency, private child placing agency, or private noncustodial agency may employ, appoint, or contract with an assessor in the county in which a petition for adoption is filed and in any other county or location outside this state where information needed to complete or

supplement the assessor's duties may be obtained. More than one assessor may be utilized for an adoption.

(D) Not later than January 1, 2008, the department of job and family services shall develop and maintain an assessor registry. The registry shall list all individuals who are employed, appointed by, or under contract with a court, public children services agency, private child placing agency, or private noncustodial agency and meet the requirements of an assessor as described in this section. A public children services agency, private child placing agency, private noncustodial agency, court, or any other person may contact the department to determine if an individual is listed in the assessor registry. An individual listed in the assessor registry shall immediately inform the department when that individual is no longer employed, appointed by, or under contract with a court, public children services agency, private child placing agency, or private noncustodial agency to perform the duties of an assessor as described in this section. The director of job and family services shall adopt rules in accordance with Chapter 119. of the Revised Code necessary for the implementation, contents, and maintenance of the registry, and any sanctions related to the provision of information, or the failure to provide information, that is needed for the proper operation of the assessor registry.

Agencies and individuals are required to demonstrate compliance with any future changes or updates to ORC 3107.014 to remain on the prequalification list.

The staff of agencies and/or individuals selected to perform adoption assessor home study assistance must submit to and successfully pass, as determined by LCJFS, background checks. This may include fingerprint criminal background checks through the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation and Identification (BCI), the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI), local police and court records, child abuse registry, and other databases and registries as determined by LCJFS.

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS FOR ADOPTION ASSESSORS

All assessors providing services on behalf of Licking County Job and Family Services must maintain any applicable training, certification, credential, or designation required to complete adoption assessment home studies.

Agencies and individuals are required to demonstrate compliance with any future changes or updates to training requirements to remain on the prequalification list.

The following are the current training requirements established in Ohio Administrative Code.

Tier I and II Requirements

- The individual must complete the following training requirements [time frames are prescribed by OAC 5101:2-48-06(E); (F)(1)(2)(3)]:
 - Complete Tier I Assessor training (six days of training) within one year of taking first Assessor training session. An Assessor who fails to complete the Tier I training within one year of the start date of the Tier I Assessor training is not authorized to perform any assessor duties until the Tier I Assessor training has been completed. A person who has not completed all Tier I assessor training is not eligible to begin Tier II assessor training.

- Complete Tier II Assessor training (six days of training) within three years of completion of Tier I. An Assessor who fails to complete the Tier II training within three years of the completion date of the Tier I Assessor training is not authorized to perform any assessor duties until the Tier II Assessor training has been completed. An extension of no more than one year may be granted by the director of the agency or court due to justifiable organizational circumstances that impede the ability of the assessor to attend offered training. The extension shall be documented on a signed JFS 01680 "Verification of Adoption Assessor Qualifications."
- If an assessor fails to complete Tier II after the one year extension, the assessor shall immediately cease completing assessor duties and repeat the Tier II training in its entirety within one year of the start date of Tier II. The assessor shall not commence assessor duties until Tier II is completed. If the assessor cannot complete Tier II in its entirety in one year, the assessor must repeat the entire training process, beginning with Tier I.

NOTE: Someone working as an assessor can begin conducting assessor duties once they begin Tier 1 training.

Six-Hour Post Tier II Requirements

- Assessors must take six hours of Post Tier II training on adoption or foster care related issues within two years of the completion date of the Tier II training.
- Assessors must take an additional six hours of ongoing adoption or foster care training within each subsequent two year period from the completion date of the previous six hours of training. This is a rolling date.
- An assessor may choose to re-take any of the Assessor Tier I or Tier II courses and have that training count towards their ongoing six-hour requirement.
- Assessors who fail to complete the training within any two year period must immediately cease performing the duties of an assessor until the six hours of foster or adoptive training have been completed.
- Any assessor who is no longer employed as an assessor may choose to continue completing the six hours of foster or adoptive training every two years so that once they regain employment, appointment, or contract as an assessor they may resume assessor duties immediately upon hire.

Refresher Training

- Assessors who had a break in employment as an assessor and are no longer current with their six-hour ongoing training requirements are required to attend the 12-hour Refresher course upon returning to employment as an assessor.
- A prerequisite for the course is completion of Tier I and Tier II Assessor training in compliance with rule 5101:2-48-06.
- Agencies can require the Refresher course for assessors or assessors may choose to take the Refresher course even if it is not a requirement for them. In these instances, the Refresher course can count towards the ongoing six-hour requirement.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF AN ADOPTION ASSESSOR

Adoption assessors under this agreement may be responsible for, but not limited to, performing the following duties related to adoptive home studies:

- Work with persons seeking to adopt a child.
- Work with the child in permanent custody of an agency to prepare the child for adoption.
- Complete the following forms, as applicable:
 - 1673 Assessment of Child Placement
 - 1385 Assessment for Child Placement Update
 - 1692 Application for Adoption of a foster child
 - 1530 Large Family Assessment
 - 1699 ODJFS Prefinalization Adoption Assessment form
 - 1673-A Child Characteristics Checklist

PROPOSAL CONTENTS

Agencies and individuals wishing to be prequalified and considered for home study services must submit the following:

- Letter of interest including general description of qualifications and experience providing adoption assessor services including specific information/qualifications regarding home studies
- Verification of any applicable training and/or credential
- Certificate of Liability Insurance
- Rate list (LCJFS requires provider to indicate a cost per completed home study)

RFQ LIMITATIONS

Prequalified agencies will remain on the prequalification list as long as Licking County Job and Family Services receives up to date copies of each agency or individual's active verification of necessary training and/or credential, Certificate of Liability Insurance, and current rate sheet.

Should agencies or individuals no longer have the necessary training and/or credential or lose their liability insurance, they will automatically lose their prequalification status and be removed from the list for consideration. Agencies and individuals have the opportunity to reissue a letter of interest with appropriate verifications once they regain compliance.

Inclusion on the Prequalified List does not guarantee contracts will be entered into or agencies will be selected to provide services.

This Request for Qualifications (RFQ) does not commit Licking County Job and Family Services to award a contract or to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of a proposal. Licking County Job and Family Services reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received, to negotiate services and costs with proposers, and to cancel in part or in entirety this RFQ.

All Proposals submitted will remain the property of Licking County.

This RFQ will be open and ongoing through December 31, 2020.

The prequalification list may be amended or terminated if there is a change in Federal, State or Agency regulations that apply to the procurement/solicitation of adoption assessors for home study assistance, a reduction of Federal, State or Local funds; unsatisfactory performance by the Agency as determined solely by Licking County Job and Family Services; or upon thirty (30) days written notice by either party.

SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Deadline: This RFQ is open and ongoing through December 31, 2020

Adoption Assessor Request for Qualifications

Licking County Job and Family Services

c/o Nathan Keirns

PO Box 5030

74 South 2nd Street

Newark, Ohio 43058-5030

Email Responses to:

Nathan.Keirns@jfs.ohio.gov

Include subject line: Adoption Assessor RFQ

CONTACT INFORMATION

Questions regarding this RFQ may be directed to:

Nathan Keirns

Licking County Job and Family Services

740.670.8726 or Nathan.Keirns@jfs.ohio.gov