

Adoption brings love full circle.



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Licensed in Massachusetts and Maine

Home Study Physical Requirements of Home (MA) & Home Certification (ME)

Homes must meet the following safety requirements as part of the home study process. Any exceptions require the written approval of the agency and will include an acceptable plan for implementation of proper remediation, if applicable, prior to placement of the child with the family. Indicate compliance status by checking the appropriate box. If out of compliance, state plan and time frame for correction.

Prospective Adoptive Parents(s): _____

Relationship to prospective adoptive child: _____

Person doing inspection: _____ Position: _____

Preliminary Information

Photos: Social workers, please use a phone with camera/email capacity or a digital camera to take photos of all areas inside and outside the family's home. In an email, note any areas which need attention. This helps the office supervise this aspect of the home study. Later, thank you for emailing the photos to: team@fullcircleadoptions.org. Thanks.

Smoke and CO Detectors: Families are encouraged to consult with their local fire departments about local and state requirements with regard to smoke, carbon monoxide and any other fire/safety related items.

Smoke detectors: Please test all smoke detectors to make sure they're functioning. Please list, in the home study, the location of all smoke detectors.

CO detectors: Please test all CO detectors to make sure they're functioning. Please document location of all CO detectors in the home study. According to one fire department professional with whom the agency consulted, short of activating or spraying CO near a detector and seeing if the detector responds, the key ways of testing the CO detectors are:

- 1) Press the button to see if an electrical current is going through the detector and
- 2) Please check the expiration date of the CO detector.

Reportedly, the chemicals inside the detector, which are responsible for the process of detections of carbon monoxide, can deteriorate over time. If the CO detector is over 10 years, it must be replaced. In the case of adoption, since the process can take time, it is preferred that detectors over 7 years old be replaced.

Our understanding is that carbon monoxide detector/alarms are required as follows: On every level of the residence, including habitable portions of basements and attics and must be located within 10 feet of each bedroom door.

Combination detectors (photoelectric smoke and carbon monoxide detector) may be used if the detector is within 20 feet of a kitchen or bathroom (containing a bathtub or shower). Combination detectors (ionization smoke and carbon monoxide detector) may be used if the detector is outside of 20 feet of a kitchen or bathroom (containing a bathtub or shower). These may be either: battery powered, plug-in with battery backup, hardwired with battery backup, or system type. Please follow the manufacturer’s instructions for placement. **If local fire department has updated requirements or recommendations, these should be followed.**

Spacing of bars/slats etc. for Child Safety: The spacing between baby level slats/spindles/rungs/rails/bars on cribs/changing tables/banisters/fencing/deck rails or anything that a child could connect with should be no greater than 2 3/8 inches or 6 centimeters.

Construction/Home Renovation: Prospective adopters and any other household members should be able to perform usual functions of daily living (e.g. sleeping, eating, bathing, and relaxing etc.) in sufficient living areas of the home. The parts of the house undergoing renovation/construction should not pose a safety hazard nor interrupt daily functions. The home study should begin *after* renovations are complete if, otherwise, you could not really live in an ordinary and safe way with a baby or child in the home as it is now. If a family is living with others or elsewhere while renovations are underway, the alternate living space would be evaluated with a plan to update the home study with an addendum regarding your home after you move back following completion of renovations. There will be an additional cost (\$350 for an addendum, plus \$20 p/hour travel for the second inspection and write up) borne by the prospective adoptive parents to cover social worker’s time for subsequent home safety visit and addendum.

#	SAFETY REQUIREMENTS	Compliant	Non-Compliant	Plan of correction with target date
1	Operable smoke detectors consistent with local regulations and state law. (“An approved smoke detector shall be installed on the ceiling of each stairway leading to the floor above, near the base of, but not within each stairway and an approved smoke detector shall be installed outside each separate sleeping area.” MGLC 148, Section 26E.) <i>Working smoke detectors on each floor (or more if required by city or state FMO code). Working fire extinguisher in kitchen area.</i>			
2	Fireplaces, fireplace inserts, wood and coal burning stoves and free-standing space heaters shall have sufficient shielding so as to prevent access to or heat/burning of children. Fireplaces, even if not currently in use, shall have secure bolted protection. Elimination of risk associated with tools for			

	fireplace, stove and similar heating elements. <i>No combustible materials near fire source. No oil leaks (tanks, pipes) inside or outside.</i>			
3	<p><i>There should be no fire safety issues present:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>If there are concerns or questions, applicant will request inspection by fire department</i> • <i>Applicants submit statement to agency attesting that home is fire safe including details of why that determination is warranted.</i> • <i>If home is approved with plan of correction- cert.</i> • <i>If P.O.C.- Applicant must submit evidence of correction</i> 			
4	<i>No blocked exits</i>			
5	There are no exposed electrical wires. <i>No frayed electrical wires. Only covered outlets. Only surge protected extension cords (box attached to cord must state Surge Suppressant or Surge Protected)</i>			
6	Extension cords are in good repair and used safely.			
7	Kitchen and Laundry areas: Velcro strips to secure doors/enclosures on appliances that children could try to climb into (e.g. oven, dishwasher, front loading clothes washer, dryer, refrigerator); stove shield, removal of wine bottles/wine refrigerator to location out of child's reach; latches on drawers to sharps or breakables (can buy adjustable latches that can be disabled until a child is in the home)			
8	Drinking water from a non-community source (e.g. well water) has a current potable inspection. If the home uses well water, it shall be tested and determined safe, and a report of the test furnished to the adoption agency.			
9	Adequate lighting and ventilation, hot and cold water supply, plumbing, electricity and an operable heating system in place. <i>Heating devices/pipes screened or</i>			

	<i>protected from touch.</i>			
10	<p>Applicants provide documentation of reasonable testing and/or other compliance with reasonable home safety, including but not limited to compliance with state laws and regulations, concerning lead paint, radon safety, unsafe molds, carbon monoxide safety and any other applicable safety matters.</p> <p><i>House built before 1978-evidence of no lead hazard. No pipe wrap exposed-no asbestos hazard.</i></p>			
11	<p>Medication and containers of poisonous, caustic, toxic, flammable or other dangerous material kept in the residence shall be distinctly marked or labeled as hazardous and stored in inaccessible areas.</p> <p><i>Medicines, poisons, hazardous materials are out of reach of young children, medicines kept in original containers.</i></p> <p><i>All medications (including addictive medications (oxy, Ativan etc.) in secure location-out of reach of children, including teens (who may be babysitters).</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Medications are administered as prescribed by physician</i> • <i>Medications are administered by pre-adoptive parents or agency approved caretakers only.</i> 			
12	<p>Windows to outside of premises or doors to closets/rooms with dangerous contents (e.g. poisonous chemicals) have latches, safety handles or other technology that eliminate risk of exiting and/or injury.</p> <p>Removal of fragile, dangerous or poisonous objects from areas accessible to children to areas inaccessible to children.</p>			
13	Safety caps are placed in electric outlets accessible to the child(ren).			
14	Child protective closures, shields, covers and latches for protection against access to appliances, drawers, areas with dangerous contents and			

	<p>equipment involving plumbing (e.g. hot faucets, heating element covers, tubs, showers, toilets, washers/dryers). <i>Water temperature below 120 degrees (to prevent burns)</i></p>			
15	<p>Any weapons or firearms are inoperable, unloaded and are kept in high quality firearms-industry-specific locked firearms/weapons storage cabinets. <i>Ammunition projectiles are locked separately in a storage cabinet of equal safety and levels of protection.</i> Cabinets are in a locked area inaccessible to others beside the applicants, including being inaccessible to children/teens. Keys or combination codes are kept in a separate place completely inaccessible to children or teens. <i>Any weapons transported with child are inoperable or inaccessible.</i> Applicants shall provide written statement indicating commitment to maintaining this level of security throughout the child's growing up years. Evidence of gun safety and/or hunter weapon safety training. Evidence of licenses associated with owning all weapons.</p>			
	<p><i>Harmful materials kept locked or in an inaccessible area, (such as poisonous, toxic or flammable materials)</i> <i>Household material, tools, equipment, which may be dangerous to children and teens must be kept out of reach</i></p>			
16	<p>Adult/dangerous equipment such as tanning beds, hot tubs/Jacuzzi's, pools or other similar potentially dangerous items should be completely inaccessible to children with more than one level of barrier and protection.</p>			
17	<p>Inside and Outside:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stairs and decks that are child safe e.g. netting, so that there are no openings for a child to go through (no rails that are greater distance apart than 2 3/8 inches or 6 centimeters) and no stair or deck conditions which could contribute 			

	<p>to a child falling; secure any/all banisters/railings; gates at the top and bottom of stairs and gate or equivalent protections in between landings and/or balconies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • secure barriers to outdoor equipment e.g. grills, ATVs, snowmobiles; outdoor machines or electronics; • <i>Stairways shall have railings</i> • Gates or other protections against anything else hazardous stored on the deck or similar area • Remove any other safety hazards • Sufficient locks to keep unaccompanied children out of garage and removal of dangerous items in garage to above child level (family should assume an accompanied child may be in the garage with the parents, but, if there are poisons or dangerous objects at child level, they should be covered, secured or removed to higher level as a precaution since a caretaker could be preoccupied e.g. getting in or out of car in the garage.) and not see what attracts a child • Double protection for pools or access to bodies of water on property: As appropriate: fence, high grade pool lock, locked covering and other adequate protection for a pool or other water site • <i>No excessive clutter (Stairs or Passageways)</i> • <i>No clutter or debris in yard, play areas</i> • <i>Ongoing maintenance- to prevent broken stairs, broken railings, splintering etc.</i> • <i>home clean and maintained to assure health and safety</i> • <i>working telephone(not dependent on electricity)</i> 			
18	Removal, securing or otherwise safeguarding furniture, appliances or equipment (e.g. television screens,			

	<p>electronics, shredders) from conditions that could pose risk for injury to a child; safety precautions may include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • covers on sharp corners • safety latches • placement of clear plexi-glass protective panels on child level glass in windows and glass doors to prevent hand injuries when pushing through. • absence of conditions that might pose suffocation risks e.g. closets with piles of heavy linens or reachable plastic dry cleaning bags • any object that can ‘topple’ on a child or which a child could pull onto themselves must be removed or secured in such a fashion that it does not pose a risk to the child • <i>No trip hazards</i> • <i>Radiators, heating pipes protected from touch</i> 			
19	<p>Home must be clean, safe, and sufficient size to accommodate comfortably and appropriately all members of the household and the approved number of foster or adopted children to be placed. Requirements integrate state regulatory requirements for both foster children and adopted children within the agency’s policy for physical requirements of home for any child placed with the agency’s involvement.</p>			
20	<p><i>Toilet and bathroom-Provided, appropriate, adaptable accessible without passing through sleeping areas. Must be sanitary and in good repair.</i></p>			
21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home must have sufficient furniture to allow each child to sleep in a separate bed and to have adequate storage space for his/her personal belongings. • The home shall have bedrooms which provide at least 50 square feet per child and shall 			

	<p>accommodate no more than four children per bedroom. Social worker should measure any rooms intended to be any child's bedroom to confirm at least 50 square feet of space per child and document adequate storage space for personal belongings as well. Any bedroom should have at least one window providing sufficient sunlight.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No child over one year of age shall sleep in the same room with an adult (age 18 or older) • At no time should a child be sharing a bed with another child or adult. "Family bed" style sleeping does not meet the agency's accepted standards for care of a child. • No bedroom to be used by children shall be located above the second floor unless any such floor has two means of egress. • No bedroom to be used by children shall be located below the first floor unless it contains a ground level, standard door exit and at least one operable window. • <i>Food Storage/Dining/Eating-Sanitary and adequate</i> • <i>Exit doors must not be obstructed</i> • <i>One window must be operable for exit in each room</i> • <i>Internal Doors/Closets-Locks completely operable from both sides</i> 			
22	<p><i>Bedrooms in Maine must meet the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>More than one child-at least 40 square feet per child</i> • <i>One child per room- at least 60 square feet</i> • <i>Average ceiling height of 7 feet</i> • <i>At least one window operable for ventilation and Emergency Evacuation</i> • <i>Must have a door for reasonable privacy</i> • <i>Separate beds with clean bedding</i> 			

	<p><i>for (each child)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Furniture comfortable and suited to the needs of the child</i> • <i>Cannot use alcove, closet or corridors, etc. for a bedroom</i> • <i>Adult MUST be in hearing distance to respond to needs.</i> • <i>Must provide accommodations for any different abilities/disabilities (e.g. visual communication for deaf)</i> 			
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Photographs of repairs, removals, gates, safety plugs, latches and other implementation should be sent to your home study social worker’s email and to team@fullcircleadoptions.org.

Dates and results of safety checks (list date,circle one, and intiiial):

Date: _____ In Compliance/Out of Compliance Initials: _____

Date: _____ In Compliance/Out of Compliance Initials: _____

Date: _____ In Compliance/Out of Compliance Initials: _____

If last safety check notes any matters that are “out of compliance,” please describe plans for follow up below:

Signature of Social Worker: _____ Date: _____