I. Procedure for New Residential and LCPA Applicants

1. All new Residential and LCPA applicants and all existing Residential and LCPA providers proposing new programs must develop a needs assessment (see below for more information). [1]

2. The Residential/LCPA applicant or provider must submit the needs assessment to the Manager of the DCS Residential Licensing and Contract Compliance Unit prior to submission of the Application.

3. The Manager of the DCS Residential Licensing and Contract Compliance Unit will submit the needs assessment to the Regional Manager (RM) in the Region where the proposed facility or program is located as notice of the proposed new program. The RM may share the Needs Assessment with the Regional Service Council (RSC) and may request that the Applicant present at an RSC meeting. The RM may provide feedback to the Manager of the DCS Residential Licensing and Contract Compliance Unit.

4. The Manager of the DCS Residential Licensing and Contract Compliance makes the final decision regarding licensure.

5. The agency submits the necessary documents for a contract.

6. DCS Rate Setting sets a rate for the program under the contract.

II. Needs Assessment

465 IAC 2-9-18 "Needs assessment" defined
Authority: IC 12-13-5-3
Affected: IC 12-17.4
Sec. 18. As used in this rule, "needs assessment" means a written study which documents that the specific services offered by a child caring institution will be used by referral sources within the **geographic area to be served.**

A needs assessment is a process for determining and addressing *needs,* or "gaps" between current conditions and desired conditions. It involves identifying material problems/deficits/weaknesses and advantages/opportunities/strengths, and evaluating possible solutions that take those qualities into consideration.

An applicant for a DCS residential or LCPA license (or an existing agency requesting a new program) must complete a Needs Assessment. This Needs Assessment involves assessing the needs of children requiring placement services in order to develop a program that addresses unmet needs. It is a research-based, written study which

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[1] **A new needs assessment *is* not required if a new company is merely taking over an existing program and there are no programmatic changes and there is no lapse in operations of the program (i.e. the program is not closed and reopened). A new license may be required upon a transfer of ownership, but the needs assessment will not be required.**

documents that the specific services offered by an agency are needed within the geographic area to be served. When preparing a needs assessment, applicants must have knowledge and awareness of the type of programming which is eligible for licensure.

Four Steps to Conducting a Needs Assessment

1. Perform a "gap" analysis

Identify the current situation and the necessary or desired situation. The "gap" between the current and the necessary will identify the needs, purposes, and objectives.

2. Identify priorities

Examine the identified needs within the context of placing agency goals, realities, and constraints. Determine if the identified needs are real, if they are worth addressing, and specify their importance and urgency in view of placing agency needs and requirements.

3. Identify causes of performance problems and/ or opportunities

Describe why existing programs do not meet the needs of children and/ or placing agencies. This may be related to a specialized service which is not offered by other agencies, capacity issues preventing existing agencies from serving the total population of children in need, ineffective service delivery and a plan for improvement, or any other relevant issues. Identification of performance opportunities may include a plan for duplicating an existing, successful program or service and improving or expanding it to meet the needs of more children, different ages or types of children, or another geographic area.

4. Identify a solution

This is where the new program is introduced as a solution or part of a plan for a solution. Include current goals and future plans or opportunity for growth, improvement, and expansion.

Methods

There are several basic Needs Assessment techniques. Use a combination of some of these, as appropriate:

- Direct or participant observation
- Questionnaires
- Consultation with persons in key positions, and/or with specific knowledge

- Review of relevant literature
- Interviews with key stakeholders
- Focus groups
- Tests/ evaluation
- Records & report studies
- Work samples
- Secondary data analysis