

Mercer County Children and Youth Services
The Process to Becoming a Certified Resource Care Family

Step 1: Initial Intake

When interest in resource care is expressed by someone, either by phone or in person, an initial intake form is completed. This form contains identifying information of the prospective parent(s), including name, age, contact information, and reasoning for interest in resource care.

Step 2: Application Packet

After the initial intake is completed, an application packet for resource care is mailed to the person. Typically included in the packet is:

- Application
- Check list of requirements for certification: the tasks a family must complete and documents they must provide
- A home inspection checklist
- Autobiographical questionnaires
- Medical appraisal forms
- A set of 3 clearances applications

The clearances required are the FBI Fingerprint Clearances, State Police Clearances and the Child Abuse Clearances.

Step 3: Home Study

Once the potential resource family receives the packet and completes it, they should contact the resource care worker listed on the letter included in the packet to state they have completed it. At this point, the worker will schedule a date and time for the worker to come meet with the family and complete a home study. The home study includes:

- The resource care worker picking up the application, questionnaire and completed clearance forms
- A home inspection to ensure the home meets all of the requirements listed on the home inspection check list that was included in the application packet
- A personal interview with each potential resource parent to gather past and present information relevant to getting to know the family better
- A review of the check list of requirements sent in the application packet
- Collection of documents if the family has gathered them

This is also a time for the worker to further explain resource care in detail and answer any questions the potential resource family may have.

Step 4: Registration for FBI Fingerprint Clearances and Collection of Required Documents

Once the resource care worker has received the completed clearance applications, the worker will register the potential resource parents for FBI Fingerprint Clearances. The information on the locations and where this can be done and types of identification accepted is included in the application packet. Once the parents are registered, the worker will provide them with a copy of the registration which the parents will need to take with them in order to get fingerprinted.

After this is completed, the potential resource parents will await the mailed results from the FBI and Child Abuse Clearances. Once received, they should contact the resource care worker. The worker will then make the resource parents a copy and place the originals in the file.

During the waiting time for the clearances, the potential resource parents should be collecting the documents and completing the tasks required as stated on the check list of requirements included in the application packet.

Step 5: Training

As stated on the check list of requirements, a minimum of 12 hours of in-person training are required. Trainings are available through the Agency and through outside providers such as the Children's Aid Society in Mercer County. The home study completed in Step 3 will be counted as training hours. Additional hours the family will receive from the Agency are:

➤ 3 Hours for the Resource Parent Manual: In-home

This occurs when the resource care worker schedules a date and time to come to the potential resource family's home to go over the Resource Parent Manual with the parents. This can be done in 1.5 hour increments. The manual includes detailed information on resource care as well as laws and regulations relating to resource care and Agency policies.

➤ 2 Hours for the CPR/1st Aid Certification

The Agency nurse offers CPR and 1st Aid trainings at the Mercer County CYS office intermittently throughout the year. The resource care worker will contact you to schedule a date and time to come in and complete the training in order to be certified in CPR and 1st Aid.

The resource care worker will contact the resource family with other training options and register them in order for the family to complete the required 12 hours of training.

Step 6: Finalization

Once the Agency has received all of the required documents from the family, including the clearances, and the resource parents have completed all of the required tasks, the resource care worker will meet with the resource care supervisor and a certificate of approval will be issued and mailed to the new Resource Care Family.