

West Virginia



Recruitment and Retention Plan 2015



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**WV Department of Health and Human Resources
Bureau for Children and Families Recruitment and Retention Plan 2015**

In the last two years, West Virginia has completed the following tasks related to foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment and retention:

1. The State has implemented standards for foster family homes and childcare institutions, which are in accord with recommended national standards.
 - Child Placing Agency regulations are in the process of being updated by a group of stakeholders, including private agencies, and DHHR staff and submitted for approval.
 - ICPC staff has developed a Communication Workgroup to address issues of communication between the DHHR field staff and the ICPC staff to improved timeliness in submitting necessary paperwork and reports.
 - Adoption Support and Preservation will be heavily supported through our IVE Waiver “Safe at Home” which will provide wrap around services to youth ages 12-17 at risk of out of home placement. DHHR does have Post-Adoptive services through our Socially Necessary Services; however these are not sufficient for those cases in which the youth is at risk of being placed out of home. Through the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act, September 2014 the Federal Government has stated a larger percentage of Incentive Funds awarded to each state is to be used for Post-Adoptive/Post-Legal Guardianship Services. West Virginia is currently considering utilizing these funds to hire four regional specialists to operate a warm-line for adoptive parents as well as provide case management services to all adoptive parents.
2. The standards are applied to all licensed or approved foster family homes or childcare institutions receiving title IVE or IVB funds.
 - All families are certified as foster/adoptive parents. A workgroup was developed to address the ability of the DHHR to waive certain non-safety standards for kin/relative providers.
3. The state complies with Federal requirements for criminal background clearances as related to licensing or approving foster care and adoptive placements and has in place a case planning process that includes provision for addressing the safety of foster care and adoptive placements for children.
 - DHHR does have a protocol in place that complies with standards.

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4. The State has in place a process for ensuring the diligent recruitment of potential foster and adoptive families that reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of the children in the State for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed.

- We have requested data for this – we need to know the racial/ethnic breakdown of the children in care; racial/ethnic breakdown of the foster/adoptive providers; the percentages of the population as a whole.
- This should be looked at in conjunction with disproportionality
- The National Resource Center – Diligent Recruitment (NRC-DR) will be providing Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) to WV and will assist us in understanding the data and how best to recruit/retain foster/adoptive parents that reflects the racial/ethnic diversity of the children in care.

5. The State has in place a process for the effective use of cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate timely adoptive or permanent placements for waiting children.

- DHHR will receive T/TA from the NRC-DR to address our shortfalls in this area. We do not have a centralized database of all available permanency homes. Even with T/TA, we must have the ability to update our Adoption Resource Network (ARN) so we can not only have a listing of ALL available children, but also families registered that want to adopt. Our Management Information System is currently unable to update the ARN due to insufficient servers.
- If the database/Resource Network was re-designed and all of our permanency families entered, Homefinders could search for children that matched the families on their caseload and Adoption staff could search the families that match their children on their caseload.
- Regions have the ability to contract out Homestudies to various providers through our Socially Necessary Services. Data was requested from APS Healthcare to indicate the utilization of these contracted providers. If they are being underutilized, we must determine why and how to increase their use.)
- The DHHR submitted an improvement package to increase the number of Homefinders, which was denied.
- The DHHR will explore expanding existing contracts with agencies that currently provide additional Homefinders to the regions.

West Virginia is currently receiving Training and Technical Assistance from the National Center for Diligent Recruitment. Our goal

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- Undertake a comprehensive system assessment of issues effecting WV recruitment and retention efforts of foster/adoptive families
- Assess the training and preparation of foster/adoptive families and determine if it meets the high needs of our youth in care particularly the older youth and sibling groups and children with very high needs.
- Assess the customer service provided to new and existing foster/adoptive families

It is hoped that this training and technical assistance can help West Virginia with its Recruitment and Retention of Foster Families. Included in the assessment were focus groups with DHHR staff including Homefinding, Child Welfare Consultants, Regional Program Managers, State Office Staff such as Director of Training, Policy Staff and Program Managers; Specialized Foster Care Agencies that provide foster care and adoption services for DHHR; Mission WV; Foster and Adoptive families; DPQI; FACTS; and Research and Analysis unit.

By developing a recruitment and retention plan West Virginia will ensure the state has a sufficient pool of qualified foster/adoptive families that are able to meet the needs of the children coming into care as well as to sufficiently support the IV-E Waiver “Safe at Home WV” and its goal of reducing the use of congregate care both in and out of state.