# Unified Home Study

## *General Information*

**Participant Guide**

Office of Child Welfare

*4/1/2018*

# Table of Contents

Unified Home Study Definition ..... 4
Placement Assessment ..... 7
Purpose of Unified Home Studies ..... 8
Person Provider Inquiry ..... 10
Provider File Cabinet ..... 17
What Components Does a UHS Assess? ..... 22

# Unified Home Study: General Information

**Learning Objectives:**

1. Define the purpose of a Unified Home Study and explain why the changes have been made to policies and FSFN functionality.
2. Examine the common core components of a UHS and the information gathered to assess these components.
3. Identify new FSFN functionality and how it relates to the various UHS types.

# Unified Home Study Definition

The Unified Home Study (UHS) is the assessment of a common set of requirements that must be met before the child is placed by a Child Welfare Professional into someone's home, such as a relative/non-relative, foster family, or adoptive family.

## Why Change?

1. UHS FSFN functionality did not align with practice and policy.
2. UHS FSFN functionality and state policies did not align with post-Title IV-E Waiver requirements.
3. The UHS is not user-friendly and does not meet the needs of CPIs, Case Managers, Licensing Specialists, and Adoptions Specialists.
4. Unified Home Studies are not consistently approved and denied in FSFN.

## What Has Changed?

**Policies:**

- 65C-16, F.A.C.: Adoptions
- 65C-13, F.A.C.: Licensing
- 65C-28, F.A.C.: Out-of-Home Care
- CFOP 170-1, Chapter 5: Unified Home Study
- CFOP 170-1, Chapter 6: Requesting and Analyzing Background Records

**FSFN Functionality:**

- Ability to inactivate non-household members
- Ability to build upon a previously approved UHS
- Redesign of the finance breakdown group box
- Modification of the narrative family assessment
- Modification of approvals process

- Ability to capture common core assessment questions
- Ability to search for person provider inquiries
- Ability to answer non-required questions
- Creation of a provider filing cabinet and a provider licensing checklist

## When Do the Changes Occur?

## Resources

Various training materials and resources will be offered in order to prepare all Child Welfare Professionals for the upcoming changes. These resources can be found at the Florida Center for Child Welfare website.

- The following materials can be found here: http://www.centerforchildwelfare.org/HomeStudy.shtml
  - UHS Train-the-Trainer Guides, PowerPoints, and Participant Guides.
  - UHS Job Aid: Provides an overview of the core components and includes sample questions that can be utilized by participants when making the UHS assessment.
  - FSFN Tutorials: Provide step-by-step demonstrations on how to create a Person Provider and the UHS. Includes how to select the various types of home studies, upload key documents, and complete the UHS.
  - UHS FSFN Functionality Informational Flyers.
- The following materials can be found here: http://centerforchildwelfare.fmhi.usf.edu/DeptOperatingProcedures.shtml
  - CFOPS.
- The following materials can be found here: http://centerforchildwelfare.fmhi.usf.edu/FloridaAdminCode.shtml
  - Florida Administrative Codes.

- The following materials can be found here: http://www.centerforchildwelfare.org/FSFNAll.shtml

  – Unified Home Study User Guide: Provides information about how to complete work in FSFN. This guide includes screen shots of the work in FSFN.

  – Unified Home Study How Do I Guide: Provides the steps to take when completing work in FSFN. This is a quick desk reference companion to the User Guide where additional details can be found.

  – Unified Home Study Position Paper: Defines how a child welfare business process is supported with the FSFN functionality.

## Placement Assessment

A placement assessment must first be completed when a child is initially removed. Additional Placement Assessments should be completed as determined by the Community Base Care (CBC) Lead Agency.

People may recall from the recent webinar entitled "Assessment Process for Placement of Children in Out-of-Home-Care", the placement assessment helps determine the level of care needed for each child placed in out-of-home care to ensure the most appropriate placement is selected on behalf of the child. Webinar link to share and/or use as needed: http://centervideo.forest.usf.edu/video/center/asplacoohc/start.html

Through the use of the placement assessment, Child Welfare Professionals determine the best level of care needed for the child's placement. Thus, in determining the best placement setting, assess if the child has any:

- Medical, developmental, and/or mental health needs
- DJJ involvement
- Court order placement requirements
- Siblings
- Educational needs
- Placement preference and activities, hobbies, etc. that the child is involved with

This assessment is designed to determine the level of care, not to determine if the child should be placed with a specific individual.

# Purpose of Unified Home Studies

- **Emergency Placement:**
  - Completed by Child Protective Investigators.
  - Assesses prospective relative/non-relative caregivers.
  - Occurs when a child must be placed immediately due to exigent circumstances.
  - Initial assessment occurs prior to the child's placement.

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- **Relative/Non-relative Placement:**
  - Completed by Case Managers that will be placing the child with a relative/non-relative caregiver.
  - Assesses prospective relative/non-relative placements.
  - Assessment occurs prior to the child's placement.

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- **Initial Licensing or Re-licensing for Foster Home:**
  - Completed by Licensing Specialists/staff who are employed by a CBC, subcontracted agency, or other licensed child-placing agency.
  - Assesses prospective caregivers who want to become foster parents (licensed caregivers) for children placed in out-of-home care and caregivers who are already licensed and are undergoing their re-licensure process.
  - For the initial license UHS, the assessment and supervisor approval in FSFN occurs prior to the child's placement.
  - Determines the number of children the caregiver(s) are able to care for and supervise.

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- **Adoption:**
  - Completed by Adoption Specialists/staff employed by a CBC, subcontracted agency, or other licensed child-placing agency.
  - Completed when an individual wishes to adopt a child within the Child Welfare System to evaluate his/her capacity for adoptive parenthood.
  - Completed and supervisor approved in FSFN prior to the adoption of a child.

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- **Adoption Addendum**
  - Completed by Adoption Specialists/staff employed by a CBC, subcontracted agency, or other licensed child-placing agency.
  - Completed when an Adoption Unified Home Study needs to be updated.

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- **Addendum-Not Adoption**
  - Completed by Licensing Specialists and Case Managers.
  - Completed annually when a licensed caregiver is afforded a three-year foster care license.
  - Completed when there are updates due to changes in family circumstances.

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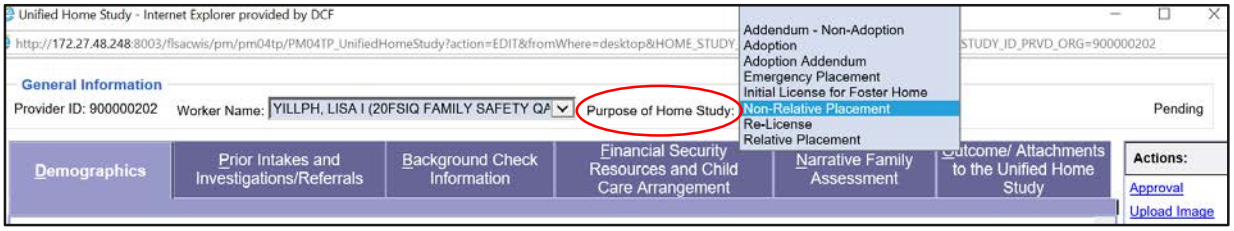
**FSFN Screens**




## Person Provider Inquiry

The Person Provider Inquiry is used to document the initial inquiry when a potential caregiver wants to become a Person Provider (i.e., licensed foster parent, relative or non-relative caregiver, or adoptive parent).

- There are two routes that can be followed when creating the Person Provider Inquiry:

  1. When CPIs are in situations where they do not have access to a computer, for example if they are conducting the removal in the late hours of the night and are not near the office or do not have internet access in the field, the Criminal Intelligence Unit (CIU) at the Florida Abuse Hotline can assist by phone. To conduct the background checks and complete the Person Provider Inquiry, the CIU needs the information for the potential caregiver(s) and household members. The CIU will then conduct a provider search, create a provider inquiry, create the UHS, complete background checks, and assign the Person Provider Inquiry to the CPI.
     – **Note:** The Person Provider Inquiry displays in the My Intakes section in FSFN.

  2. The second way is for Child Welfare Professionals to create the Person Provider Inquiry themselves using the FSFN Create menu.

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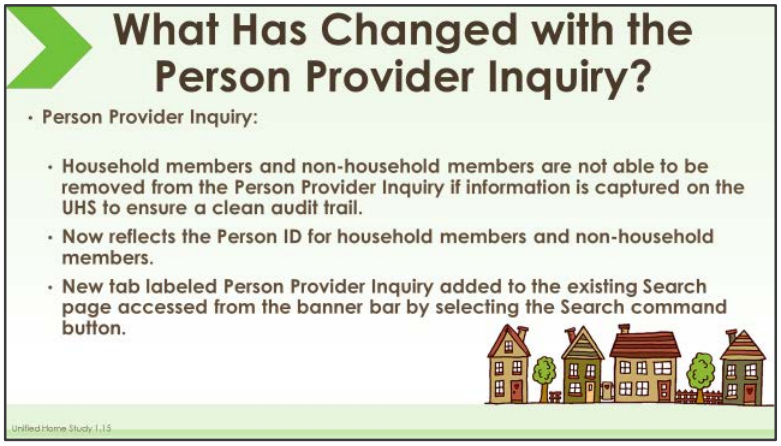
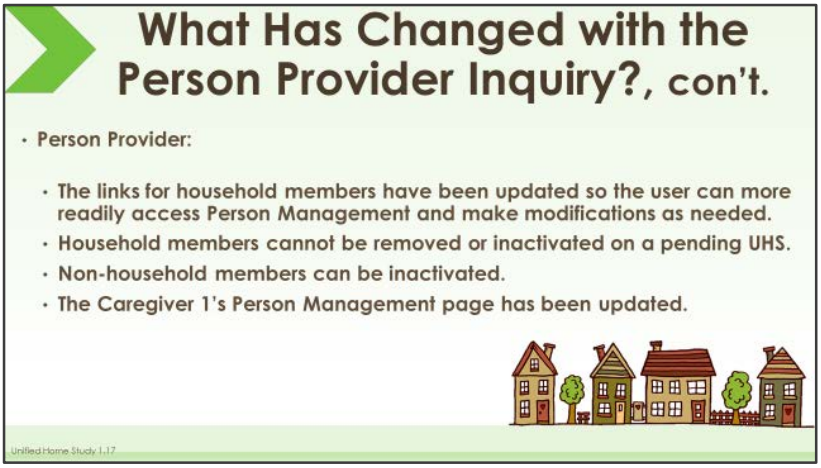
## What Has Changed with the Person Provider Inquiry?

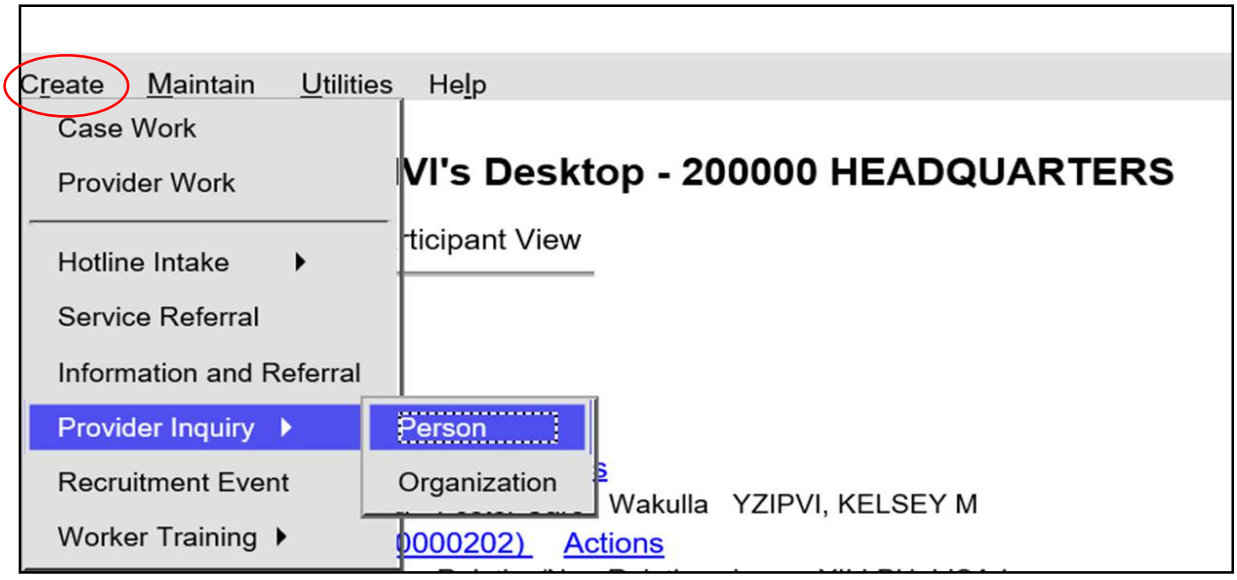


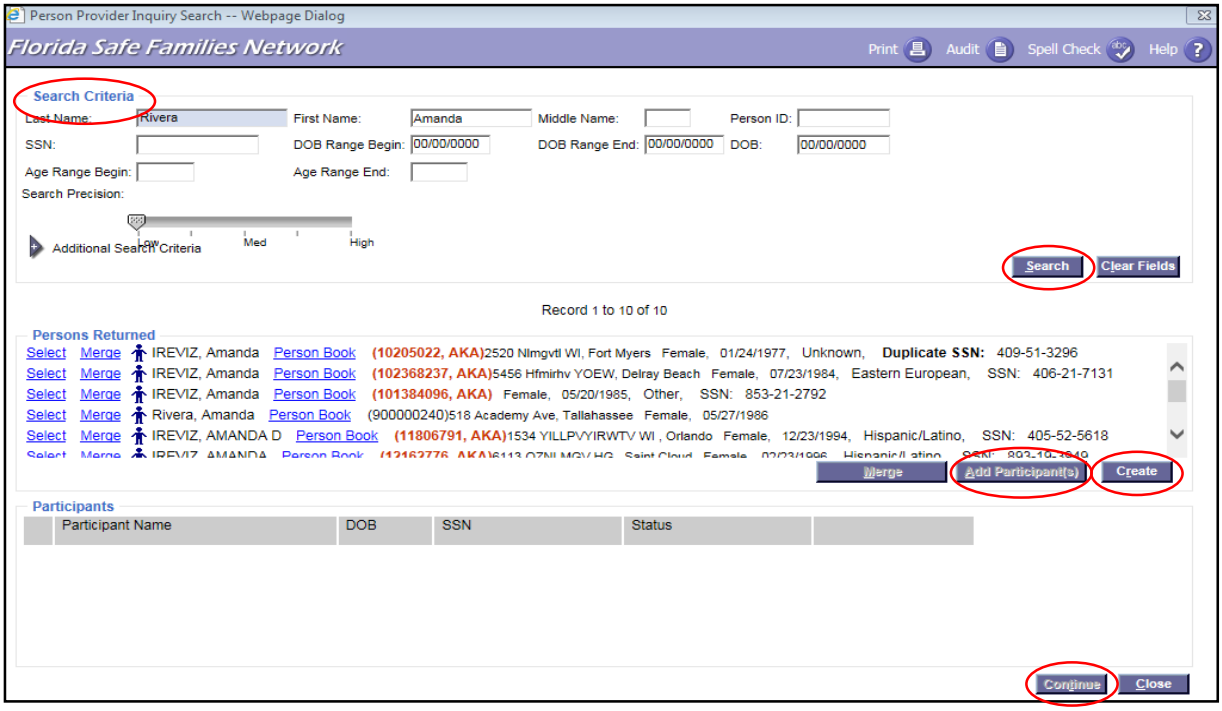
# Creating the Person Provider Inquiry and Launching the UHS

**FSFN Screens**

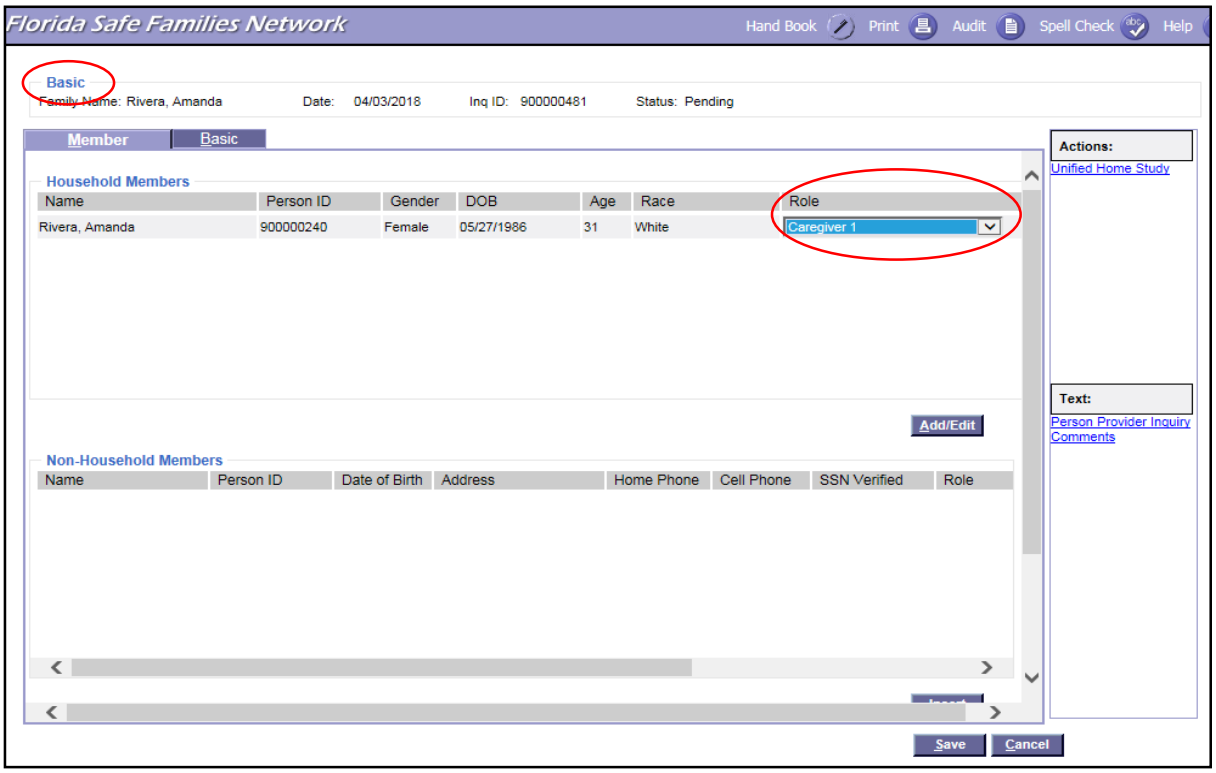
*How to create a Person Provider Inquiry:*



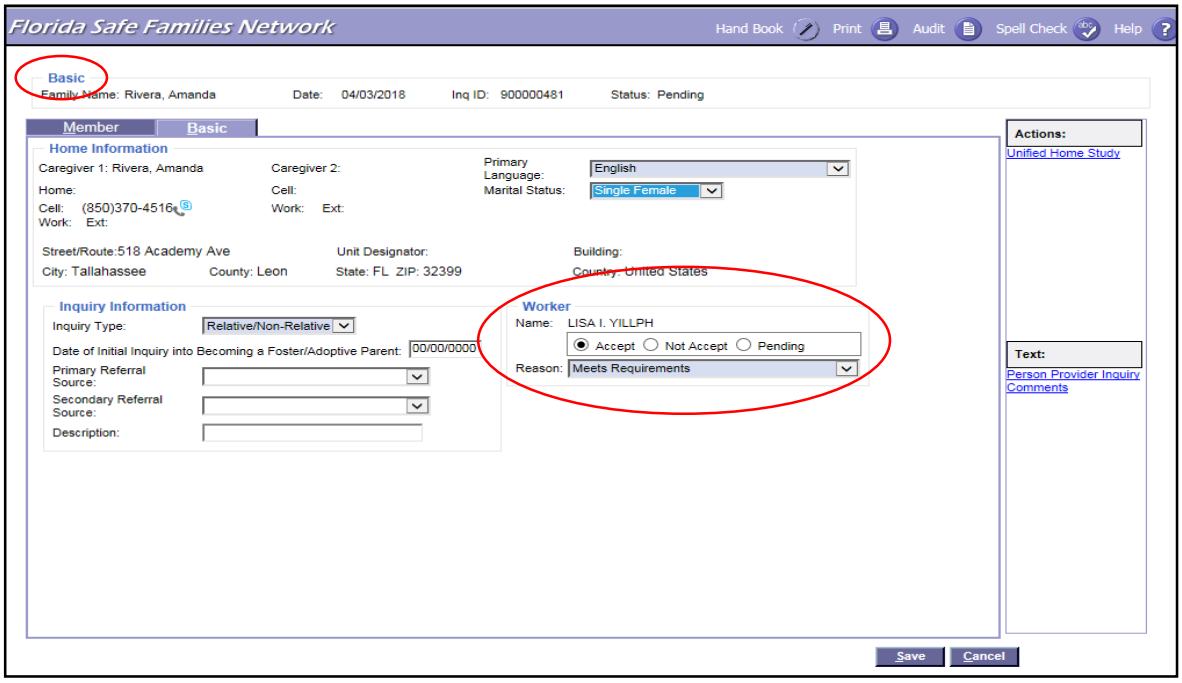

*How to search and add participants to the Person Provider Inquiry:*



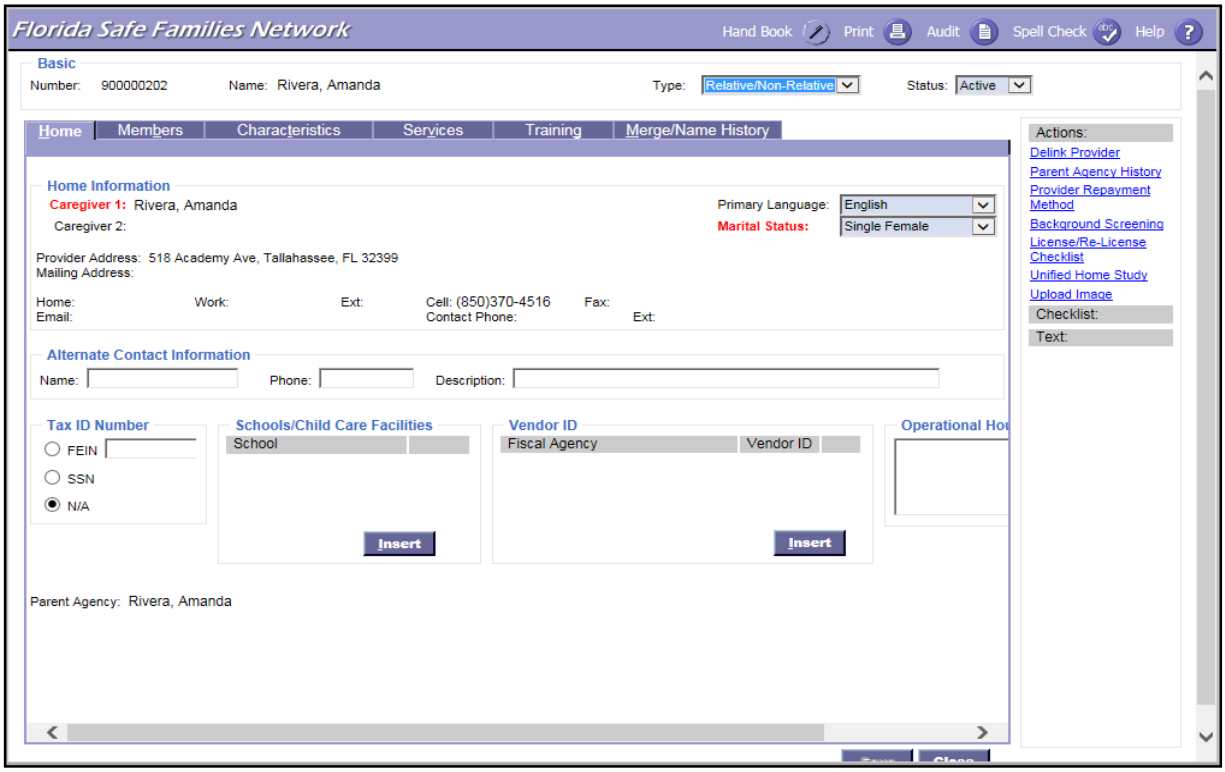
*Documenting the caregiver role on the Person Provider Inquiry page:*



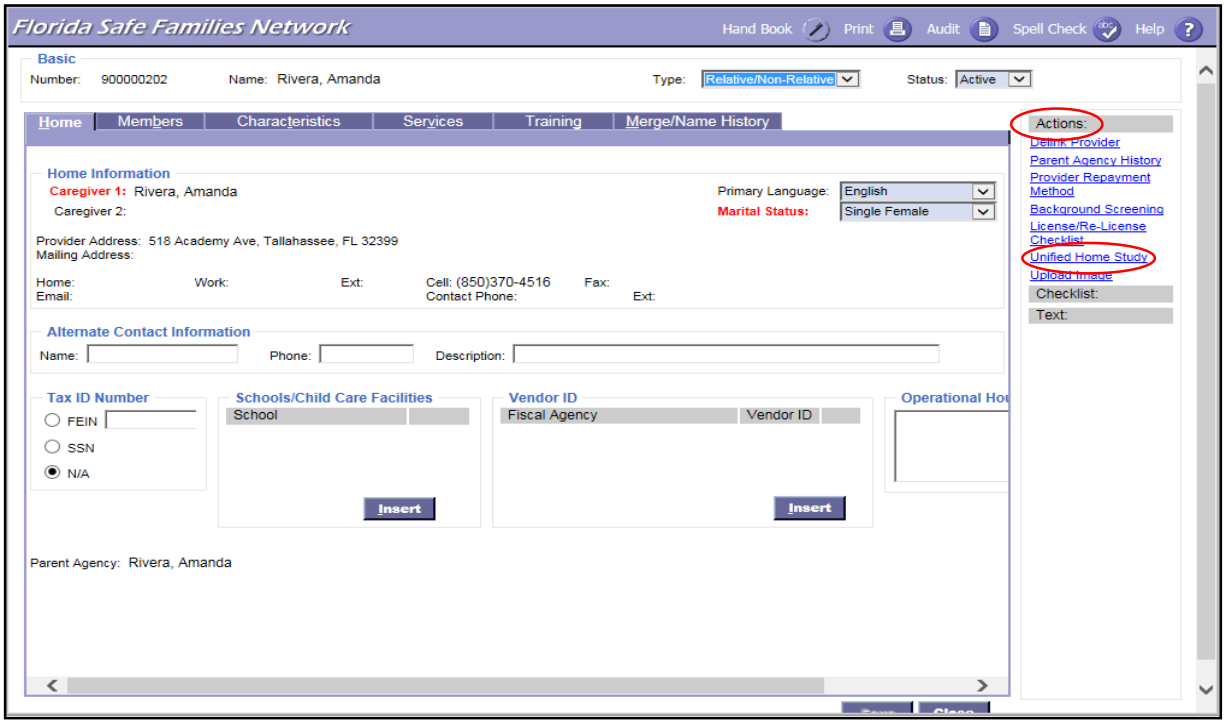

*Where to complete the acceptance decision:*



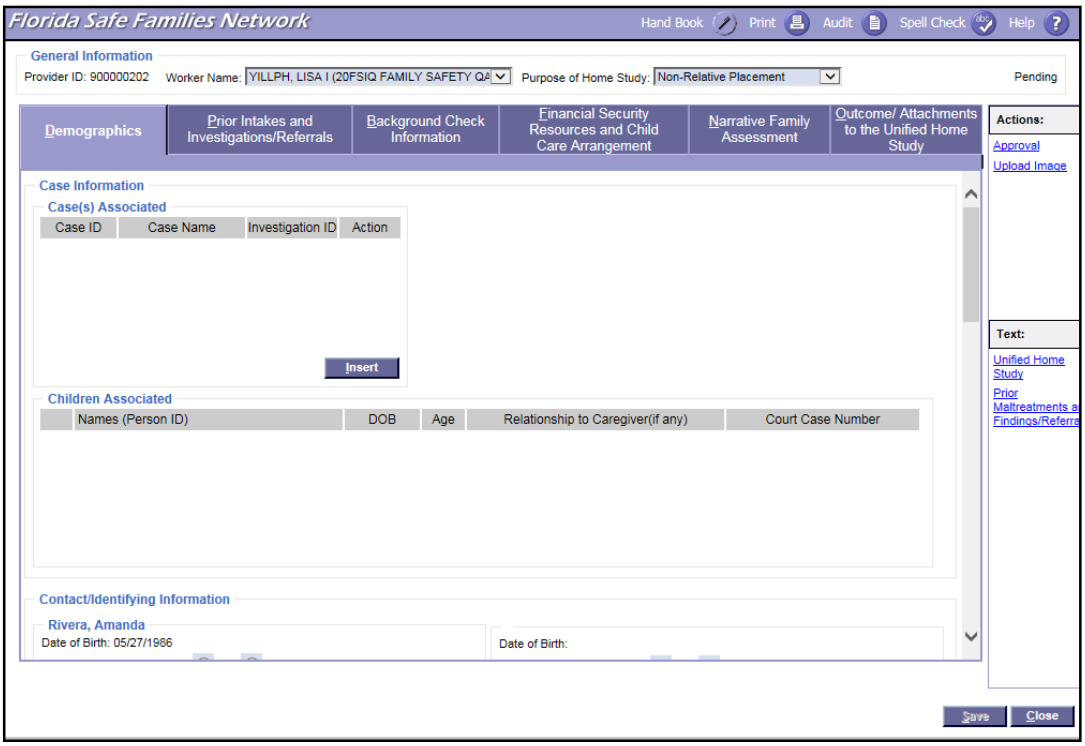
*What the Person Provider Home tab looks like once created:*



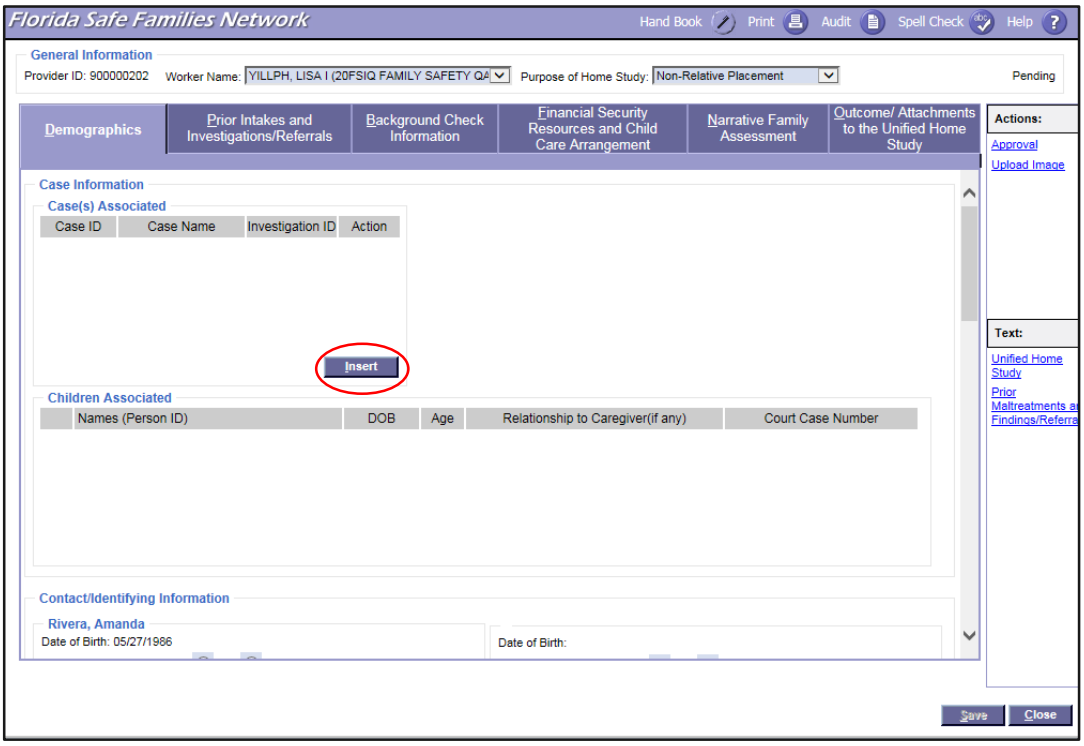

*Launching the UHS from a Person Provider page:*

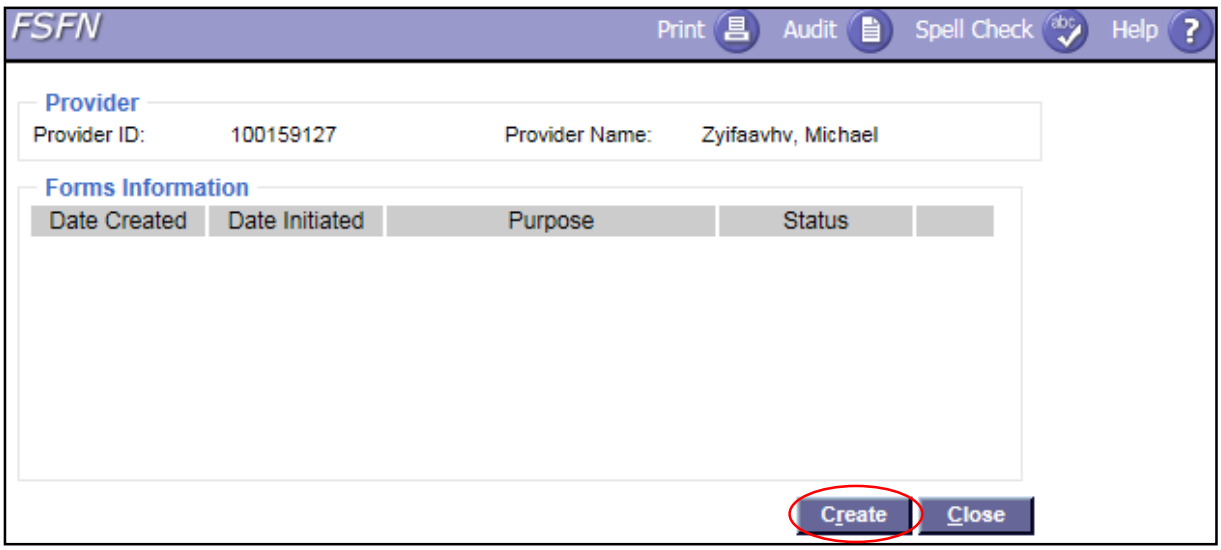


*UHS Main page once created:*




*How to link the UHS with a particular FSFN case:*




FSFN
Print
Audit
Spell Check
Help
Provider
Provider ID: 100159127
Provider Name: Zyifaavhv, Michael
Forms Information
Date Created
Date Initiated
Purpose
Status
Create
Close

# Provider File Cabinet

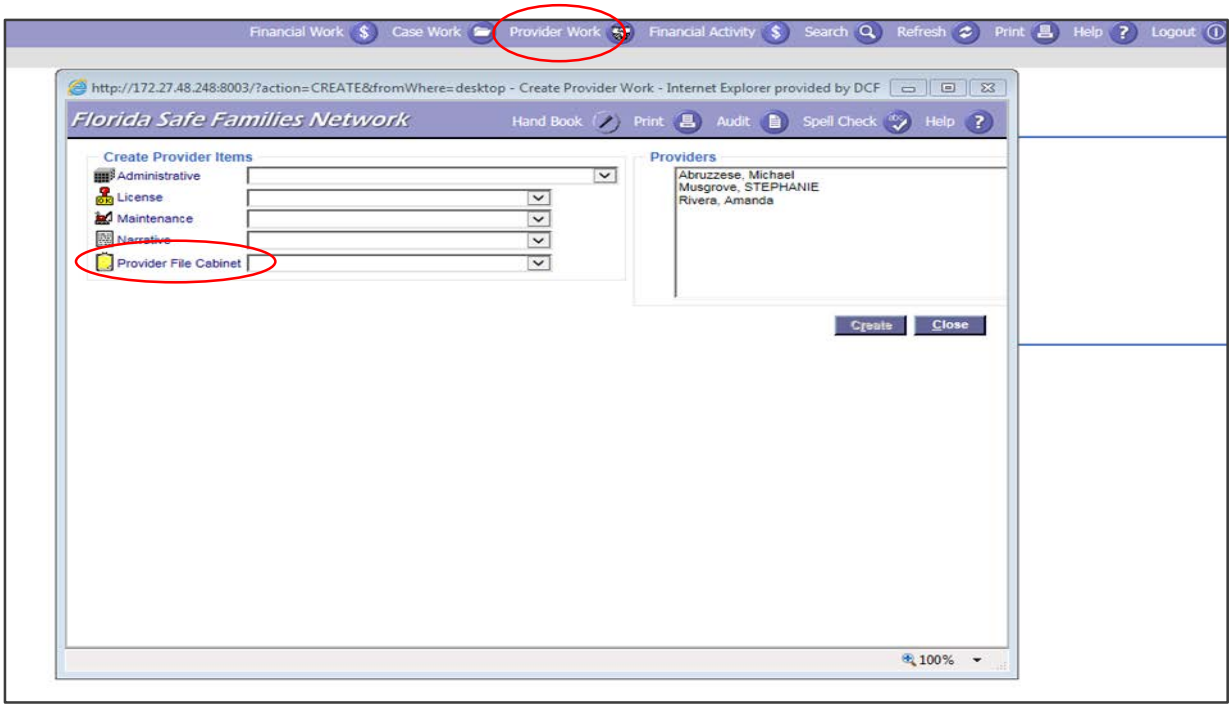
The new Provider File Cabinet allows Child Welfare Professionals to upload documents that relate specifically to the provider. It is similar to the Case File Cabinet.

The Provider File Cabinet Image can be created directly from the Person Provider, Organization Provider, UHS, or Create Provider Work.

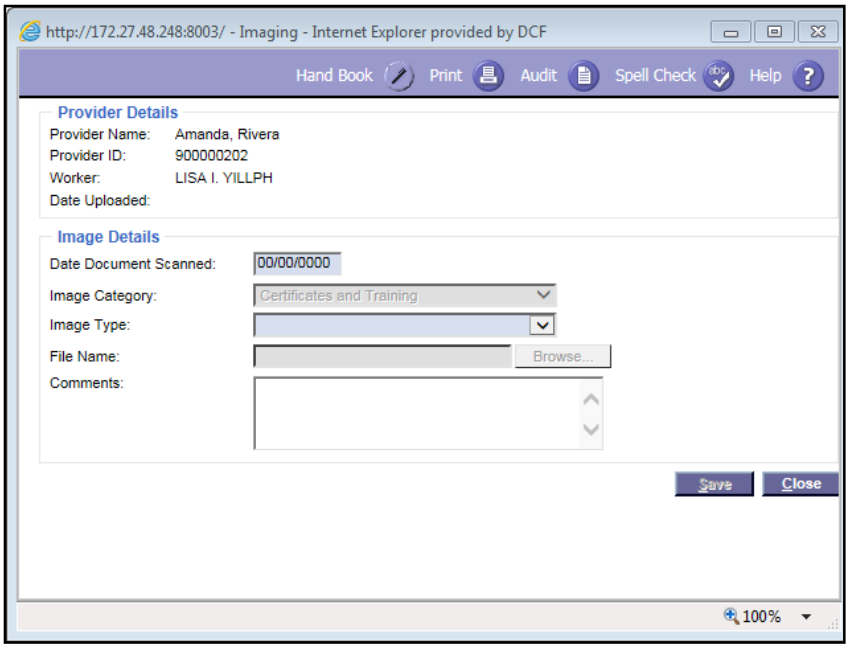
- There is a new page accessed from the Utilities menu on the desktop labeled Provider File Cabinet Search.
  - Search criteria is available for the Provider File Cabinet Search.
  - The Images Returned group box provides for sorting and the ability to access the Provider (Person or Organization) and Images page directly.
  - Once the document is uploaded and titled, the title cannot be changed. The File Name for all uploaded images needs to follow a standard naming convention.

## FSFN Screens

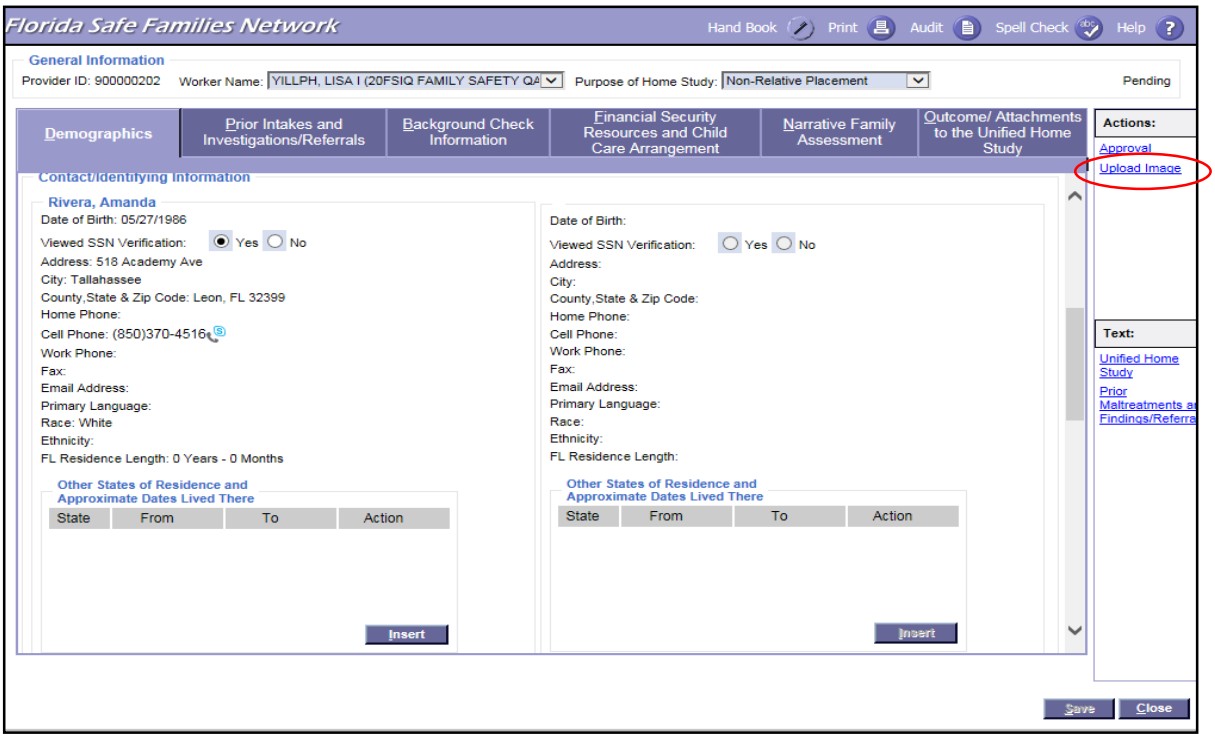
*How to access the Provider File Cabinet:*



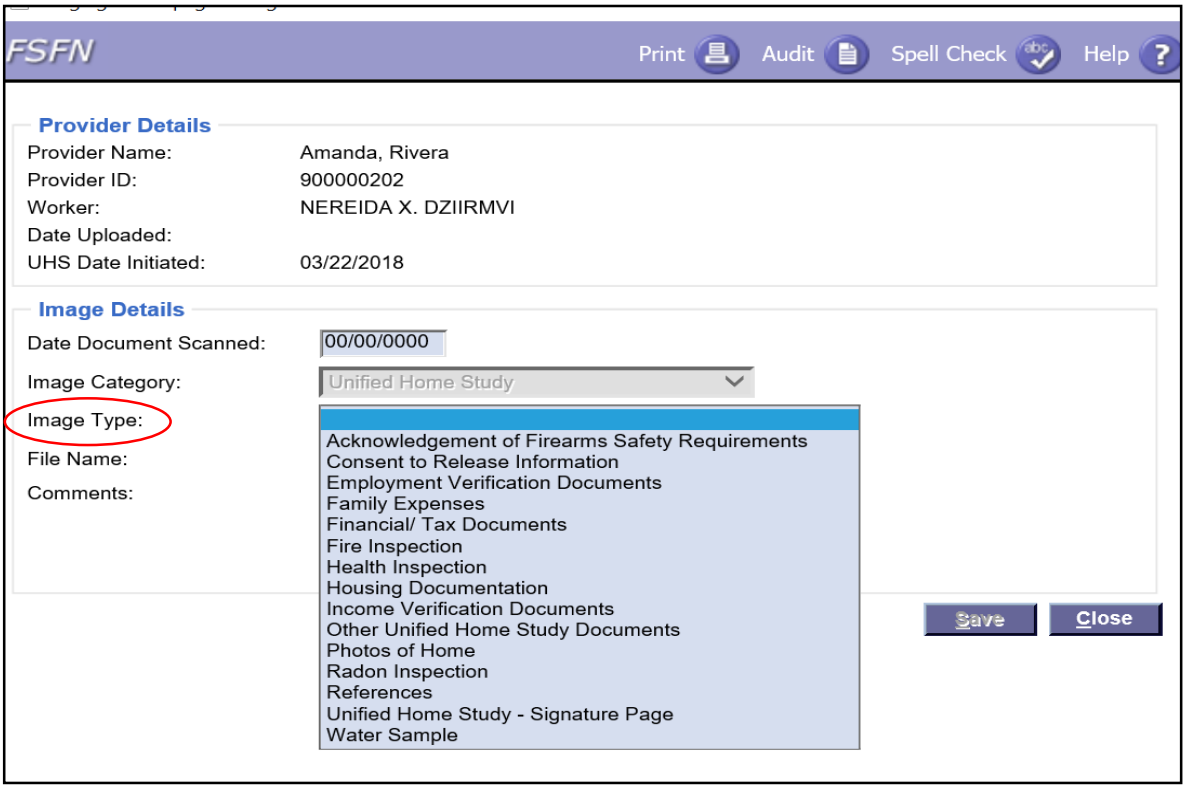

*How to upload the Image pop-up box for the Provider File Cabinet:*



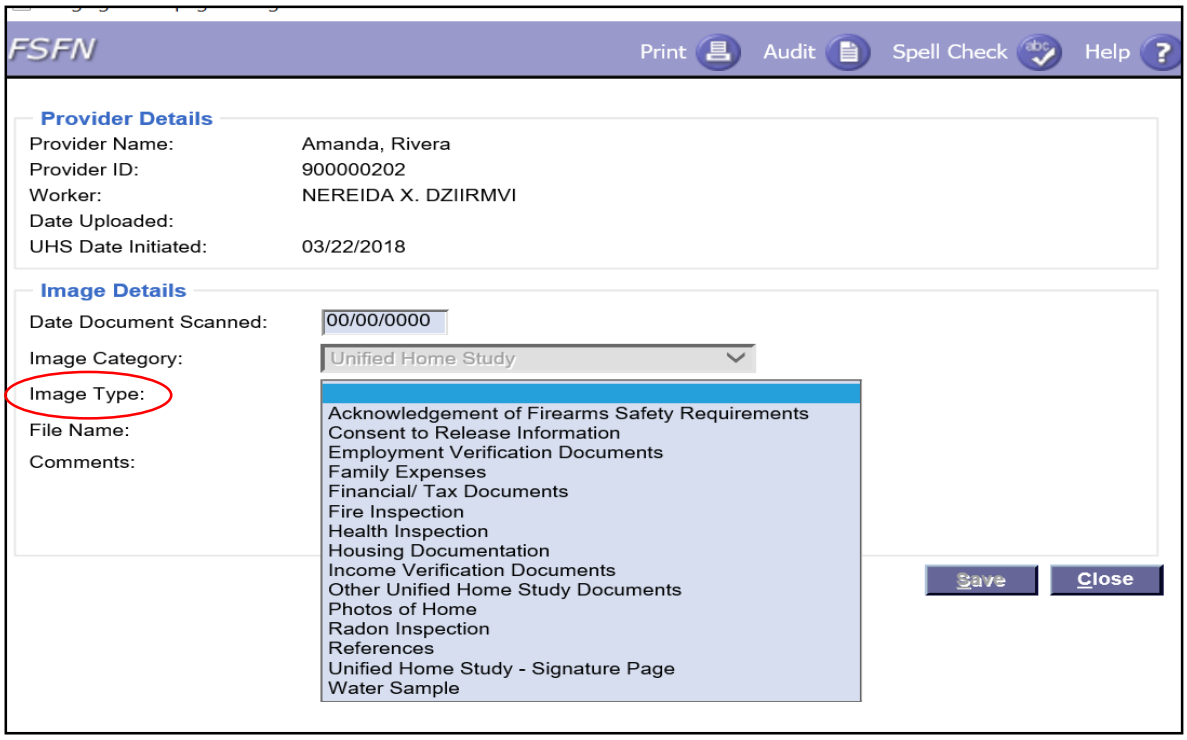
*How to upload images from the UHS:*



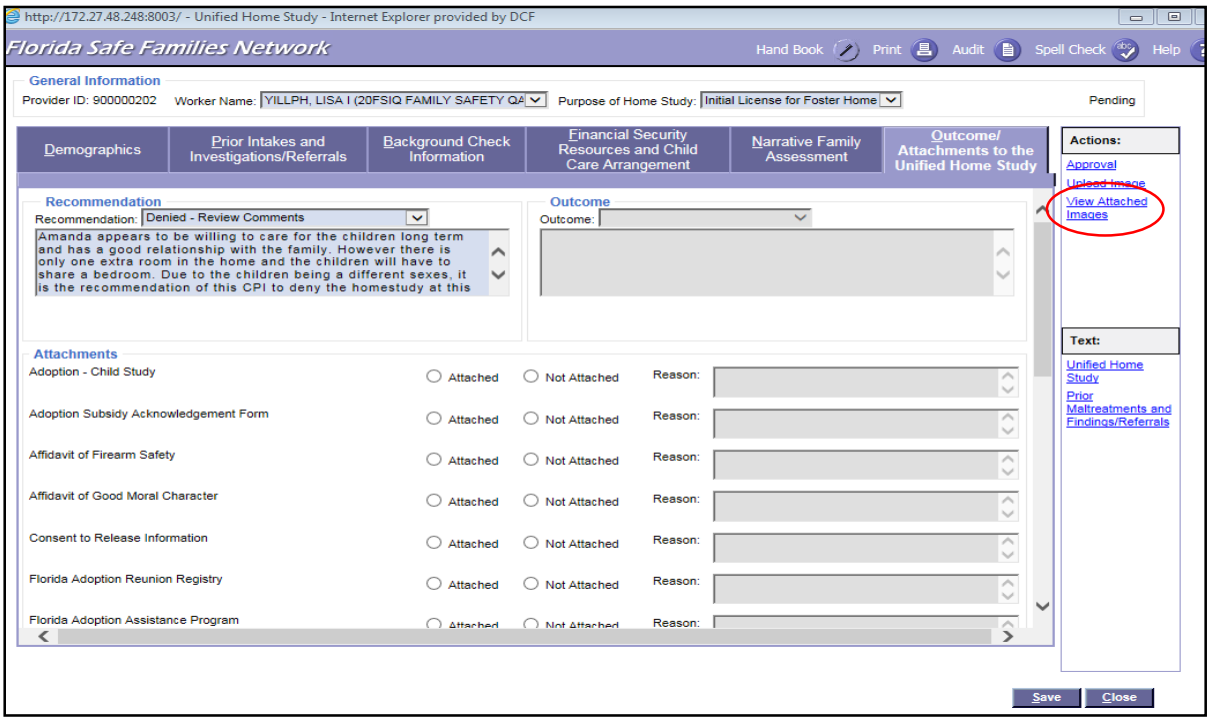

*How to choose the image type from the UHS:*



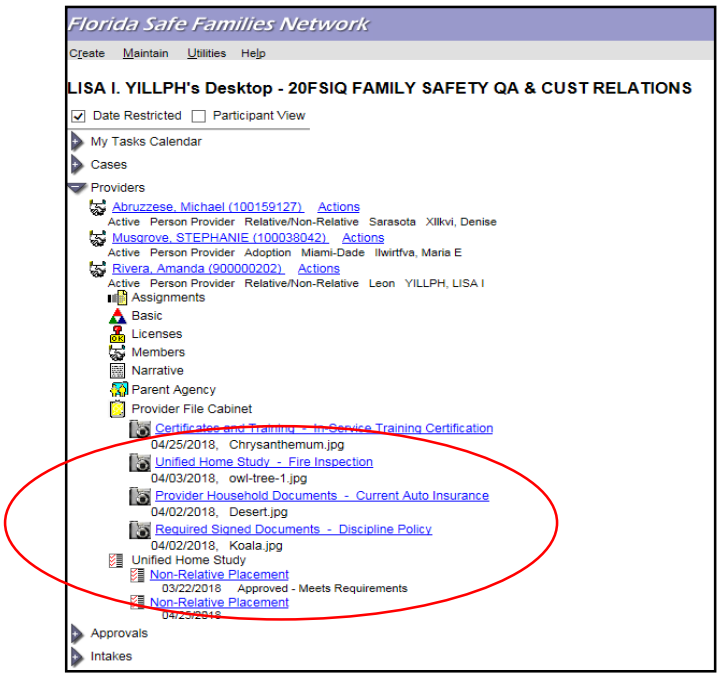
*How to choose the image type from the UHS:*



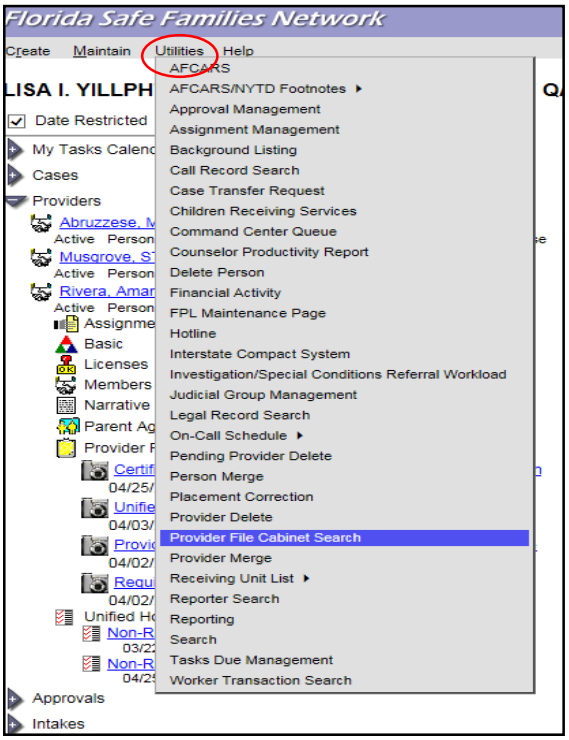

*How to view attached images from the UHS:*

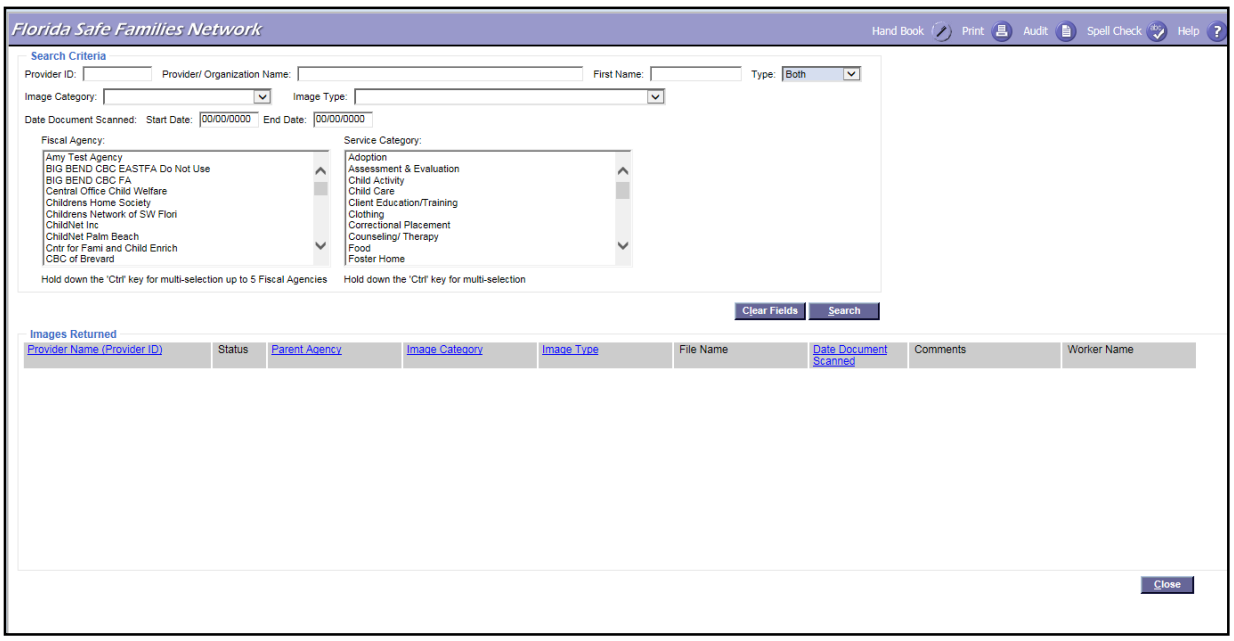


*How to view attached images from the desktop:*




*How to search in the Provider File Cabinet:*



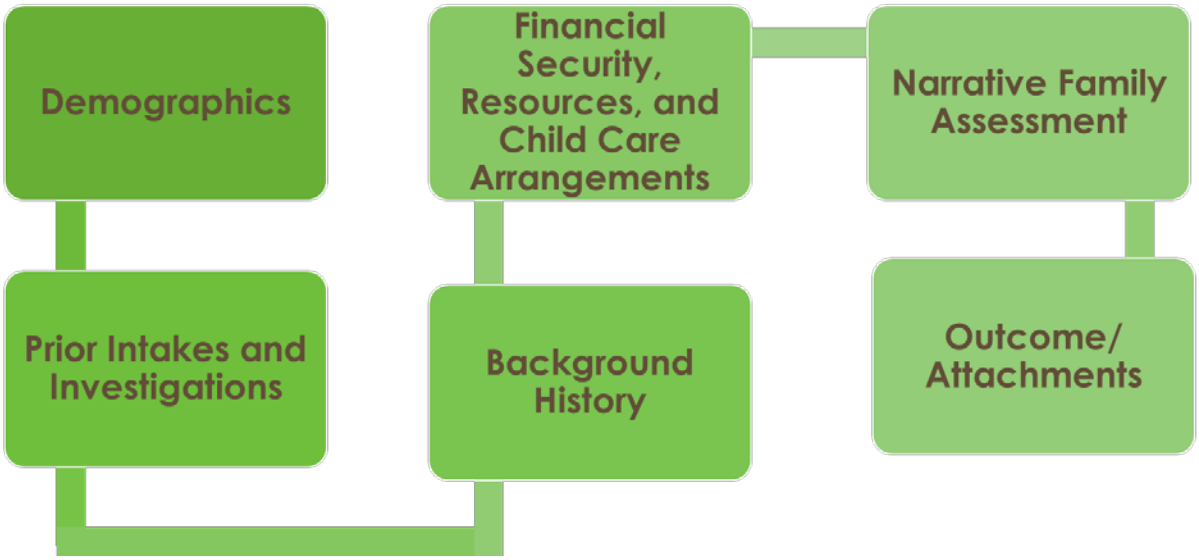



## What Components Does a UHS Assess?

The UHS is a process whereby Child Welfare Professionals gather vital information in order to assess if identified caregiver(s) have the capacity to provide a nurturing, caring, and safe environment for each child placed in their care.

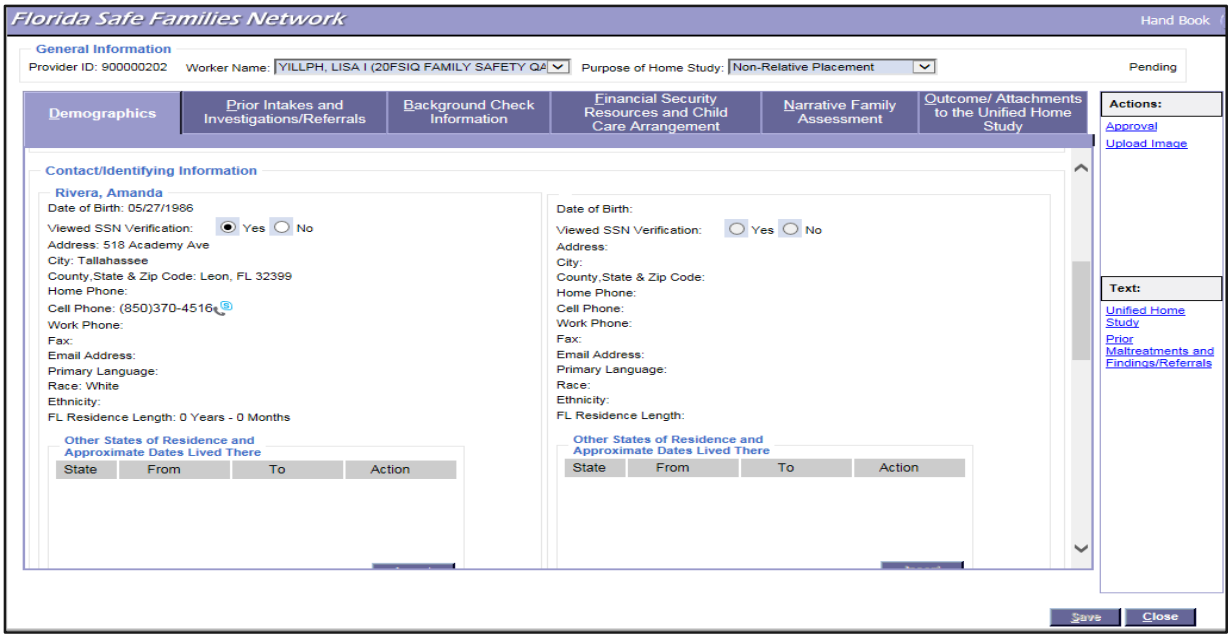
Each component of the UHS consists of core assessment information and/or questions. The information gathered as part of the core assessment is required for all home studies, regardless of type. Additional information will be required and gathered based on the type of home study that is completed.

## Core Components

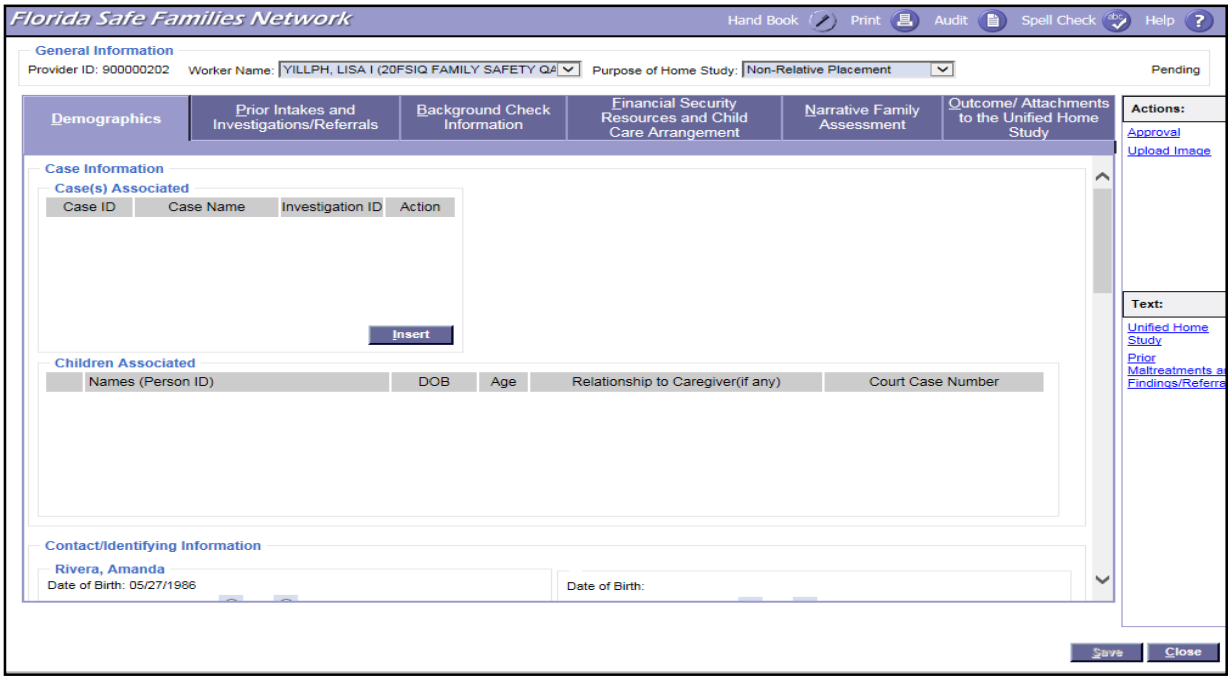


## FSFN Screens

*Core Component – Demographics:*




*Core Component – Demographics:*



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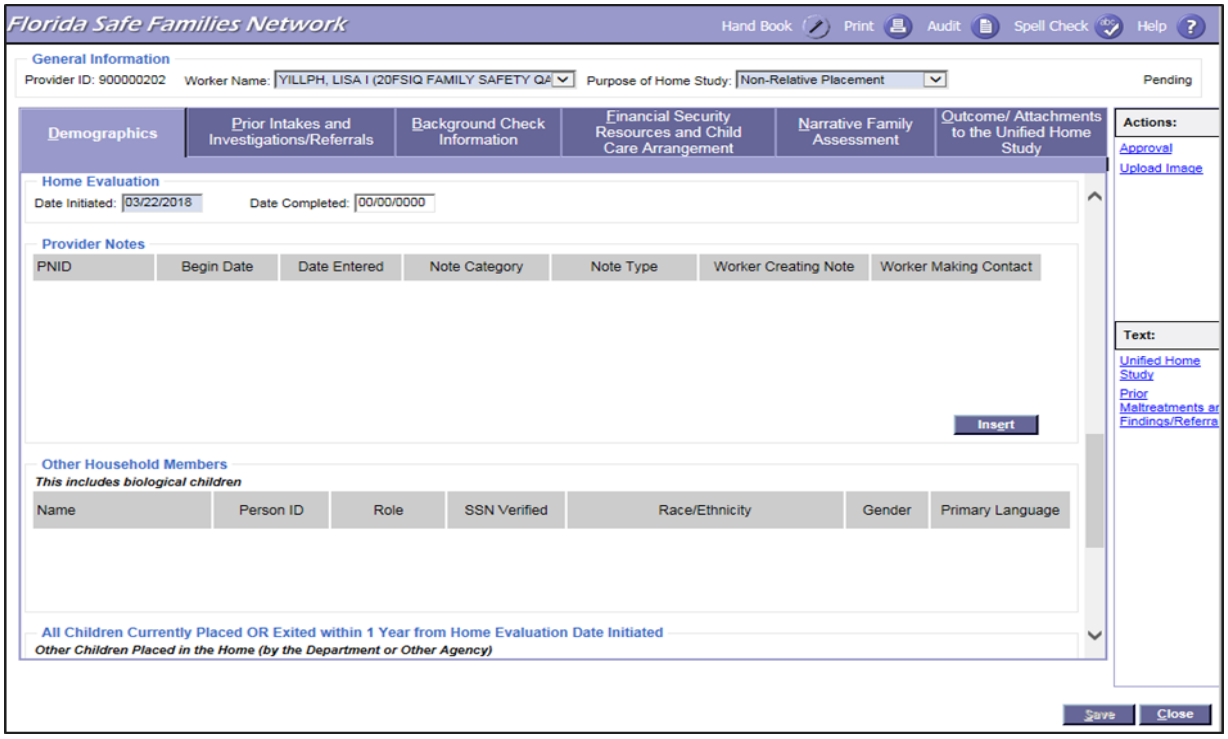
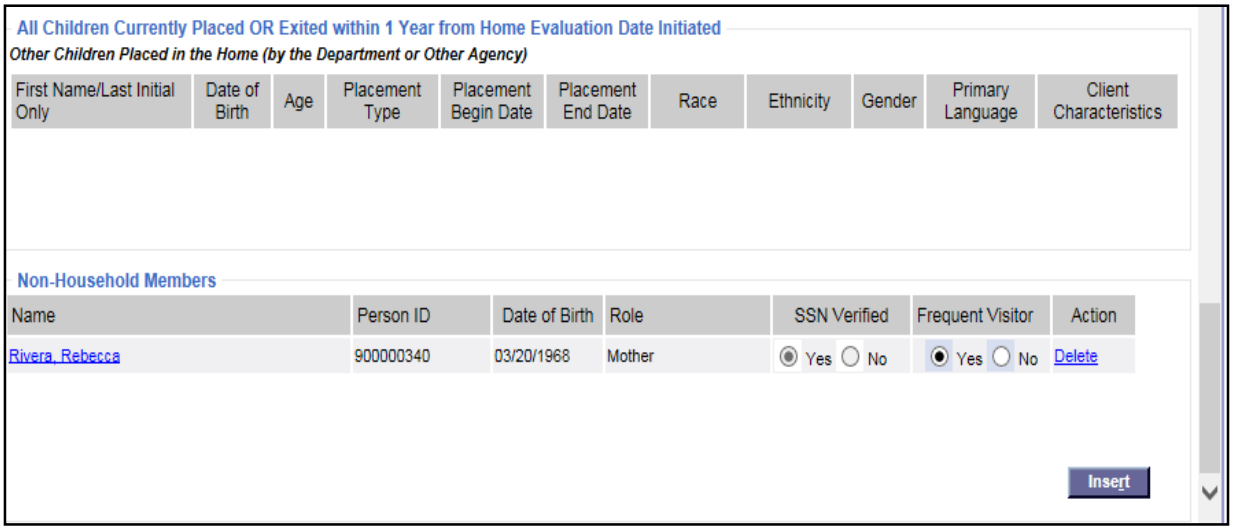
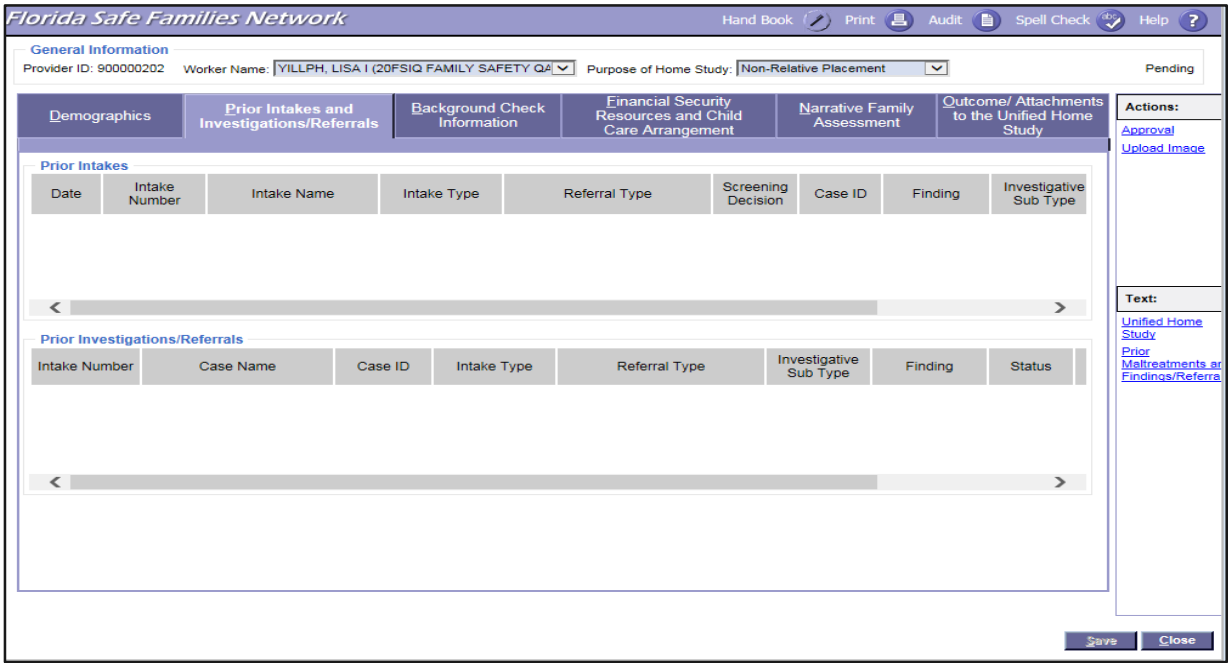


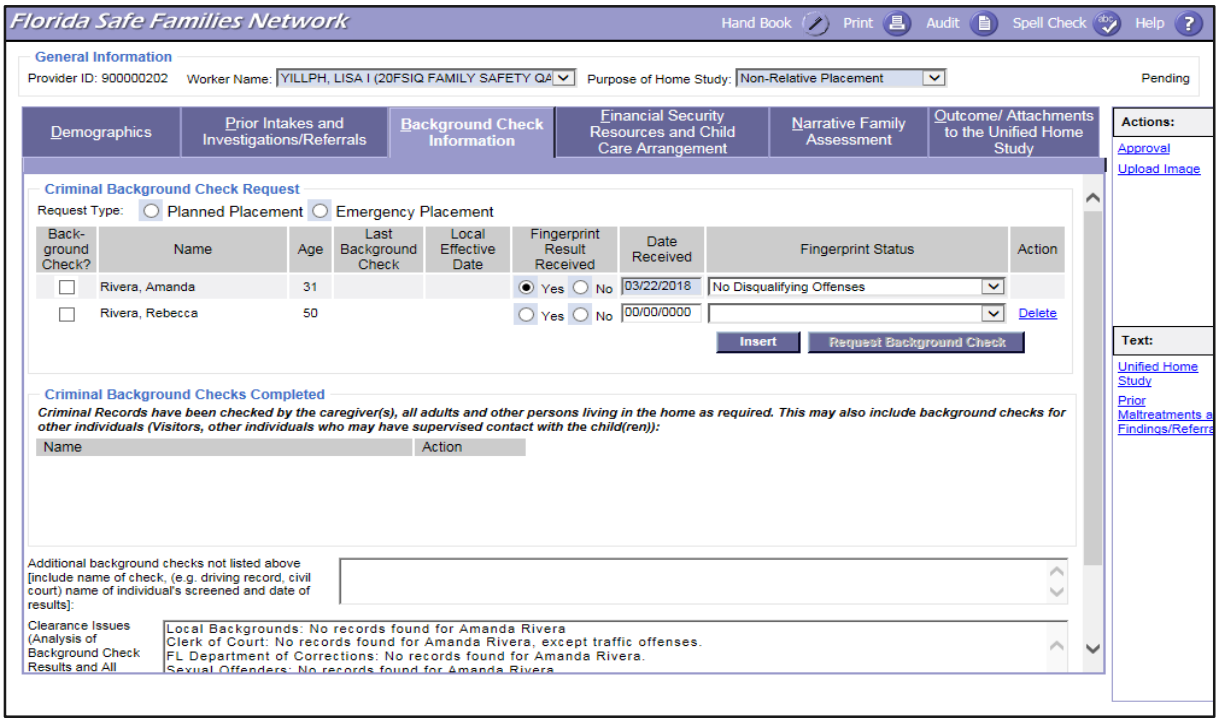

*Core Component – Demographics:*



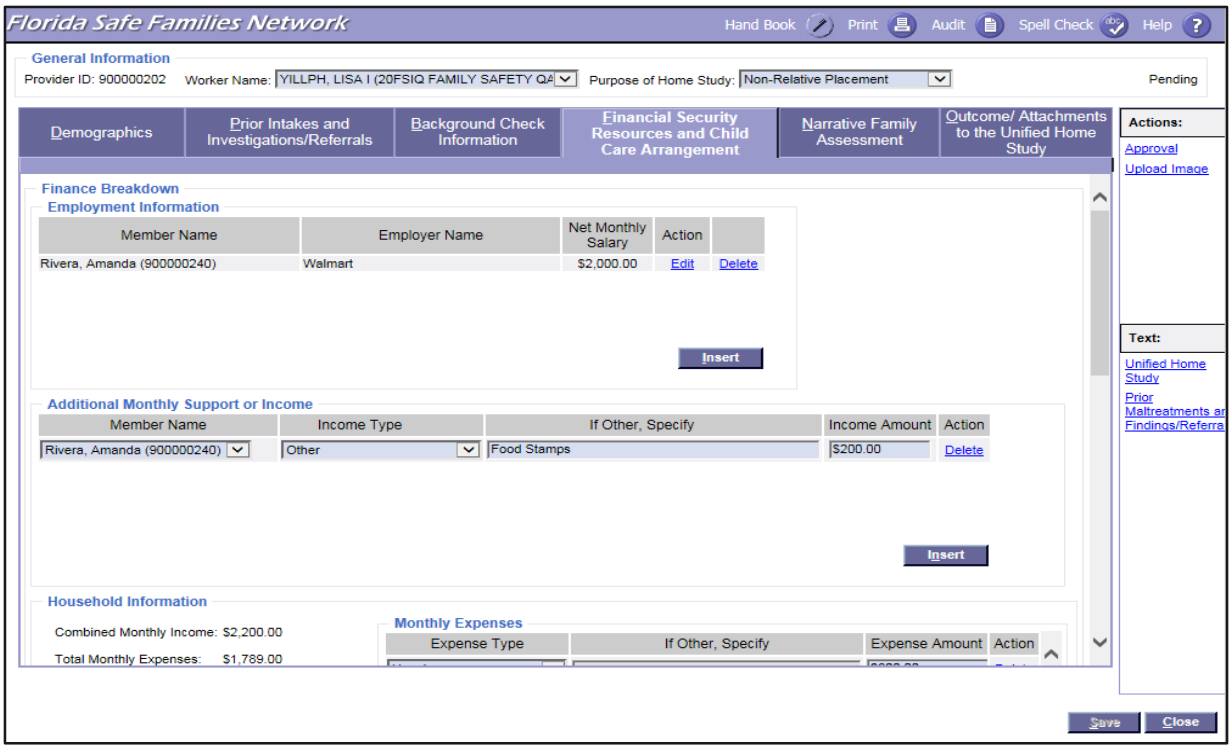
## *Core Component – Prior Intakes and Investigations/Referrals:*



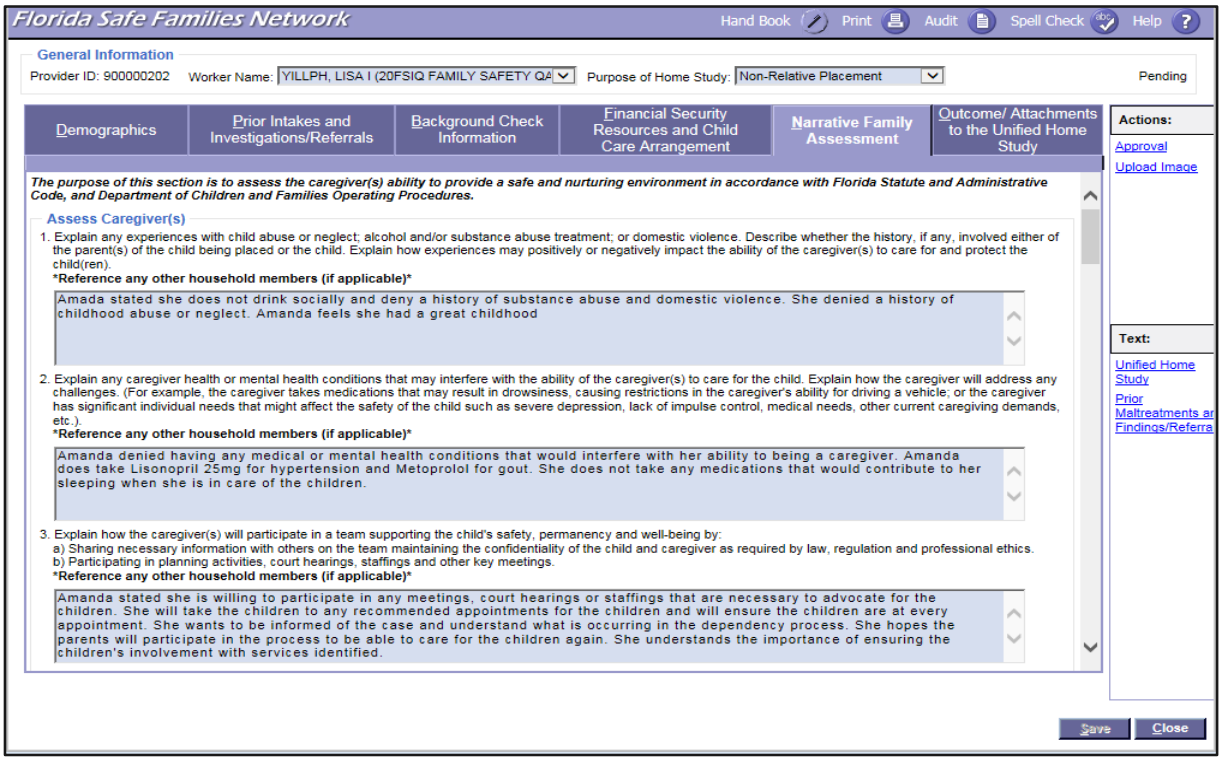
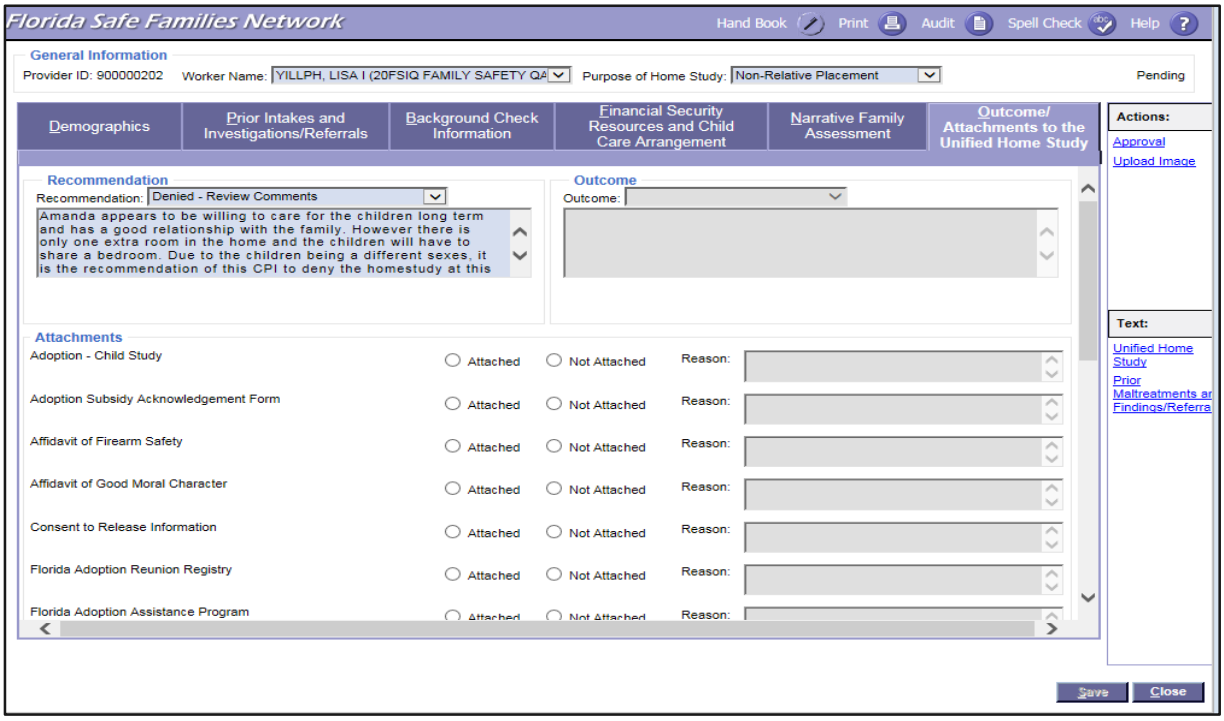

## *Core Component – Background Check Information:*



## *Core Component – Financial Security Resources and Child Care Arrangement:*




## *Core Component – Narrative Family Assessment:*



## *Core Component – Outcome/Attachments:*