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Ohio Administrative Code

Rule 5180:2-7-12 Site and safety requirements for a foster home.

Effective: June 15, 2020

(A) A foster home and all structures on the grounds of the home shall be maintained in a clean, safe, and sanitary condition and in a reasonable state of repair. A home shall be a house, mobile home, housing unit or apartment occupied by an individual or a family.

(1) A home is to be free of peeling or chipping paint.

(2) If a potential lead hazard is identified, the recommending agency is to make a referral to the appropriate agency.

(B) Swimming pools.

(1) Are to have a barrier on all sides.

(2) Are to have their method of access through the barrier equipped with a safety device, such as a bolt lock.

(3) Are to be equipped with a life saving device, such as a ring buoy.

(4) If the swimming pool cannot be emptied after each use, the pool is to have a working pump and filtering system.

(C) Hot tubs and spas are to have safety covers that are locked when not in use.

(D) Outdoor recreation equipment on the grounds of a foster home shall be maintained in a safe state of repair.

(E) Outdoor areas on the grounds of or immediately adjacent to a foster home which are potentially hazardous to a foster child placed in the home shall be reasonably safeguarded, considering the age

and functioning level of the foster child. Such areas include, but are not limited to:

(1) Water areas, including lakes, ponds, rivers, quarries and swimming pools.

(2) Open pits and wells.

(3) Cliffs and caves.

(4) High-speed or heavily traveled roads.

(F) A foster home shall be adequately heated, lighted and ventilated.

(G) The following are to be stored in a safe manner that prevents the child's access, as appropriate for his or her age and development:

(1) Bleach.

(2) Cleaning materials.

(3) Poisonous or corrosive household chemicals.

(4) Flammable and combustible materials.

(5) Potentially dangerous tools or utensils.

(6) Electrical equipment in or on the grounds of a foster home.

(7) Machinery in or on the grounds of a foster home.

(8) Alcoholic beverages.

(H) A foster home shall comply with the following requirements regarding weapons:

(1) The following weapons kept on the grounds of or in a foster home shall be stored in an inoperative condition in a locked area inaccessible to children:

(a) Firearms.

(b) Air rifles.

(c) Hunting slingshots.

(d) Any other projectile weapon.

(2) All ammunition, arrows or projectiles for such weapons shall be stored in a separate locked space.

(3) Any foster caregiver who is also a law enforcement official and can document that their jurisdiction requires them to have ready and immediate access to their weapon shall be exempt from the requirements of this paragraph.

(I) A foster home shall have a working telephone or be able to demonstrate to the recommending agency reasonable access to a working telephone for emergency situations.

(J) Appropriate emergency telephone numbers including fire, police, ambulance, poison control, the recommending agency, and each agency with a foster child placed in the home shall be posted in a prominent place in a foster home.

(K) All locks to at least one door to any room or walk in storage area inside a foster home in which a person could become confined shall be of the type which permit the door to be unlocked from either side of the door and be unlocked from the inside of the room or storage area without a key. Locking of the children's bedroom doors while children are sleeping is prohibited. Locking of outside doors and fencing around a yard or outside play area is permitted.

(L) A foster home shall have a continuous supply of safe drinking water. Well water used for drinking and cooking shall be tested and approved by the health department prior to initial

certification and annually thereafter.

(M) A foster home shall have working bathroom and toilet facilities located within the home and connected to an indoor plumbing system.

(N) A foster home is to ensure proper water heater temperature not to exceed one hundred-twenty degrees fahrenheit.

(O) Garbage shall be disposed of on a regular basis. Garbage stored outside shall be in covered containers or closed bags.

(P) A foster home shall have a working smoke alarm on each level of occupancy and at least one near all sleeping areas of the home approved by one of the following:

(1) "Underwriter's Laboratory."

(2) A certified fire inspector.

(Q) A foster home is to have at least one carbon monoxide detector on each level of occupancy of the home and at least one near all sleeping areas.

(R) A foster home is to maintain first aid supplies.

(S) A foster caregiver shall have a written evacuation plan for evacuating the home or seeking shelter in the event of fire, tornado or other disaster. This evacuation plan shall contain a primary and alternate escape route for each floor. A foster caregiver shall provide initial orientation and ongoing instruction on the contents of this plan to each foster child in accordance with the foster child's age and functioning level.

(T) All escape routes shall be kept free of clutter and other obstructions.

(U) Household heating equipment used in a foster home shall be equipped with appropriate safeguards in accordance with the age and functioning level of any foster child in the home.

(V) Heaters.

(1) Unvented heaters that burn kerosene or oil shall not be used.

(2) All heaters shall be approved by "Underwriter's Laboratory" or a certified fire inspector.

(3) All heaters shall not be prohibited by any local zoning ordinances.

(W) A foster home shall have a portable fire extinguisher in working order in or near the cooking area of the home. The fire extinguisher shall be approved by one of the following:

(1) "Underwriter's Laboratory."

(2) A certified fire inspector.

(X) A foster home is to be free from rodents and insect infestation.

(Y) Pets or domestic animals in or on the premises of a foster home shall be kept in a safe and sanitary manner in accordance with state and local laws.

(Z) A foster child shall be protected from animals potentially dangerous to the child's health and safety in or on the premises of a foster home.

(AA) Interior and exterior stairways accessible to children shall be protected by child safety gates or doors according to the child's age and functioning level.

(BB) A foster home shall provide a smoke free environment for foster children.

(1) No smoking shall be permitted in the living area of a foster home or in a vehicle used to transport a foster child.

(2) No smoking is permitted in the presence of a foster child.

(CC) All prescription drugs in a foster home shall be stored in a locked cabinet or storage area except that an inhaler or other medication may be left unlocked if a person has a special health condition that requires the inhaler or medication to be immediately available.