

## Family Profile Synopsis Guidelines

**Introduction:** The Family Profile Synopsis is designed to provide the county permanency worker with additional information that summarizes an applicant's ability to parent a child with special needs and is intended as a follow-up to the Waiting Families at a Glance. However, when an affiliate worker already has an established working relationship with a county permanency worker, the synopsis may be the first information provided to the county. Some of the information in the Family Profile Synopsis duplicates information found in the Waiting Families at a Glance.

Once a county permanency worker requests the Family Profile Synopsis, reviews it and decides to further consider placement of a child with the applicant(s), the county worker then requests the Family Approval Document, which is the completed profile with all required legal documents.

### Instructions:

**Family Photograph:** Include a clear photograph of the applicants and their family.

#### I. Agency Information:

List the complete address information for the affiliate agency, including phone and email addresses as well as the contact person responsible for this family.

#### II. Family Information:

- 1. Applicant's Name:** List first, middle and last name of the potential resource parent. Space is provided for two applicants.
- 2. Occupation/Stay at Home Parent:** List the applicant's profession or whether the applicant is a stay-at-home parent. If the applicant works from home, list the occupation and indicate that it is a home office or work from home situation. Briefly describe the applicant's work schedule: Does the applicant work a day, evening or overnight shift, work weekends or have a flexible work schedule?
- 3. Date of Birth:** List the month, day and year the applicant was born, as well as place of birth.
- 4. Race/Ethnic Group:** Indicate the race and ethnic group of the applicant. If the applicant(s) is bi-racial, check the races that make up the applicant's ethnicity.
- 5. Street Address:** List all address information, including the street, city, county, state and zip code where the applicant lives.
- 6. Telephone Number:** List the primary area code and phone number used to contact the applicant(s).
- 7. Current Marital Status:** Indicate the current marital status of the applicant as married, single or alternative lifestyle. Also indicate any previous marriages or significant relationships.
- 8. Home Environment:** Is the home's location urban, suburban or rural?
- 9. Comments:** Provide any specific information that will assist in matching a child with the applicant and their family, including if any family members smoke, if the family has pets or any other special family and home conditions.

**III. Children Living in Family:**

Give the names, date of birth, gender and race of each child living in the household, as well as applicant's children who are not living at home. Include foster children living with the applicant, and indicate their relationship to the applicant.

**IV. Children Living Outside Home:**

Give the names, date of birth, gender and race of each child living outside the household and indicate their relationship to the applicant.

**V. Other Adults Living in Household:**

Give the name, date of birth, gender and race of all adults living in the household and their relationship to the applicant. If the adult is not a relative to the applicant, indicate "non-relative."

**VI. Type of Child or Children Desired:**

- 1. Indicate if the applicant is willing to accept a child who is a legal risk placement (yes or no).**
- 2. Race:** Specify the race or races of a child or children the applicant would prefer.
- 3. Gender:** Indicate if the applicant would prefer a male or female child or children. If gender is not an issue, indicate "either."
- 4. Number of Children/Age Range:** Indicate if the applicant is interested in one child or is willing to consider a sibling group. If the applicant would consider a sibling group, specify how many siblings they would be willing to accept. Lastly, designate the age range of the children the applicant would consider adopting.

**VII. Family Preparation Information:** Include the name and phone number of the agency that provided the preparation. Indicate whether SWAN training was completed (check yes or no) and the date completed. In addition, indicate if applicant received first aid/CPR as well as any other additional preparation required by the affiliate agency.

**VIII. Worker Assessment:**

1. Describe the strengths and outstanding characteristics of the applicant and their family, specifically those that make them a suitable family for a child with special needs.
2. What special skills do the applicant(s) or other family members have (e.g. medical training)?
3. What formal and informal resources are available to the applicant, and how willing are they to use these resources?
4. How accepting is the family of children with special needs, including the applicant's tolerance for behaviors that may occur?
5. What is the applicant's ability to problem solve and cope with stressful situations?
6. Mention any existing concerns about the applicant and their family.

**IX. Applicant Assessment [to be completed by applicant(s)]:**

**Note to Worker:** If the applicant(s) is not comfortable completing this on their own, their permanency worker can provide some assistance.

1. Summarize how your life experiences have prepared you to provide permanency to a child with special needs.

2. How have you coped with and resolved issues of grief and loss?
3. How would you describe your tolerance of individuals with physical or mental disabilities or illnesses?
4. How would you describe your tolerance of individuals with cultural and ethnic differences?
5. How do you resolve problems and issues?
6. Write any special or anecdotal stories that you feel would support your desire for a child.

#### **X. Situations, Behaviors or Disabilities the Applicants are willing to consider:**

The applicant must consider situations or behaviors that are acceptable, will be considered or are not acceptable for each of the following areas: Health, Education, Characteristics and Behaviors, Family Connectedness and History, and Openness (to birth family.)

The categories are to be used as a guide when addressing these situations and behaviors with the applicants. The list **is not intended to be all inclusive**; the intent is to assist the applicant in thinking about and understanding the types of difficulties that are present with special needs children.

This part of the synopsis focuses on the impact these situations or behaviors would have on the applicant's family and *not* on the situation or behavior itself. Assist the applicant in thinking about how the care of a child with behavioral, learning or health issues will impact family functioning.

In the Family Connectedness and History section, the permanency worker should explore each of the entries with the applicant(s), explaining what each one may mean to their family. For example, if a child has strong ties to their birth family, foster family or siblings, what will that mean in terms of parenting that child? Can those emotional bonds be accepted and nurtured in their family and how would they do that? Another example is a child who was conceived as a result of rape or prostitution. Is the family willing to learn how to be sensitive yet truthful with the child about the circumstances of his or her birth?

In the Openness section, the permanency worker should discuss with the applicant the level of openness they are willing to allow with the birth family. Applicants should be cautioned that these are important issues for birth families and children, and applicants should answer truthfully and with the expectation that they will follow through with what they say they are willing to do.