

**§ 48-3-303. Content and timing of preplacement assessment.**

(a) A preplacement assessment shall be completed within 90 days after a request has been accepted.

(b) The preplacement assessment must be based on at least one personal interview with each individual being assessed in the individual's residence and any report received pursuant to subsection (c) of this section.

(c) The preplacement assessment shall, after a reasonable investigation, report on the following about the individual being assessed:

- (1) Nationality, race, or ethnicity, and any religious preference;
- (2) Marital and family status and history, including the presence of any children born to or adopted by the individual and any other children in the household;
- (3) Date of birth and physical and mental health, including any addiction to alcohol or drugs;
- (4) Educational and employment history and any special skills;
- (5) Property and income, and current financial information provided by the individual;
- (6) Reason for wanting to adopt;
- (7) Any previous request for an assessment or involvement in an adoptive placement and the outcome of the assessment or placement;
- (8) Whether the individual has ever been a respondent in a domestic violence proceeding or a proceeding concerning a minor who was allegedly abused, dependent, neglected, abandoned, or delinquent, and the outcome of the proceeding;
- (9) Whether the individual has ever been convicted of a crime other than a minor traffic violation;
- (10) Whether the individual has located a parent interested in placing a child with the individual for adoption and a brief, nonidentifying description of the parent and the child; and
- (11) Any other fact or circumstance that may be relevant to a determination of the individual's suitability to be an adoptive parent, including the quality of the environment in the home and the functioning of any children in the household.
- (12) The following information may be redacted from the preplacement assessment provided to a placing parent or guardian:
  - a. Detailed information reflecting the prospective adoptive parent's income, expenditures, assets, liabilities, and social security numbers;
  - b. Detailed information about the prospective adoptive parent's extended family members, including surnames, names of employers, names of schools attended, social security numbers, telephone numbers and addresses; and
  - c. Other similarly detailed information about extended family members obtained under subsections (b) and (c) of this section.
- (13) The most recent amended or updated preplacement assessment that meets the requirements of this section and G.S. 48-3-301(a), including subsequent amendments or partial updates completed as of the time of delivery, shall constitute the preplacement assessment for the purpose of meeting any requirement of this Chapter that a copy of the preplacement assessment be delivered to a court or a placing parent, guardian, or agency.

When any of the above is not reasonably available, the preplacement assessment shall state why it is unavailable.

(d) The agency shall conduct an investigation for any criminal record as permitted by law. If a prospective adoptive parent is seeking to adopt a minor who is in the custody or placement responsibility of a county department of social services, a county department of social services shall have the prospective adoptive parent's criminal history and the criminal histories of all individuals 18 years of age or older who reside in the prospective adoptive home investigated pursuant to G.S. 48-3-309, and in accordance with G.S. 48-3-309(b), make a determination as to the prospective adoptive parent's fitness to have responsibility for the safety and well-being of children and as to whether other individuals required to be checked are fit for an adoptive child to reside with them in the home.

(e) In the preplacement assessment, the agency shall review the information obtained pursuant to subsections (b), (c)(2) through (c)(13), and (d) of this section and evaluate the individual's strengths and needs to be an adoptive parent. The agency shall then determine whether the individual is suitable to be an adoptive parent.

(f) If the agency determines that the individual is suitable to be an adoptive parent, the preplacement assessment shall include specific factors which support that determination.

(g) If the agency determines that the individual is not suitable to be an adoptive parent, the preplacement assessment shall state the specific concerns which support that determination. A specific concern is one that reasonably indicates that placement of any minor, or a particular minor, in the home of the individual would pose a significant risk of harm to the well-being of the minor.

(h) In addition to the information and finding required by subsections (c) through (g) of this section, the preplacement assessment must contain a list of the sources of information on which it is based.

(i) The Social Services Commission shall have authority to establish by rule additional standards for preplacement assessments. (1995, c. 457, s. 2; 1998-229, s. 14; 2001-150, s. 8; 2005-114, s. 2; 2007-276, s. 8; 2012-16, s. 5; 2018-68, ss. 6.1, 6.2; 2018-142, s. 9; 2019-172, s. 6; 2019-240, s. 17; 2023-124, s. 2.2.)