DATE: October 27, 2006

TO: District Administrators and Community-Based Care CEO’s
Zone Licensing Specialists
Zone Adoption Specialists
ICPC Coordinators

THROUGH: Vicki Groven, Acting Assistant Secretary for Operations
David Fairbanks, Director of Provider Relations

FROM: Patricia Badland, Director, Office of Family Safety


On July 3, 2006, President Bush signed the Safe and Timely Interstate Placement of Foster Children Act of 2006 (P.L. 109-239) into law. The implementation date is October 1, 2006. This memo provides guidance and practice for implementation of P.L. 109-239 until changes to the foster home licensing and adoptions rules can be completed.

This new law will require a two-step process for completion of a full home study for the interstate placement of dependent children with prospective adoptive and licensed foster families in Florida.

Step 1. A written evaluation of the home environment must be completed according to the current administrative rules with the exception of sections 65C-13.009(6)(a)1 and 65C-16.005(4)(b). These two sections require pre-service training/preparation to be a part of the home study process. The training requirement is now exempted under P.L. 109-239 in order to assist states in completing interstate home study evaluations within a 30-60 day timeframe. Step 1 does NOT require a state to recommend or approve a child for placement in the receiving state based on the home study evaluation. Rather, this new law defines an interstate home study as an evaluation documenting that the home environment meets the individual needs of the child, including the child’s safety, permanency, health, well-being and mental, emotional and physical development. Note, however, that a negative evaluation of the home environment can be used to recommend against placement, even before step 2 has begun.

Step 2. After pre-service training/preparation is successfully completed by the prospective adoptive or licensed foster parents, a recommendation must be sent to the Interstate Compact Central Office for forwarding on to the other state as an official

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approval for placement of the dependent child. It is important to recognize the need for court approval after this second step is completed by the prospective adoptive or licensed foster parents.

If you have questions about these guidelines, please contact Chris Lolley, Licensing Specialist, at (850) 921-1928 regarding licensed foster parent issues or Kathleen Waters, Adoption Program Manager, at (850) 922-5055 regarding adoptive parent issues.

cc: Sallie Linton, Chief of State/ Federal Planning and Reports
    Elizabeth Wynn, Chief of Adoptions and Federal Funding Eligibility
    Gay Frizzell, Chief of Child Welfare Services Training, and Supports