



HENRY McMASTER, GOVERNOR  
MICHAEL LEACH, STATE DIRECTOR

Thank you for your interest in becoming licensed by the South Carolina Department of Social Services (SCDSS) as a Child Placing Agency (CPA). According to § 63-11-30 of the South Carolina Code of Laws (as amended), SCDSS is the agency mandated to license all Child Placing Agencies for the State of South Carolina. To become a licensed CPA, you will need to explore several areas, including the type of program services you plan to offer and how you will fund your program. The following information is provided to help you as you explore your decision to become a licensed CPA:

#### **RESEARCH (NEED and FUNDING)**

The first step is researching the needs of your community and potential referral sources. Decide what kind of program you plan to offer, and then use this decision to help you in developing and writing your policy and procedures, personnel manual, and securing future funding sources. Currently, state agencies do not offer any start-up funds. SCDSS licenses programs with a variety of funding streams. It is crucial that you identify your funding sources as you begin to work towards becoming licensed.

#### **TYPES OF SERVICES**

There are several options of services that can be provided as a Child Placing Agency. They may include:

- To receive minor children for placement in family homes with a view toward adoption (domestic or international)
- To provide foster home and adoptive assessments, and training
- To provide adoptive recruitment services and/or serve as a referral agency
- To provide care for children in a treatment family type setting

#### **BACKGROUND CHECKS:**

The South Carolina Code of Laws (as amended), § 63-7-2350 (copy enclosed) prohibits employment of a person or the foster care placement of a child with any person who has a substantiated history of child abuse or neglect (i.e. an indicated or founded case of child abuse or neglect as determined by the Department of Social Services). State law also prohibits the employment of a person or the foster care placement of a child with any person who has a criminal history pertaining to an offense against a person, an offense against morality or decency, contributing to the delinquency of a minor or a felony drug-related offense. In addition, South Carolina Code of Laws (as amended), § 63-11-70 on background checks and pardons is enclosed for your review and information. Central Registry (**DSS Form 3072**) and Criminal History Background (SLED) must be completed within twelve months prior to the issuance date of your license for all employees and volunteers. Documentation must comply with the above statutes, and results of the background checks must be kept on file at your facility. Additional instructions on background checks can be found on the individual forms and table enclosed in this packet.

 **REGULATIONS:**

Please read and familiarize yourself with the copy of the Regulations for Child Placing Agencies that is enclosed. During the operation of your facility, you will be required to meet and follow these regulations, all of the conditions and specifications of your license, and other applicable State and Federal laws [e.g., Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children, Multiethnic Placement Act (MEPA), etc]. For additional information on ICPC, go to <http://icpc.aphsa.org/Home/about.asp>. Once you have completed the licensing process, the SCDSS will issue a Standard license effective for one year from the date of issuance or renewal unless revoked or otherwise terminated. SCDSS will monitor your agency by making regular announced and/or unannounced visits to ensure compliance with the regulations. During monitoring visits, your licensing consultant will tour the agency, audit a percentage of files (families, if applicable and staff), and address any other concerns or regulatory issues.

 **FEES:**

You will find a fee collection document enclosed for reference. Below are the required fees relative to licensing as a Child Placing Agency:

| Description  | Fee                                     | Billing   |
|--|---|---|
| Initial Licensure of Child Placing Agency  | \$500                                   | SCDSS will bill you for the appropriate fee based on your license request <b>after</b> your packet has been submitted and approved. |
| Initial Licensure of each Foster Family Home   | \$15.00                                 | SCDSS will bill you for the appropriate fee based on your license request <b>after</b> your packet has been submitted and approved. |
| Central Registry Checks for each employee  | \$8.00 non-profit<br>\$25.00 for-profit | See <b>DSS Form 3072</b> for instructions on payment procedures.  |
| <p>SLED Checks for employees of the CPA. <b>You have two options for completing this requirement.</b></p> <p><b>Option 1:</b> Follow the link, complete the form, and mail along with your payment <b>directly</b> to SLED.<br/> <a href="http://www.sled.state.sc.us/CISystem/Images/Catch/CriminalRecordsCheckForm.pdf">http://www.sled.state.sc.us/CISystem/Images/Catch/CriminalRecordsCheckForm.pdf</a></p> <p><b>Option 2:</b> Follow the link for instructions to conduct an online search (SLED CATCH).<br/> <a href="http://www.sled.state.sc.us/sled/default.asp?Category=CA TCH_SSN&amp;Service=crc">http://www.sled.state.sc.us/sled/default.asp?Category=CA TCH_SSN&amp;Service=crc</a></p> | See SLED website                        | Follow the link, complete the form, and mail along with your payment <b>directly to SLED.</b>                                       |

Thank you again for your interest in providing services for children. **Enclosed is a table that lists the required forms and documents and an explanation for each item.** Completing these will make up your licensing application. While this packet contains a large amount of information and a number of forms, licensing staff will be happy to assist you as you work to provide the materials listed. You will also find enclosed a **“Frequently Asked Questions Informational Sheet”** for your review which may be helpful in making your decision to become licensed as a Child Placing Agency.

If you have any questions or need further assistance, please call the Group Home/Child Placing Agency licensing unit at (803) 898-7837 and request to speak to a supervisor.

Enclosures