



North West Service Delivery Area

# Adoption Practice Audit

Report Completed: November 2017

Office of the Provincial Director of Child Welfare and Aboriginal Services

Quality Assurance Branch

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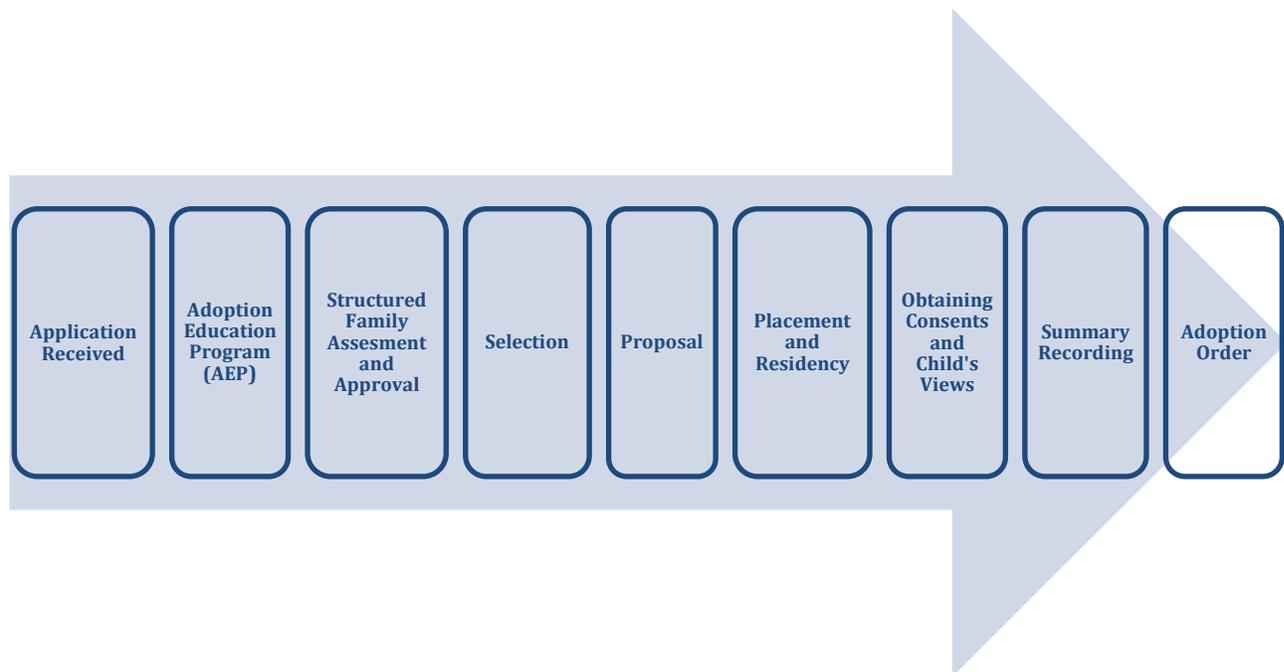
## INTRODUCTION

This section of the report provides information about the purpose and methodology of the Adoption practice audit that was conducted in the North West Service Delivery Area (SDA) in May 2017 through June 2017.

### 1. PURPOSE

Practice audits are conducted regularly by the Provincial Director of Child Welfare (PDCW) across the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) service lines and for those services provided by Delegated Aboriginal Agencies (DAAs) under the Child, Family and Community Service Act (CFCSA). Practice audits are grounded in the Quality Assurance Standards (revised June 28, 2004) and Quality Assurance Audit Policy (effective June 1, 2016). These quality assurance audits examine compliance with legislation, policy, and operational standards, while providing a systematic approach to the evaluation and improvement of services. Practice audits also provide effective quality assurance oversight and public accountability, which in turn informs continuous improvements in practice, policy, and service delivery. Another intended outcome for practice audits is that children, youth, and families will receive quality, culturally safe and restorative services and programs.

The Adoption Home (AH) practice audit is designed to assess achievement of key components of the Practice Standards and Guidelines for Adoption (MCFD, 2001). These standards and guidelines were implemented in April of 2001 and outline both standards for practice and procedural guidelines for the duties and functions of delegated adoption social workers under the *Adoption Act (RSBC 1996)*. See Appendix 1 for a complete listing of the specific Adoption Practice Standards that were assessed by this audit.



## 2. METHODOLOGY

Two groups of AH records were selected from data extracted from the Ministry's Management Information System (MIS) on June 30, 2016:

- **Open AH records** with a file start date after Dec 31, 2010, that were still open on March 31, 2016
- **Closed AH records** with a file start date after Dec 31, 2010 and a file stop date between April 1, 2015 and June 30, 2016

The audit is based on a review of AH records for adoption homes using a census sampling technique, wherein all file records that met the selection criteria were drawn and included in the audit. The only exception was with the relatively small number of AH records with out of country, inter-provincial, and territorial involvement, and where the prospective adoptive parent(s) reside outside of British Columbia (BC). These records were removed from the sample because the key Standards and Guidelines for Adoption (MCFD, 2001) in the audit apply only to prospective adoptive parent(s) who reside in BC and apply for adoption of a child in care residing in BC or a child who is under the guardianship of another province, territory or country. When the application is from prospective adoptive parents residing outside of BC an adoption worker from that other jurisdiction assumes responsibility for guiding the adoption process. The procedures for the adoption of children in care outside their guardian province are set out in the Provincial/Territorial Protocol on Children and Families Moving Between Provinces (June 21, 2011) and the Provincial/Territorial Protocol on Children, Youth and Families Moving Between Provinces and Territories (April 1, 2016).

The audit sampling method and Management Information System (MIS) data extracts were developed and produced with the support of the Modelling, Analysis and Information Management (MAIM) Branch.

The total number of AH records in the census sample for the North West SDA was 45. Twenty of these AH records had been closed during the past 15 months (i.e., between April 1, 2015 & June 30, 2016), while 25 remained open as of March 31, 2016 when they were selected for auditing. None of the AH records selected for this SDA had to be removed from the audit because the prospective adoptive parent(s) reside outside of BC.

Physical file records as well as electronic records in the Management Information System (MIS), the Integrated Case Management (ICM) system and the Adoption Management System (AMS) were reviewed.

The selected records were assigned to a practice analyst on the provincial audit team for review. The analyst used the AH Practice Audit Tool to rate the records. The AH Practice Audit Tool contains 14 Adoption Critical Measures (ACM) designed to assess compliance with key components of the Adoption Standards using a scale with achieved and not achieved as rating options for measures ACM 1 and 2. A scale with achieved, not achieved, and not applicable as rating options is used for measures ACM 3 through ACM 14.

The analyst entered the ratings in a SharePoint data collection form that included ancillary questions and text boxes, which were used to enter additional information about the factors taken into consideration in applying the critical measures.

In reviewing selected AH records, the analysts considered the entire practice that occurred during the life of the AH file leading up to the time when the audit was conducted (December 2016 through to April 2017).

Quality assurance policy and procedures require that practice analysts identify for action any record that suggests a child may need protection under section 13 of the *Child, Family and Community Service Act*. During this audit, the practice analyst watched for situations in which the information in the records suggested that a child may have been left in need of protection. When identified, these records were brought to the attention of the appropriate team leader (TL) and community services manager (CSM), as well as the executive director of service (EDS), for follow up, as appropriate.

### 3. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

The findings are presented in tables that contain counts and percentages of ratings of achieved and not achieved for all of the measures in the audit tool (ACM 1 to ACM 14). The tables contain findings for measures that correspond with specific components of the Practice Standards and Guidelines for Adoption. Each table is followed by an analysis of the findings for each of the measures presented in the table.

45 AH records were selected for this audit of the North West SDA. However, not every measure in the audit tool was applicable to all of the AH records audited. This is necessary as not all applications by prospective adoptive parents result in the placement of a child for adoption and the granting of an Adoption Order by the court. Additionally, approximately two-thirds of the AH files audited remained open at the time of auditing and therefore by definition were still at some preliminary or penultimate stage of the adoption process.

The tables shown below present both the number of “not applicable” and the number of “applicable” records for each of the critical measures. The numbers and percentages for records rated “achieved” versus “not achieved” in each table are derived from the number of applicable records for that critical measure.

#### 3.1 Planning with Prospective Adoptive Parents

Table 1 provides compliance rates for measures ACM 1 through ACM 5, which relate to planning with prospective adoptive parents. These measures correspond with Adoption Practice Standard 43 - Providing Adoption Information and Accepting the Application to Adopt (ACM 1 & 2), Adoption Practice Standard 44 - The Home Study Process: The Adoption Education and Structured Family Assessment (SFA) Components (ACM 3 & 4), and Adoption Practice Standard 47 - Keeping the Written Family Assessment Current (ACM 5). See Appendix 1 for details. The rates in the table are presented as percentages of all records for which the measures were applicable.

**Table 1: Planning with Prospective Adoptive Parents (N= 45)**

Measure	# of Not Applicable Records	# of Applicable Records	# Rated Achieved	% Rated Achieved	# Rated Not Achieved	% Rated Not Achieved
ACM 1: Providing Adoption Information	0	45	7	16%	38	84%
ACM 2: Accepting the Application to Adopt	0	45	10	22%	35	78%
ACM 3: Completing the Adoption Education Program (AEP) Component of the Home Study Process	7	38	19	50%	19	50%
ACM 4: Completing the Structured Family Assessment Component of the Home Study Process	14	31	19	61%	12	39%
ACM 5: Keeping the Written Family Assessment Current	41	4	1	25%	3	75%

**ACM 1: Providing Adoption Information**

The compliance rate for this critical measure was **16%**. The measure was applied to all 45 records in the sample; 7 of the 45 records were rated achieved and 38 were rated not achieved. To receive a rating of achieved, the record contains documentation confirming the adoption worker responded to the prospective adoptive parent(s) within 7 working days and provided the prospective adoptive parent(s) with all of the information listed in Standard 43.

Of the 38 records rated not achieved, 24 did not have documentation that any of the information listed in Standard 43 was provided to the prospective adoptive parent(s), 4 did not have documentation that the information provided to the prospective adoptive parent(s) met all of the requirements listed in Standard 43, 8 did not have documentation that the required information was provided within 7 working days and 2 did not have documentation that the required information was provided nor was it provided within 7 days. Of the 10 records that did not have documentation that the required information was provided within 7 working days, 4 did not record the dates the required information was provided and, therefore, the average length of time it took was unknown. The remaining 6 records did record the dates the required information was provided and the average time it took was 29 days.

**ACM 2: Accepting the Application to Adopt**

The compliance rate for this critical measure was **22%**. The measure was applied to all 45 records in the sample; 10 of the 45 records were rated achieved and 35 were rated not achieved. To receive a rating of achieved, the record contains documentation confirming the adoption worker provided the prospective adoptive parent(s) with the forms and information required for the Structured Family Assessment (SFA) component of the home study process within 10 working days of receiving the application, and then interviewed each applicant in person to determine eligibility and other relevant factors.

Of the 35 records rated not achieved, 17 did not provide the prospective adoptive parent(s) with the required forms and information for the SFA component within 10 working days of receiving the application, 3 did not subsequently interview each applicant in-person, and 15 did not provide the prospective adoptive parent(s) with the required forms and information for the SFA component within 10 working days of receiving the application, nor did they interview each applicant in-person. Of the 32 records that did not provide the prospective adoptive parent(s) with the required forms and information for the SFA component within 10 working days, 11 did not record the dates the required forms were provided and, therefore, the average time it took was unknown for those records. The remaining 21 did record the dates the required forms were provided and the average time it took was 75 days.

**ACM 3: Completing the Adoption Education Program (AEP) Component of the Home Study Process**

The compliance rate for this critical measure was **50%**. The measure was applied to 38 of the 45 records in the sample; 19 of the 38 records were rated achieved and 19 were rated not achieved.

To receive a rating of achieved, the record contains documentation confirming the prospective adoptive parent(s) completed the ministry-approved adoption education program (AEP) prior to the home study being completed and a certificate of completion is in the file, or in the case of a second

adoption, the previous AEP was reviewed and any training deficiencies identified for the proposed adoptive parent(s) were upgraded.

Of the 19 records rated not achieved, 3 did not have documentation that the prospective adoptive parents completed the AEP component prior to the completion of the home study, 12 did not contain a certificate of AEP completion and 4 did not, in the case of a second adoption, review the previous AEP for training deficiencies and the proposed adoptive parent(s) did not receive upgrading.

This critical measure was not applied to 7 records in the sample. The reasons for being not applicable on this measure included: 3 had the AEP component still in progress and 4 had the application to adopt withdrawn before the AEP component was completed.

#### **ACM 4: Completing the Structured Family Assessment Component of the Home Study Process**

The compliance rate for this critical measure was **61%**. The measure was applied to 31 of the 45 records in the sample; 19 of these 31 records were rated achieved and 12 were rated not achieved. To receive a rating of achieved, the record contains an SFA covering all of the required components and it was completed within the 4-month timeframe, or supervisory approval for an extension to the timeframe and the reasons for the extension are documented in the record.

Of the 12 records rated not achieved, 1 did not contain an SFA, 1 did not have an SFA that covered all of the required components, and 10 did not have an SFA completed within the 4-month timeframe and there is no documentation of supervisory approval and reasons for the extension to the timeframe. Of the 10 records that did not have the SFA completed within the 4-month timeframe the average time it took was 8 months.

This critical measure was not applied to 14 records in the sample. The reasons for being not applicable on this measure included: 3 had not started the SFA because the AEP had not yet been completed, 4 had the SFA still in progress and 7 had the application to adopt withdrawn before the SFA was completed.

#### **ACM 5: Keeping the Written Family Assessment Current**

The compliance rate for this critical measure was **25%**. This measure was only applicable to records where the initial SFA had been completed and approved for more than a year and the prospective adoptive parents were still awaiting the placement of a child. The measure was applied to 4 of the 45 records in the sample; 1 of the 4 records was rated achieved and 3 were rated not achieved. To receive a rating of achieved, the record contains the required annual updates attached to the SFA and includes the required information and supervisory approvals.

All 3 of the records rated not achieved did not have annual updates to the SFA documented in the record.

This critical measure was not applied to 41 records in the sample. The reasons for being not applicable on this measure included:

7 did not have an SFA that was completed in its entirety and approved by the supervisor, 3 were in abeyance for less than 2 years, 10 had an SFA completed within the last year, 11 had an adoption occur within a year of the SFA being completed and approved by the supervisor, 9 had the application to adopt withdrawn before the SFA needed to be updated, and 1 had the application to adopt terminated by MCFD before the SFA needed to be updated.

### 3.2 Adoption Planning for the Child and with Birth Parents

Table 2 provides compliance rates for measures ACM 6 through ACM 10. These measures correspond with Adoption Practice Standard 26 - Selecting Prospective Parent(s) for a Child in Continuing Custody (ACM 6), Adoption Practice Standard 27 - Proposing the Adoption Placement of a Child to Prospective Adoptive Parent(s) (ACM 7), Adoption Practice Standard 50 - The Adoption Proposal and Preparing for Placement (ACM 8 & 9), and Adoption Practice Standard 37 - Transferring Care and Custody with a Birth Parent Pre-Placement Agreement (ACM 10). See Appendix 1 for details. The rates in the table are presented as percentages of all records for which the measures were applicable.

**Table 2: Adoption Planning for the Child and with Birth Parents (N= 45)**

Measure	# of Not Applicable Records	# of Applicable Records	# Rated Achieved	% Rated Achieved	# Rated Not Achieved	% Rated Not Achieved
ACM 6: Selecting Prospective Parent(s) for a Child in Continuing Custody	27	18	4	22%	14	78%
ACM 7: Proposing the Adoption Placement of a Child to Prospective Adoptive Parent(s)	27	18	16	89%	2	11%
ACM 8: The Adoption Proposal and Preparing for Placement	28	17	17	100%	0	0%
ACM 9: The Timing of the Adoption Placement	29	16	15	94%	1	6%
ACM 10: Transferring Care and Custody with a Birth Parent Pre-Placement Agreement (Voluntary Relinquishments only)	45	0	0	N/A	0	N/A

#### **ACM 6: Selecting Prospective Parent(s) for a Child in Continuing Custody**

The compliance rate for this critical measure was **22%**. The measure was applied to 28 of the 45 records in the sample; 4 of the 28 records were rated achieved and 14 were rated not achieved. To receive a rating of achieved, the record contains documentation confirming the child’s social worker reviewed the SFA and conducted a selection process involving at least the social worker’s supervisor and one other person involved in the child’s life (including but not limited to the foster parent, the guardianship worker, the adoption worker or a supervisor).

Of the 14 records rated not achieved, 11 did not have documentation that confirmed the child’s worker reviewed the SFA, 1 did not have a selection process that involved at least 2 others and 2 records did not have documentation that confirms the child’s worker reviewed the SFA and did not have a selection process that involved at least 2 others.

This critical measure was not applied to 27 records in the sample. The reasons for being not applicable on this measure included: 17 had not yet selected a child for prospective adoptive parent(s), 9 had the application to adopt withdrawn before a child was selected for prospective adoptive parent(s), and 1 had the application to adopt terminated by MCFD before a child was selected for prospective adoptive parent(s).

**ACM 7: Proposing the Adoption Placement of a Child to Prospective Adoptive Parent(s)**

The compliance rate for this critical measure was **89%**. The measure was applied to 18 of the 45 records in the sample; 16 of the 18 records were rated achieved and 2 were rated not achieved. To receive a rating of achieved, the record contains documentation confirming the child's social worker has completed all of the requirements outlined in the standard prior to the child being proposed to the prospective adoptive parent(s).

Of the 2 records rated not achieved, both did not have documentation that all the requirements outlined in the standard were completed prior the child being proposed to the prospective adoptive parent(s).

This critical measure was not applied to 27 records in the sample. The reasons for being not applicable on this measure included: 17 had not yet proposed a child to prospective adoptive parent(s), 9 had the application to adopt withdrawn before a child was proposed to prospective adoptive parent(s), and 1 had the application to adopt terminated by MCFD before a child was proposed to prospective adoptive parent(s).

**ACM 8: The Adoption Proposal and Preparing for Placement**

The compliance rate for this critical measure was **100%**. The measure was applied to 17 of the 45 records in the sample; all 17 records were rated achieved. To receive a rating of achieved, the record contains documentation confirming the required information was shared with the prospective adoptive parent(s), and a letter of acknowledgement was signed by the prospective adoptive parent(s).

This critical measure was not applied to 28 records in the sample. The reasons for being not applicable on this measure included: 17 had not yet proposed a child to prospective adoptive parent(s), 1 had proposed a child, but the prospective adoptive parent(s) have never signed a letter of acknowledgement, 9 had the application to adopt withdrawn before a child was proposed to prospective adoptive parent(s), and 1 had the application to adopt terminated by MCFD before a child was proposed to prospective adoptive parent(s).

**ACM 9: The Timing of the Adoption Placement**

The compliance rate for this critical measure was **94%**. The measure was applied to 16 of the 45 records in the sample; 15 of the 16 records were rated achieved and 1 was rated not achieved. To receive a rating of achieved, the record contains documentation confirming the adoption placement of a child with the prospective adoptive parent(s) occurred within 6 months of signing the letter of acknowledgement, or if the adoption placement occurred more than 6 months after signing the acknowledgement letter, the reasons for the extension and supervisory approval of the extension are documented in the record.

The record rated not achieved did not have a child placed with the prospective adoptive(s) within 6 months of signing the letter of acknowledgement and instead the child was placed 7 months after signing.

This critical measure was not applied to 29 records in the sample. The reasons for being not applicable on this measure included: 17 had not yet proposed the placement of a child to prospective adoptive parent(s), 2 had proposed a child and a letter of acknowledgement was signed by the prospective adoptive parent(s), but the placement of the child occurred beyond the timeframe of the audit (June 30, 2016), 9 had the application to adopt withdrawn prior to the placement of a child, 1 had the application to adopt terminated by MCFD prior to the placement of a child.

**ACM 10: Transferring Care and Custody with a Birth Parent Pre-Placement Agreement**

The compliance rate for this critical measure was not measured. This critical measure is specific to situations where the birth parent(s) was voluntarily relinquishing the child for adoption under the Adoption Act. The measure was not applied to any of the 45 records in the sample, because none involved the voluntary relinquishment of a child.

This critical measure was not applied to any of the 45 records in the sample. The reasons for being not applicable on this measure included: 17 had not yet proposed the placement of a child to the prospective adoptive parent(s), 1 had proposed a child and the letter of acknowledgement was not signed by the prospective adoptive parent(s), 17 had proposed a child who is under a continuing custody order (CCO), 9 had the application to adopt withdrawn prior to the placement of a child, and 1 had the application to adopt terminated by MCFD prior to the placement of a child.

**3.3 Consents, Post-Placement Services, and Adoption Completion**

Table 3 provides compliance rates for measures ACM 11 through ACM 14. These measures correspond with Adoption Practice Standard 39 - Required Consents (ACM 11), Adoption Practice Standard 57 - Post-Placement Responsibilities of the Adoption Worker to the Child and the Adoptive Parent(s) (ACM 12), Adoption Practice Standard 60 - Preparing the Report on a Younger Child’s Views (ACM 13), and Adoption Standard 61 - Preparing the Summary Recording (ACM 14). See Appendix 1 for details. The rates are presented in the table as percentages of all records for which the measures were applicable.

**Table 3: Consents, Post-Placement Services, and Adoption Completion (N= 45)**

Measure	# of Not Applicable Records	# of Applicable Records	# Rated Achieved	% Rated Achieved	# Rated Not Achieved	% Rated Not Achieved
ACM 11: Obtaining Required Consents	29	16	16	100%	0	0%
ACM 12: Post-Placement Responsibilities of the Adoption Worker	33	12	0	0%	12	100%
ACM 13: Preparing the Report on a Younger Child’s Views	42	3	3	100%	0	0%
ACM 14: Preparing the Summary Recording	34	11	9	82%	2	18%

**ACM 11: Obtaining Required Consents**

The compliance rate for this critical measure was **100%**. The measure was applied to 16 of the 45 records in the sample; all of these 16 records were rated achieved. To receive a rating of achieved, the record contains documentation confirming that all required consents for a child under a CCO or a voluntary relinquishment have been obtained prior to placement, or there is documentation the adoption worker has properly dispensed with obtaining consents.

This critical measure was not applied to 29 records in the sample. The reasons for being not applicable on this measure included: 18 had not yet proposed a child to prospective adoptive parent(s) or the proposed child was not accepted by the prospective adoptive parent(s), 1 had proposed a child to the prospective adoptive parents, but the child had not yet been placed or the consents had not yet been obtained, 9 had the application to adopt withdrawn prior to the placement of a child and, 1 had the application to adopt terminated by MCFD prior to the placement of a child.

**ACM 12: Post-Placement Responsibilities of the Adoption Worker**

The compliance rate for this critical measure was **0%**. The measure was applied to 12 of the 45 records in the sample, all of which were rated not achieved. To receive a rating of achieved, the record contains documentation confirming the adoption worker contacted the adoptive family within 1 working day after the adoption placement, visited the adoptive family home within 7 days after the adoption placement, and conducted at least 2 subsequent home visits during the placement period, and all of these visits met the requirements set out in the standard (i.e., assisting the adoptive family in meeting the child's specific needs as described in the plan of care, and consulting with the child about his or her views of the adoption placement).

Of the 12 records rated not achieved, 2 did not have documentation confirming the adoption worker visited the child within the required timeframes after placement, 1 had 1 or more of the visits with the child that did not meet the requirements set out in the standard and 9 did not have documentation confirming the worker visited the child within the required timeframes after placement and also did not meet the requirements set out in the standard.

This critical measure was not applied to 33 records in the sample. The reasons for being not applicable on this measure included: 17 had not yet proposed the placement of a child to prospective adoptive parent(s), 2 had proposed a child to the prospective adoptive parents, but the child had not yet been placed, 4 had a child in a 6-month placement (or residency) period that had not concluded, 9 had the application to adopt withdrawn prior to the placement of a child, and 1 had the application to adopt terminated by MCFD prior to the placement of a child.

**ACM 13: Preparing the Report on a Younger Child's Views**

The compliance rate for this critical measure was **100%**. The measure was applied to 3 of the 45 records in the sample; all 3 of these records were rated achieved. To receive a rating of achieved, the record contains documentation confirming the adoption worker met with the child in private and gathered the required information, completed a full report on the younger child's views, and the report was approved by the supervisor.

This critical measure was not applied to 42 records in the sample. The reasons for being not applicable on this measure included: 17 had not yet proposed the placement of a child to prospective adoptive parent(s), 2 had not yet placed a child with the prospective adoptive parent(s), 4 had a child in a 6-month placement (or residency) period that had not concluded or preparing a report on a younger child's views was not yet due as the adoption had not yet been finalized, 8 involved a child who is less than 7 or over 12 years of age, 1 had a placement disruption, 9 had the application to adopt withdrawn prior to the placement of a child, and 1 had the application to adopt terminated by MCFD prior to the placement of a child.

**ACM 14: Preparing the Summary Recording**

The compliance rate for this critical measure was **82%**. The measure was applied to 11 of the 45 records in the sample; 9 of the 11 records were rated achieved and 2 were rated not achieved. To receive a rating of achieved, the record contains documentation that after the 6-month placement (or residency) period expired, a current prior contact check (PCC) was conducted and a Summary Recording was completed.

Of the 2 records rated not achieved, 1 did not have a Summary Recording completed after the placement (or residency) period expired and 1 did not have documentation that a PCC was conducted on the prospective adoptive parent(s) or a Summary Recording completed after the placement period expired.

This critical measure was not applied to 34 records in the sample. The reasons for being not applicable on this measure included: 17 had not yet proposed the placement of a child to prospective adoptive parent(s), 2 had not yet placed a child with the prospective adoptive parent(s), 4 were in the 6-month placement (or residency) period that had not yet expired, 1 had a placement disruption, 9 had the application to adopt withdrawn prior to the placement of a child and 1 had the application to adopt terminated by MCFD prior to the placement of a child.

**Records Identified for Action**

Quality assurance policy and procedures require practice analysts to identify for action any record that suggests a child may need protection under section 13 of the Child, Family and Community Service Act. No records were identified for action during the course of this audit.

## 4. OBSERVATIONS AND THEMES

This audit reviewed 45 AH records that had been opened by the North West SDA during the 5-year period between January 1, 2011 and March 31, 2016. As of June 30, 2016, 32 of these records remained open while 13 had been closed sometime between April 1, 2015 and June 30, 2016. Among the closed records, 5 concluded with a completed adoption and the granting of an adoption order. The remaining 8 closed records either had the application withdrawn by the prospective adoptive parents (7) or the application process was terminated by MCFD (1). Analysts also noted that among the records open in MIS, 7 had closure type statuses in AMS as of June 30, 2016. For example, of these 7 records, it was noted that 5 had concluded with a completed adoption and the granting of an adoption order. Further analysis into these records would be recommended to determine if file closure should have occurred earlier.

Among the 45 records reviewed for this audit, 22 involved general applications by prospective adoptive parents (49%), 14 were foster to adopt applications (31%) and 9 were child specific applications involving family members (20%).

This section summarizes the observations and themes arising from the record reviews and audit findings. The observations and themes relate to identified strengths and areas needing improvement. Some relate to specific critical measures and corresponding standards and policy requirements, while others are informed by themes that emerged across several measures. The purpose of this section is to inform the development of an action plan to improve practice.

The SDA overall compliance rate for all 14 critical measures was **50%**.

### 4.1 Strengths

There was moderate (61%) compliance rate for the critical measure associated with Completing the SFA Component of the Home Study Process (ACM 4). Over half of the records contained an SFA with signature of approval by the appropriate Team Leader or Supervisor. Documenting supervisory approval for an extension to the 4 month timeframe would increase compliance for this critical measure as there were 10 records that received a not achieved rating due to exceeding the 4 month timeframe.

The critical measure associated with Proposing the Adoption Placement of a Child to Prospective Adoptive Parent(s) (ACM 7) had a high (89%) compliance rate. 16 out of 18 records were rated achieved on this measure and demonstrated a high level of documentation specific to the child's birth, social and medical history, placement history, life experiences and previous Plans of Care being on file prior to proposal. This documentation also included how this information was shared with the prospective adoptive parents, including discussions around openness and obtaining supervisory approval prior to proposing the child. In conducting the audit, it was noted that significant information could be located in review of email correspondence on the records.

There was extremely high (100%) compliance for the critical measure associated with The Adoption Proposal and Preparing for Placement (ACM 8).

Documentation to support an achieved rating included a completed proposal package and a signed acknowledgement letter indicating that the adoptive parents read and acknowledged the package contents. All of the applicable records (17 out of 17) contained documentation confirming the required information was shared with the prospective adoptive parent(s) and an acknowledgement letter was signed subsequently by the prospective adoptive parents.

Similarly, there was a very high (94%) compliance rate for the critical measure associated with The Timing of the Adoption Placement (ACM 9). Nearly all of the applicable records (15 out of 16) contained documentation confirming the adoption placement occurred within 6 months of the signing of an acknowledgement letter. The record rated not achieved did have an acknowledgement letter signed by the adoptive parents, but the placement did not occur within 6 months of signing the letter.

The critical measure associated with Obtaining Required Consents (ACM 11) had an extremely high (100%) compliance rate. All of the applicable records (16 out of 16) contained documentation confirming the required consents for a child under a CCO were obtained. Among the 16 applicable records rated achieved, 4 were for children over 12 years of age and had signed consent forms on record and 12 were for children in the continuing custody of the Director under 12 years of age where no written consents were required.

About one quarter of the AH records audited (10 out of 45 records) concluded with a completed adoption and the granting of an Adoption Order. Preparing the Report on a Younger Child's Views (ACM 13) was applied to just 3 records and all were rated achieved. All 3 applicable records contained information that the child, at least seven and less than 12 years of age, was interviewed privately. The child's views were then recorded in a report before applying to the Court for an Adoption Order.

Lastly, the critical measure associated with Preparing the Summary Recording (ACM 14) had a high (82%) compliance rate. The standard for this critical measure also requires that a current PCC be completed prior to completion of the Summary Recording. There was documentation of both a current PCC and a Summary Recording in over three quarters of the applicable records (9 out of 11).

## 4.2 Challenges

The critical measures associated with Adoption Standard 43, Providing Adoption Information and Accepting the Application to Adopt (ACM 1 and ACM 2), both had very low compliance rates (16% and 22% respectively). There was very limited documentation to indicate the calendar date when prospective adoptive parent(s) initially contacted MCFD to express interest in adoption and when the adoption worker responded. As such, the file documentation was generally insufficient to determine whether the adoption worker's response was within 7 working days. In addition, it was difficult to determine whether the information that was provided to the prospective adoptive parent(s) within 7 days of the initial contact and the forms and information that were provided to the prospective adoptive parent(s) within 10 days receiving the completed application met all of the requirements listed in the standards.

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, 18 of the 45 records rated not achieved at ACM 2 (Accepting the Application to Adopt) did not contain documentation confirming the prospective adoptive parent(s) were interviewed in person to determine eligibility and other relevant factors. Recording the date the prospective adoptive parent(s) initially contacted MCFD to express an interest in adoption, the date the adoption social worker responded and describing the required forms and the information that was provided (usually in a letter) and the date(s) the prospective adoptive parent(s) were interviewed in person will greatly improve the compliance ratings for these measures.

The compliance rate with Adoption Standard 43 (as measured by ACM 1 and ACM2) may also be improved by modifying the "Adoption Intake and Recruitment Tracking" form. Specifically, including information on this form about when and what information was provided, as well as confirmation of eligibility for the prospective adoptive parent(s) both prior to and following the receipt of an application would be helpful in meeting the standard. Additionally, some records had a checklist of forms included in an adoption application package; it may be beneficial to utilize this form for each record and include the physician's report in the checklist. Also, recording the date the adoption package was provided and the date the application forms were returned would further increase compliance. Within the North West SDA, it was also noted in some records that when documenting information on the prospective adoptive parent(s), only 1 prospective adoptive parent's name was listed on the electronic record. However, the corresponding physical files identify 2 adults/partners residing in these households, who are being assessed and potentially approved as prospective adoptive parents. This leaves some inconsistency between the electronic and physical files and it is recommended that adoption workers list all eligible parties on MIS, AMS and ICM database systems to correspond correctly with the information gathered and listed on the physical file. A list of the identified records will be compiled and forwarded to the Executive Director of Guardianship, Adoption and Permanency and also provided to the North West SDA for follow up.

There was a moderately low (50%) compliance rate for Completing the Adoption Education Program (ACM 3). Of the 19 records rated as not achieved, 15 did not contain documentation indicating the completion of this program. Of the remaining 4 records rated not achieved, all involved a second adoption, and documentation was lacking on a review of the previous AEP and training deficiencies identified for the prospective adoptive parent(s) were not upgraded as per Adoption Practice Standard 45. In August 2012, the AEP curriculum was updated and expanded. Prospective adoptive parent(s) who completed the AEP in the years prior were required to upgrade their education when they applied for a second adoption. With these records, there was a general lack of any reference to taking the updated AEP curriculum.

There was a very low (25%) compliance rate for Keeping the Written Family Assessment Current (ACM 5). Of the 4 applicable records, 3 were rated not achieved as the SFA was not updated annually. After prospective adoptive parent(s) have been approved for adoption and until an adoption placement occurs, the adoption worker must request updated information from the prospective adoptive parent(s) annually. All records rated not achieved were solely due to the lack of an annual update. As prospective adoptive parent(s) can wait varying lengths of time to be matched and familial circumstances change, it is imperative that SFA's remain current in order to ensure appropriate and successful matching, placement and adoption completion.

Had the prescribed S.A.F.E update document (which was introduced in August 2014) been utilized this critical measure would increase compliance ratings in this area.

The critical measure associated with Selecting Prospective Parent(s) for a Child in Continuing Custody (ACM 6) had a very low (22%) compliance rate. Among the 14 records that that were rated not achieved on this measure, 13 records had no documentation of the child's social worker reviewing the written SFAs and did not conduct a selection process outlined in Adoption Standard 26. The analysts noted that a lack of consistent file documentation regarding the selection of prospective adoptive parents may have contributed to the low compliance on this measure. Filing email correspondence between the Adoption and Guardianship workers and written notes from selection teleconferences on the AH record may strengthen compliance in this area.

Lastly, in the critical measure associated with Post-Placement Responsibilities of the Adoption Worker (ACM 12), the compliance rate was 0% due to insufficient documentation to meet the requirements set out in Standard 57. This measure was applied to 12 records. In 9 of the records there was no documentation of any contact or visit by the adoption worker with the adoptive family or with the child once the child was placed in the adoption home. The non-compliant records also lacked documentation on consulting the child about his or her views of the adoption and assisting the prospective adoptive family in meeting the child's specific needs as described in the plan of care at the time of proposal. In 1 of the records the visits did not meet policy requirements and in the other 2 records the visits did not document seeing the child within the appropriate time frames. More thorough documentation of post placement contact with the child is required to improve this very low compliance rate.

## 5. ACTIONS TAKEN TO DATE

In October of 2016 the Centralized Services Hub in Victoria commenced with screening and assessing all prospective caregivers on behalf of the SDAs, including those applying to become adoptive parents. This screening work has been extended to all 13 SDAs across the province. This Hub is intended to provide ease of access for the public across a broad continuum of in-care and out-of-care services and will lessen the workload of front line staff by moving some administrative functions from district offices.

On October 31, 2016 MCFD launched a new online Adoption tool province-wide that will streamline the adoption process for waiting families and help ensure children in care find a permanent family and home sooner. This new online tool 'Adopt BC Kids' provides a personalized user-friendly portal for prospective adoptive families to view information about adoption, view their application process, track what documents have been received and processed by MCFD, and better understand the next steps. Once approved, prospective adoptive parents can also browse the photos and videos of children waiting to be adopted. Anyone interested in becoming an adoptive can begin their journey through the online portal at [www.gov.bc.ca/adoptkids](http://www.gov.bc.ca/adoptkids).

The introduction of the Adopt BC Kids web portal and the enhanced role of the Centralized Services Hub in screening adoption applications may have a positive impact on the ability of SDAs to consistently meet the requirements set out in Adoption Practice Standards 43 and 44 (i.e., *Providing*

*Adoption Information and Accepting the Application to Adopt (ACM 1 & 2), and The Home Study Process: The Adoption Education and Structured Family Assessment Components (ACM 3 & 4).*

## 6. ACTION PLAN

Proposed Action Plan Items	Person Responsible	Date to be Completed by	Anticipated Outcome
<p>1) The Director of Operations for Adoption Services will review the findings of this practice audit, as well as the applicable Adoption Practice Standards (APS) and documentation requirements within the Adoption Management System (AMS) and physical files, with the supervisor for Adoption Services and all the adoption workers to reaffirm standards and general expectations for practice.</p> <p>Following this review with the supervisor for Adoption Services and all the adoption workers, the SDA will submit the meeting minutes to the manager of Quality Assurance, Office of the Provincial Director of Child Welfare.</p> <p><i>(Addresses ACMs 1-14)</i></p>	Sara Lloyd, EDS	Jan 31, 2018	Adoption workers have a clear understanding of the audit findings, adoption practice standards and associated procedures, and documentation requirements
<p>2) The SDA will develop and implement a tracking system to monitor the following: due dates and completions of the Structured Family Assessments and required annual updates (APS 47); dates of contacts and home visits related to post-placement responsibilities; and dates of the required prior contact checks at the end of the adoption residency periods and the completion of summary recordings (APS 61).</p> <p>This tracking system will be sent, via email, to the manager of Quality Assurance, Office of the Provincial Director of Child Welfare.</p> <p><i>(Addresses ACM 5, 8, 11 &amp; 14)</i></p>	Sara Lloyd, EDS	Jan 31, 2018	The SDA has an efficient process to ensure that required documentation is in AH files.

<p>3) The Director of Practice will review the relevant sections of this audit report with guardianship staff, highlighting the documentation requirements when guardianship practice overlaps with adoption practice, namely: selecting prospective parent(s) for a child in continuing custody (APS 26). Confirmation of this review will be sent, via email, to the manager of Quality Assurance, Office of the Provincial Director of Child Welfare.</p> <p><i>(Addresses ACM 6)</i></p>	<p>Lori Hansen, DOP</p>	<p>Jan 31, 2018</p>	<p>Adoption workers and guardianship workers will be better informed about the requirement to document the process for selecting prospective adoptive parents, including the review of the SFA by the guardianship worker.</p>
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## Appendix 1 – Listing of Adoption Practice Standards Assessed by Audit

### Adoption Practice Standard 43: Providing Adoption Information and Accepting the Application to Adopt

**When prospective adoptive parent(s) contact the ministry expressing an interest in adoption, you must respond within 7 working days and:**

- clarify your responsibilities under the *Adoption Act* and the *CFCSA*, including giving paramount consideration to the child's best interests in all circumstances
- provide them with information about adoption, including:
  - eligibility requirements
  - pre- and post-placement services provided by the ministry
  - services available through licensed adoption agencies, and adoption support groups
  - the regulation of payment of birth parent expenses
  - the children awaiting placement
  - post-adoption assistance
  - the adoption process, including time frames and requirements
  - the home study process, explaining that it consists of an education component and an objective, structured family assessment with no guarantee of approval or of an adoption placement
  - openness and access in adoption
  - the importance of preserving the Aboriginal child's cultural identity, and
  - the fee schedule for applicable services

You must personally interview each applicant to determine:

- whether the applicant is eligible to adopt a child in British Columbia
- in the case where they are applying for a child with special service needs, whether the applicant(s) have a reasonable understanding of the long-term impact of these needs and are prepared to accept the significant behavioural and emotional issues associated with these needs, and
- whether the applicant is Aboriginal

**When prospective adoptive parent(s) submit an application to the ministry for children awaiting placement, you must:**

- register the application with Adoption Branch [in the Adoption Management System]
- begin the home study process for:
  - those applying for a specific child in continuing custody awaiting placement
  - those applying for a child in care with special service needs where you have determined that they understand the long-term impact of those needs and are prepared to accept the issues associated with them

- within 10 working days, provide them with the applicable forms and information required for the structured family assessment component of the home study process, and
- advise Adoption Branch of the decision to begin the home study process

If the application is for a child with no special service needs or a child with only special placement needs, wait for Adoption Branch to request that you begin the home study process.

You must make contact annually with applicants waiting for the home study process to begin.

#### **Adoption Practice Standard 44: The Home Study Process: The Adoption Education and Structured Family Assessment Components**

**In order to approve applicants for adoption, you must complete the education component and structured family assessment component of the home study process.**

For the educational component of the home study, you must ensure that the prospective adoptive parent(s) complete a ministry-approved education program.

For the structured family assessment, you must conduct the assessment according to ministry-prescribed guidelines.

When conducting the structured family assessment, you must:

- gather the following documents:
  - results of prior contact checks
  - the results of all criminal record searches
  - physician's reports
  - a minimum of four references
- conduct a fair and impartial assessment process that includes:
  - individual and joint interviews if there are two applicants
  - interviews of any young children living in the home as part of the interview with their parent(s)
  - interviews separate from those with the parent(s) of any child 7 years of age or older to determine the child's views about the proposed adoption
  - separate, in-person interviews with other members of the household
  - at least one interview with all members of the household together so that you can assess how they relate to each other
  - at least one interview held in the prospective adoptive parent(s) home
- allow for sufficient time to determine the readiness of the prospective adoptive parent(s) to adopt a child with the special service and/or placement needs for which they have applied, and
- complete the requirements for approval as described in Practice Standard 46

Once the education component and structured family assessment have been completed, you must complete a written family assessment that:

- describes the preparation of the prospective adoptive parent(s) as required in the Adoption Regulation
- summarizes the structured family assessment, and
- includes a recommendation as to the prospective adoptive parent(s)' ability to parent by adoption a child with the special service and/or placement needs for which they have applied, and identifies the number and ages of children they are approved to adopt

You must complete the written family assessment at least 3 months and no longer than 4 months after all required documentation, as described above, has been gathered. If the written family assessment cannot be completed within 4 months, you must:

- document the reasons for the delay, and
- obtain the approval of your supervisor/team leader.

### **Adoption Practice Standard 47: Keeping the Written Family Assessment Current**

After prospective adoptive parent(s) have been approved for adoption and until an adoption placement occurs, you must request updated information from them:

- annually
- when there has been a change in their circumstances, and
- when they change their request for the age or special needs of a child or in the number of children

The updated information must be attached to or incorporated into the original written family assessment.

In addition, you must:

- reassess prospective adoptive parent(s) and revise their written family assessment recommendation when there is a change in their circumstances or a change in their request for the age or special needs of a child or in the number of children
- conduct a prior contact check and request new criminal record searches from prospective adoptive parent(s) every two years as part of the yearly update
- attach any yearly updates to the written family assessment
- where there are significant changes in the family's circumstances or when two years has passed since the family's approval, integrate the update into the written family assessment, and
- obtain your supervisor's signature on any updates that require a reassessment or new recommendation or that are integrated into the written family assessment

In order to keep all information on prospective adoptive parent(s) current, you must begin a new home study process:

- when a new child becomes part of the prospective adoptive family either through birth or through adoption, and/or
- when a written family assessment has been in abeyance and/or closed for a total of 2 years

### **Adoption Practice Standard 26: Selecting Prospective Parent(s) for a Child in Continuing Custody**

When selecting prospective adoptive parent(s) for a child in continuing custody, you must:

- determine whose views you will consider when deciding which prospective adoptive parent(s) will meet the child's special service and placement needs, and at a minimum include your supervisor/team leader and one other person
- obtain and review the written family assessments to determine the characteristics and abilities of the prospective adoptive parent(s) you are considering
- weigh all relevant factors as outlined in section 3 of the *Adoption Act* and Practice Standard 1 to determine if adoption placement with the prospective adoptive parent(s) being considered would be in the child's best interests
- obtain and consider the views of those you are involving in the selection process, and
- when there is more than one plan which may meet the child's needs and there is disagreement about which plan can best meet the child's needs, involve your regional manager responsible for adoption

### **Adoption Practice Standard 27: Proposing the Adoption Placement of a Child to Prospective Adoptive Parent(s)**

Prior to proposing the adoption placement of a child in continuing custody with prospective adoptive parent(s), you must:

- ensure that the child is thoroughly prepared and ready for an adoption placement
- participate in the review of the child's comprehensive plan of care and complete the "Specific Needs" and "Desired Outcome" categories in the child's comprehensive plan of care, including both present and future needs
- determine whether the prospective adoptive parent(s) agree to the level of openness you have determined is in the child's best interests
- obtain the approval of your supervisor/team leader to propose the child to the prospective adoptive parent(s)

When proposing the child to the adoption worker for the prospective adoptive parent(s), you must share the following, after removing identifying information:

- the comprehensive plan of care completed for the proposal, as described above
- the child's previous comprehensive plan of care
- the child's written placement history and life experiences (refer to Practice Standard 22), and
- all relevant information about the child and the birth family

When the prospective adoptive parent(s) have agreed to accept the adoption of the proposed child, you must:

- obtain from the adoption worker for the prospective adoptive parent(s) the completed and signed comprehensive plan of care and letter acknowledging information they have received
- determine with the adoption worker for the prospective adoptive parent(s), your supervisor/team leader and their supervisor/team leader whether the prospective adoptive parent(s) understand and have the capacity to meet the special service and placement needs of the child, and
- obtain your supervisor's/team leader's approval of the completed comprehensive plan of care before beginning pre-placement visits.

### **Adoption Practice Standard 50: The Adoption Proposal and Preparing for Placement**

When an adoption placement of a child is proposed, you must:

- ensure that all information on the child provided by the child's worker is shared with the prospective adoptive parent(s) and their physician
- ensure that prospective adoptive parent(s) have the opportunity to consult with medical professionals and/or others about the child's care
- assess the prospective adoptive parent(s)' ability and readiness to meet the specific needs of the child
- complete a statement, for the prospective adoptive parent(s) to sign, that acknowledges the documentation and information that has been provided about the birth parent(s) and the child
- unless the child proposed has been voluntarily placed under the Adoption Act and has no special service needs as defined in section 26(c) of the Adoption Regulation :
  - as participants in the review of the child's comprehensive plan of care, determine with the prospective adoptive parent(s) their plan to meet the child's needs
  - complete the "Description of services to be provided based upon the child's needs and "Target date" categories of the child's non-identifying comprehensive plan of care
  - obtain your supervisor's/team leader's approval and signature on the comprehensive plan of care.

After the prospective adoptive parent(s) have confirmed their interest in parenting the child you must:

- forward to the child's worker:
  - a copy of the prospective adoptive parent(s)' letter of acknowledgement
  - the completed comprehensive plan of care, if required
- if the child has special service needs, determine with the child's worker and both your supervisors/team leaders whether the prospective adoptive parent(s) can meet the special needs of the child
- if the child does not have special service needs, obtain the approval of your supervisor/team leader for the placement to proceed

- negotiate the terms of openness agreements and where possible complete openness agreements involving children in care, and
- arrange pre-placement visits and placement with the child's/birth parent's worker according to the written plan
- conduct a new prior contact check (including a check for protocol investigations) if the one completed at time of proposal is more than 30 days old

When it has been determined that the prospective adoptive parent(s) can meet the needs of the child, the placement of the child must occur within 6 months. If the child cannot be placed within 6 months, you must document the reasons and obtain the approval of your supervisor/team leader.

### **Adoption Practice Standard 37: Transferring Care and Custody with a Birth Parent Pre-Placement Agreement**

You must ensure the birth parent(s) transfer care and custody to the Director of Adoption with a Birth Parent Pre-placement Agreement if they have made one of the following interim adoption placement plans:

- to place the child with prospective adoptive parent(s) prior to the signing of adoption consents, or
- to place the child temporarily with caregivers prior to the signing of adoption consents.

Prior to entering into a Birth Parent Pre-placement Agreement to place the child temporarily with caregivers, you must:

- determine that placing the child with caregivers is in the child's best interests
- advise the birth parent(s) of their right to obtain independent legal advice
- determine the length of the Birth Parent Pre-placement Agreement, and
- ensure your supervisor/team leader reviews and agrees to the proposed agreement.

After placement of the child with caregivers, you must:

- involve the birth parent(s) in decisions affecting the child and inform them in a timely manner about significant developments in the child's life, and
- unless birth parent(s) have indicated in writing that they do not wish to be notified, make reasonable efforts to promptly notify them in the following circumstances:
  - if it is determined that the placement will not proceed in a home chosen by the birth parent(s) or guardian
  - if it is determined that the placement will not proceed because an adoption home for the child is not available
  - if the child dies, or
  - if the child develops a serious condition or has an injury that may result in the child's death or may cause serious or permanent impairment of the child's health.

If the child remains in care under a Birth Parent Pre-Placement Agreement or by adoption consents longer than 30 days prior to an adoption placement, a comprehensive plan of care is required.

## **Adoption Practice Standard 39: Required Consents**

Before placing for adoption a child:

- who is in the continuing custody of a director under the CFCSA, or
- who is under the guardianship of a director pursuant to section 29 of the *Family Relations Act* (now under Section 51 of the *Family Law Act*)

You must obtain the consent of the child, if he or she is 12 years of age or over and has the capacity to consent. (If it is determined that the child does not have the capacity to consent, refer to Practice Standard 41)

Before placing for adoption a child whose birth parent(s) are voluntarily planning adoption under the *Adoption Act* you must:

- obtain the consent of the child, if he or she is 12 years of age or over, and
- make reasonable efforts to obtain the consent of each of the following:
  - the birth mother
  - the father, as defined in section 13(2) of the *Adoption Act* and
  - any person appointed as the child's guardian

Before completing all adoptions you must obtain all required consents for the court, including the consent of the Director of Adoption, unless:

- an individual is not capable of consenting
- an order has been granted dispensing with a consent, or
- you are applying to dispense with consent

In a direct placement or in an adoption under section 48 of the *Adoption Act* you must advise prospective adoptive parent(s) that it is their and their lawyer's responsibility to determine who must consent and obtain the required consents.

## **Adoption Practice Standard 57: Post-Placement Responsibilities of the Adoption Worker to the Child and the Adoptive Parent(s)**

In exercising your guardianship role with the child, you must ensure that the rights of the child in care are affirmed and respected and that all applicable guardianship duties and responsibilities as specified in Practice Standards for Guardianship are carried out, including but not limited to:

- maintaining regular contact with the child and prospective adoptive family by:
  - contacting the prospective adoptive parent(s) by telephone or visit within one working day after placement
  - visiting the child and prospective adoptive family in their home within 7 calendar days after placement
  - contacting prospective adoptive parent(s) of a child with special service needs at least once each month, either by telephone or in person, and visiting the child and prospective

- adoptive family in their home at least 2 additional times within the 6 month post-placement period
- visiting an infant with no special needs and the prospective adoptive family in their home at least 2 additional times within the 6 month post-placement period
- if the post-placement period extends beyond 6 months, visiting the child and prospective adoptive family in their home at least every 90 days
- assisting the prospective adoptive family in meeting the child’s specific needs as described on the comprehensive plan of care prepared at the time of proposal
- consulting with the child about his or her views of the adoption placement and, if the child is at least 7 years of age and less than 12, ensuring that a written report on the child’s views is prepared for the adoption completion, and
- reviewing the child’s comprehensive plan of care

### **Adoption Practice Standard 60: Preparing the Report on a Younger Child’s Views**

After a child who is at least 7 and less than 12 years of age has been placed for adoption and before applying to the court for an adoption order, you must privately interview the child, so that the child’s views on the adoption can be heard and recorded.

When conducting the interview and writing the Report on a Younger Child’s Views, you must:

- determine the child’s views and understanding of the following:
  - the effect and meaning of adoption
  - the proposed adoption and any proposed change of the child’s name
  - relationships with other persons who are significant in the child’s life
  - where applicable, how his or her racial, cultural, linguistic and spiritual identity can be maintained
- provide the above information within the report and in addition include:
  - your name and occupation
  - confirmation that you met with the child at a place and in a manner that allowed the child to freely express his or her views about the adoption
  - identifying information about the child and the prospective adoptive parent(s), and particulars respecting the interview, and
- obtain your supervisor’s/team leader’s approval and signature on the report.

You must submit the report to the court when applying for an adoption order.

### **Adoption Practice Standard 61: Preparing the Summary Recording**

Before completing the Summary Recording, you must complete a current prior contact check on the prospective adoptive parent(s).

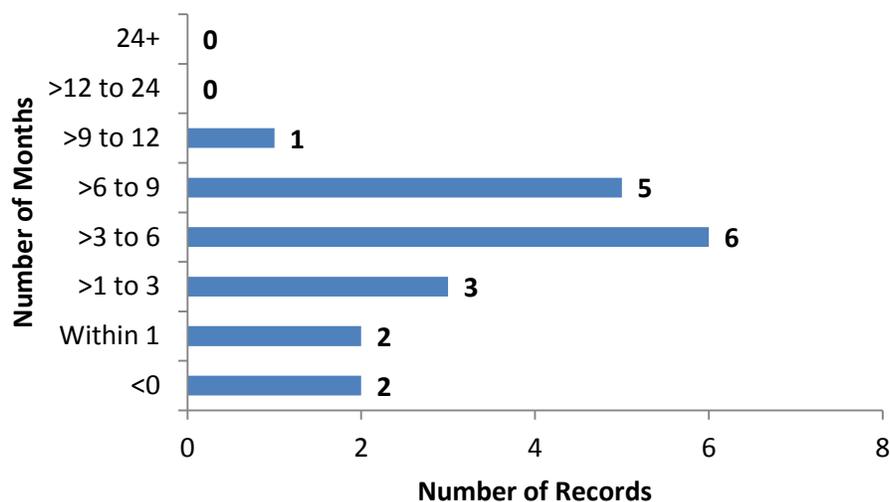
To assist the Director of Adoption in making a recommendation to the court as to whether an adoption order should be made, you must prepare a Summary Recording containing:

- the observations, assessments and facts upon which the Post-placement Report is established, and
- information as to whether the requirements of the *Adoption Act* have been met.

## Appendix 2 – Time Intervals Observed for Stages in the Adoption Process

In reviewing the 45 AH files (both open and closed) for this audit, the practice analysts on the provincial audit team made a number of observations about the time intervals for some of the stages in the adoption process. These observations are unrelated to the compliance ratings for the fourteen separate Critical Measures presented in the body of this report. However, the four bar charts displayed below, do provide some insight into the time it takes for Adoption workers in the North West SDA to guide prospective adoptive parents through the adoption process.

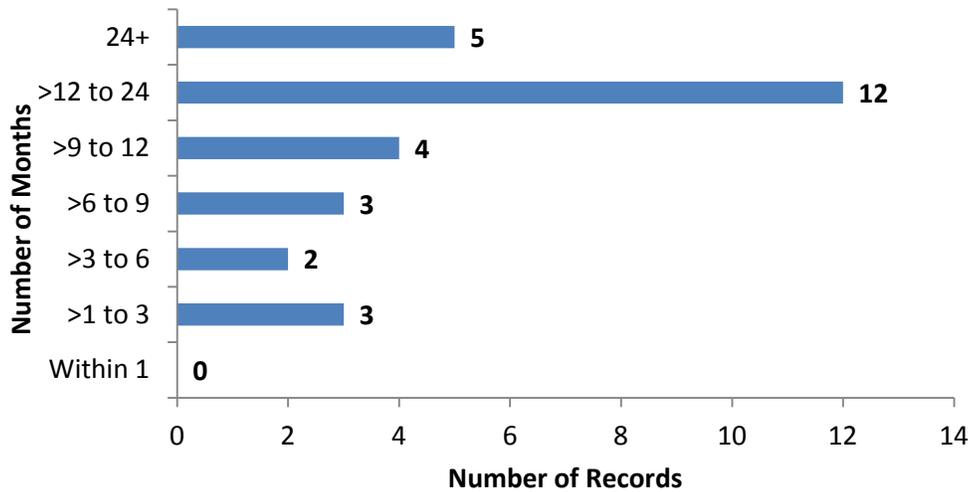
**Figure 1: Time from Opening of AH Record to the Completion of the Adoption Education Program (AEP), SDA 41 - Northwest**



Note:

1. Figures are based on adoption MIS/AMS open/closed records with start date after Dec 31, 2010 with close dates between April 1, 2015 and June 30, 2016 or still open on March 31, 2016.
2. N= 19 of 45 records are included in this time calculation. Includes all 19 records rated Achieved on ACM 3.
3. No completion dates for 26 records due to: did not complete prior to completion of home study (3), or no certificate confirming completion of AEP in file (12), or with a second adoption the AEP was not reviewed/training status upgraded (4), or AEP still in progress (3), or withdrawn before AEP completed (4).
4. There were 2 records with an AEP date prior to MIS open date because the AEP was completed prior to the opening of the AH record in MIS.

**Figure 2: Time from Opening of AH Record to the Completion and Approval of the Structured Family Assessment (SFA), SDA 41 - Northwest**

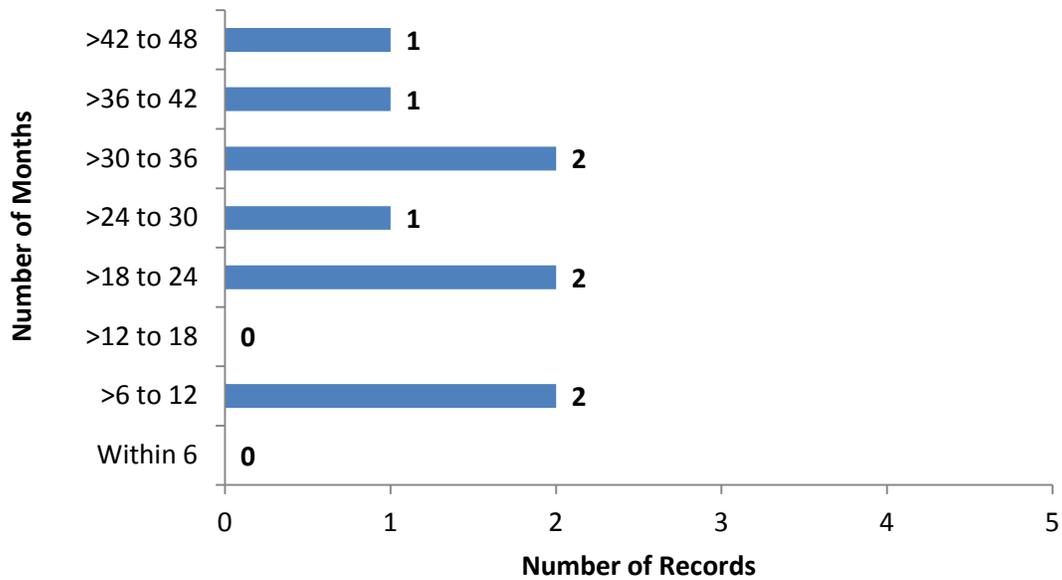


Note:

1. N= 29 of 45 records are included in this time calculation. Includes all 19 records rated Achieved on ACM 4, plus 10 record rated Not Achieved on ACM 4 because the SFA was not completed within the 4-month timeframe.

2. No approval dates for 16 records due to: no written SFA in file (1), SFA was incomplete (1), or withdrawn before SFA completed (7), or written SFA not started & AEP not yet completed (3), or written SFA still in progress (4).

**Figure 3: Time from Opening of AH Record to Completion of the Summary Recording, SDA 41 - Northwest**



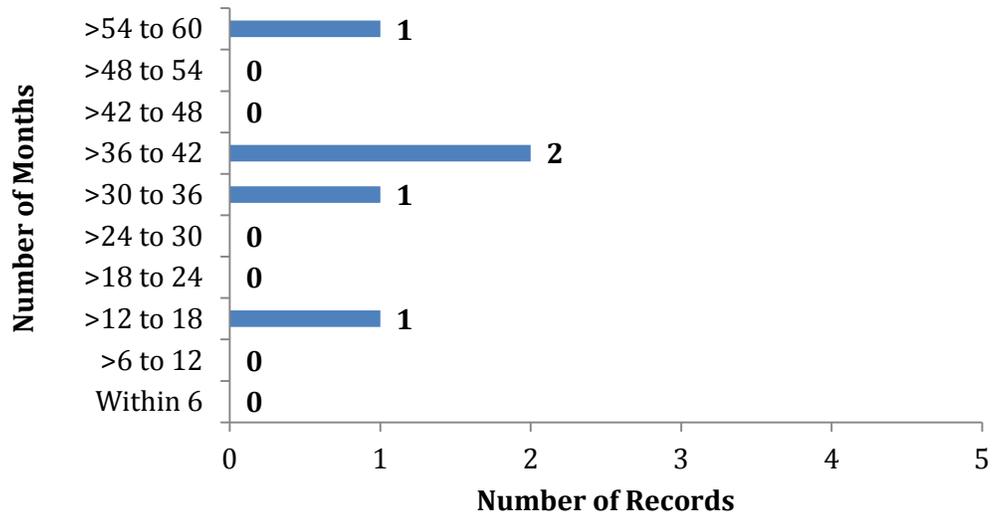
Note:

1. N= 9 of 45 records are included in this time calculation. Includes all 9 records rated Achieved on ACM 14.

2. No completion dates for 36 records due to: no summary recording in file (1), or no summary recording on file and also no PCC conducted (1), or 6-month placement period not yet expired (4), or a child has not yet been proposed to the prospective adoptive parent(s) (17), or application to adopt was terminated by MCFD (1) or withdrawn (9), placement disruption (1), or child not yet placed with prospective adoptive parent(s) (2).

3. Summary recordings are completed at the conclusion of the adoption placement and are required documentation before a Court package can be prepared and submitted.

**Figure 4: Time from Opening of AH Record to the Closing of the AH Record, for Completed Adoptions, SDA 41 - Northwest**



Note:

1. N= 5 of 45 records are included in this calculation. Includes only AH records that have been closed because an Adoption Order was obtained and the adoption completed.
2. This calculation includes any AH file closed in MIS (as of June 30, 2016). Closure dates are either before or after the Adoption Order is granted.