

Section: Family and Children's

Subject: Alternate Care – Health and Safety Standards Policy

Title: Health and Safety Standards Policy

- I. PURPOSE:** La Crosse County Human Services Department must ensure the health and well-being of children placed in foster care. Wisconsin Administrative Code HFS 56, Foster Home Care for Children states that, "...the physical environment of the foster home shall be maintained so that it is safe for all occupants, and the health of all occupants is safeguarded..." (HFS 56.07(1)(a)). To that end La Crosse County Human Services has developed "standards" to ensure the safety and well being of foster children who are placed in La Crosse County foster homes.
- II. APPLICABILITY:** This policy applies to all La Crosse County child foster homes and respite homes.
- III. DEFINITIONS:**
- IV. POLICY/PROCEDURE:**
- 1.) Carpeted, linoleum, tile and wood floors and rugs must be clean and free of soiled, torn areas and pet odors.
 - 2.) Floors, tables counter and stove tops must be clean and free of food or soiled dishes or pots and pans.
 - 3.) Shared living areas; (i.e. bathrooms, living room, kitchen, dining room, family room) and bedrooms occupied by foster children must be "smoke free environments." Foster children shall not be subject to second hand smoke. If foster parents choose to smoke they should do so in areas not accessible to foster children.
 - 4.) Stairways, entryways, and shared living areas should be free of clutter, to ensure safety.
 - 5.) Upon request social workers or other agency staff shall be given access to all shared living areas of the foster home and all bedrooms occupied or intended for use by foster children.
 - 6.) Foster homes utilizing basement sleeping arrangements may be required to get verification from their local building inspector, indicating that the sleeping arrangement meets local building code.
 - 7.) Foster Homes with private wells are required to have the well water tested at the time of initial licensing and at re-licensure. The water needs to be tested for Lead, Bacteria, and Nitrates. Water bottles and instructions are available at the La Crosse County Health Department.
 - 8.) Smoke detectors must be placed in each bedroom and on all levels of the home and be in compliance with building code and with instructions of the manufacturer.
 - 9.) A fire extinguisher must be maintained on each floor, with one being in or near the kitchen (2A10BC). Fire extinguishers must be serviced every 4 years.
 - 10.) Non-compliance with any portion of this policy may be grounds for denying future placements, and may result in removal of children if deemed necessary.
- V. METHOD OF REVIEW:** This policy shall be reviewed in January of every year.

EFFECTIVE: 01/01/2006

REVISED: NOVEMBER 22,2005

APPROVED: KEITH KELLER 12/22/2005