MARCH 1, 2015

DEAR COUNTY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES
DEAR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF PRIVATE CHILD PLACING AGENCY - ADOPTION

ATTENTION: CHILD WELFARE STAFF PERFORMING ADOPTION ACTIONS

SUBJECT: ADOPTION FORMS REVISED FOR GENDER NEUTRALITY FOLLOWING THE FEDERAL COURT RULING IN GENERAL SYNOD OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST V. COOPER

This letter is to inform county child welfare agencies of the ongoing initiative to update and streamline all adoption processes following the U.S. District Court for the Western District of North Carolina declaring unconstitutional any state law that operates to deny same-sex couples the right to marry. Since that decision, the N.C. Division of Social Services has been reviewing and addressing the legal implications of the court’s ruling, including the potential impacts on adoptions. All necessary adoption forms have been amended to be in line with the federal court’s decision. They are now available for public use. The Division of Social Services and the Office of Vital Records are currently working to streamline our IT and communications process in order to efficiently process all adoptions and issue amended birth certificates post adoption.

Changes to the adoption forms primarily consisted of language and formatting edits to improve clarity and provide gender neutrality. The DSS-1800, 1804, and 1814 also included changes in statutory citations. In the case of the DSS-1808, an additional field was also added regarding adoption dissolutions and disruptions to better inform data availability in this area. The following adoption forms have been revised and are now, or soon will be, available on the website: http://info.dhhs.state.nc.us/olm/forms/forms.aspx?dc=dss

DSS-1800 Petition for Adoption of a Minor Child.
DSS-1801 Agency’s Consent to Adoption
DSS-1802 Consent to Adoption by Parent, Guardian ad Litem, or Guardian
DSS-1803 Consent of Child for Adoption
DSS-1804 Relinquishment of Minor for Adoption
DSS-1805 Revocation of Relinquishment for Adoption by Parent or Guardian
DSS-1806 Revocation of Consent to Adoption by Parent, Guardian AD Litem, or Guardian
DSS-1807 Order for Report on Proposed Adoption
DSS-1808 Report on Proposed Adoption
DSS-1809 Affidavit of Parentage
DSS-1811 Medical Examination as Part of the Report to the Court
DSS-1814 Decree of Adoption
DSS-1815 Report to Vital Records
DSS-5012 Adoption Assistance Eligibility Checklist
In an effort to provide clarity and consistent information in regards to Stepparent Adoption and the issuance of a correctly amended birth certificate following a Stepparent Adoption, a new Report to Vital Records has been issued specifically for Stepparent Adoptions.

NEW ADOPTION FORM: DSS-5170 Report to Vital Records (Stepparent Adoption)

Spanish versions of the aforementioned adoption forms are pending.

If you have any questions regarding the forms revision process or the adoption process following the federal court’s decision regarding same sex marriage, please contact Jamie Bazemore at (919) 527-6371 or jamie.bazemore@dhhs.nc.gov.

Sincerely,

Kevin Kelley, Section Chief
Child Welfare Services

CC: Jack Rogers
Child Welfare Services Team Leaders

CWS-03-2015