§ 131D-10.6A. Training by the Division of Social Services required.

(a) The Division of Social Services, Department of Health and Human Services, shall require a minimum of 30 hours of preservice training for foster care parents either prior to licensure or within six months from the date a provisional license is issued pursuant to G.S.131D-10.3, and a mandated minimum of 10 hours of continuing education for all foster care parents annually after the year in which a license is obtained. As part of licensure, the training shall include a module that is created and made available by the Department that explains, at a minimum, the roles and obligations of a foster parent in judicial proceedings conducted under Subchapter I of Chapter 7B of the General Statutes.

(b) The Division of Social Services shall establish minimum training requirements for child welfare services staff. The minimum training requirements established by the Division are as follows:

(1) Child welfare services workers shall complete a minimum of 72 hours of preservice training before assuming direct client contact responsibilities. In completing this requirement, the Division of Social Services shall ensure that each child welfare worker receives training on family centered practices and State and federal law regarding the basic rights of individuals relevant to the provision of child welfare services, including the right to privacy, freedom from duress and coercion to induce cooperation, and the right to parent.

(2) Child protective services workers shall complete a minimum of 18 hours of additional training that the Division of Social Services determines is necessary to adequately meet training needs.

(3) Foster care and adoption workers shall complete a minimum of 39 hours of additional training that the Division of Social Services determines is necessary to adequately meet training needs.

(4) Child welfare services supervisors shall complete a minimum of 72 hours of preservice training before assuming supervisory responsibilities and a minimum of 54 hours of additional training that the Division of Social Services determines is necessary to adequately meet training needs.

(5) Child welfare services staff shall complete 24 hours of continuing education annually. In completing this requirement, the Division of Social Services shall provide each child welfare services staff member with annual update information on family centered practices and State and federal law regarding the basic rights of individuals relevant to the provision of child welfare services, including the right to privacy, freedom from duress and coercion to induce cooperation, and the right to parent.

(c) The Division of Social Services may grant an exception in whole or in part to the requirement under subdivision (b)(1) of this section to child welfare workers who meet either of the following:

(1) Satisfactorily complete or are enrolled in a masters or bachelors program after July 1, 1999, from a North Carolina social work program accredited pursuant to the Council on Social Work Education. The program's curricula must cover the specific preservice training requirements as established by the Division of Social Services.

(2) Have child welfare work experience in another state and have completed child welfare training equivalent to training in this State.

(d) The Division of Social Services shall ensure that training opportunities are available for county departments of social services and consolidated human service agencies to meet the training requirements of subsection (b) of this section. (1995, c. 324, s. 23.25; 1997-390, s. 11.1;

1997-443, s. 11A.118(a); 2000-67, s. 11.14(c); 2003-304, s. 4.2; 2021-132, s. 1(i); 2023-65, s. 7.4.)