

**CLINTON COUNTY JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES  
FOSTER CARE PROGRAM  
POLICY ON FAMILY FOSTER HOMES WITH SWIMMING POOLS**

Clinton County Job and Family Services has developed a policy regarding the use of swimming pools by foster children residing in licensed foster homes. As children in the care and custody of Clinton County Job and Family Services become the agency's responsibility, it is important for foster families who care for these children to take notice to the following guidelines regarding children's use of swimming pools.

Per Ohio Administrative Code 5101:2-7-12(C) (1) outdoor areas on the grounds of or immediately adjacent to a family 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.

In order for the agency to allow the use of a swimming pool by a foster child the following must be followed:

1. Foster children shall have at least one adult who is responsible for said child's welfare and who is at least 18 years of age to supervise them at all times while the foster children are swimming in a pool. The supervising adult should be in the pool with the foster child, or sitting or standing by the pool for the duration of the time that the foster child is in the pool.
2. Any child under the age of four years must be wearing a flotation device if swimming in a pool when the water depth is more than two feet. A flotation device is a safety ring worn around the waist, swimming suit with flotation device sewn into the suit or "water wings" that are securely attached to the arms of the child. **THE ONLY EXCEPTION TO THIS RULE APPLIES TO A CHILD WHO IS RECEIVING SWIMMING INSTRUCTION BY A CERTIFIED SWIM INSTRUCTOR. AT THAT TIME, A CHILD MAY NOT HAVE TO WEAR A FLOTATION DEVICE IF THEY ARE PARTICIPATING IN A SWIM INSTRUCTION CLASS.**
3. Access to the pool must be safeguarded at all times. Foster children should never be left unattended around any swimming pool, regardless of the size of the pool, or water depth. Pools with ladders shall be placed in an upright and locked position when not in use. If the pool area is fenced in, the gate to the pool shall be closed, locked and secured at all times when not in use. **A POOL SHOULD NEVER BE SET UP IN AN AREA WHERE A CHILD CAN GAIN ACCESS TO THE POOL. A SAFETY BARRIER TO THE POOL MUST BE IN PLACE AT ALL TIMES.**
4. The pool shall be maintained in a safe manner with water treated or changed according to the pool instructions. Only an adult may administer water treatment to a pool (i.e. chlorine, chemicals, etc.)

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5. Before a pool may be used by a foster child, the agency must inspect the pool at the foster home setting and it must be approved on the ODJFS 01348, SAFETY AUDIT OF A FOSTER HOME.

Submitted by:

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Approved by:

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