United Home Study FAQs
Version: September 18, 2018

Background Checks:

1. There are some agencies that do not use FSFN to complete background checks. Can those agencies still use FSFN to document the background check results?

   Answer
   Yes, the dates are user modifiable and do not require the background check button to be utilized to complete the UHS.

2. If a prospective provider discloses an automatic disqualifier and this is known prior to launching the UHS or completing background checks. Does a Unified Home Study need to be completed in FSFN?

   Answer
   This is based on what your judges require. Some judges require that a full home study be completed.

3. Unfortunately, there are times where a removal is completed later in the case. There may be occasions when the Live Scan results are not received prior to the 60th day of the investigation. Can the case be closed without the Live Scans?

   Answer
   Fingerprints are required for placement via Florida Statute 39.0138, for specifics as to the return of the fingerprints please see subsection (4). The UHS is a separate tool not attached to a case. The UHS, which is attached to a provider, cannot be finalized without fingerprint results. However, an incomplete UHS tool may be an issue at the case transfer staffing.

4. Are the results from the fingerprints required prior to approving the UHS in FSFN? Also the UHS CFOP states approval has to occur within 2 business days but fingerprint results are not usually obtained that quickly.

   Answer
   Yes, The UHS cannot have a final approval until all criminal checks have been obtained. This includes the results from the fingerprints. An initial approval could be given with just the name check. This information should be documented in the recommendation and outcome group box. The UHS can be prints prior to the final approval and shared with the courts.
   FSFN documentation remains the same, all information should be documented in FSFN within 2 business days of receiving the information.

5. When completing the UHS and it is determined that the UHS will be denied based on either FSFN or Criminal History, how is this documented in FSFN?

   Answer

   The user will select one of the denied reasons, Denied–Criminal Disqualifier, Denied–FSFN Disqualifier, or Denied–Review Comments, then
   1. Document in the Recommendation group box why the UHS is being denied.
   2. Select the Approval hyperlink under Actions.
   3. Select Not Approve.
   4. Select yes to the question "Not approving is final and the work will become frozen. Proceed?

6. There are household members that are between the age of 12-17, fingerprints are not completed on these children. How is this documented on the Background Information tab of the UHS?

   Answer

   Select the "No" radio button for Fingerprint Results Received. Then select "unable to submit" in the Fingerprint Status dropdown.

Consent to Release:

7. On the Outcome/Attachments to the UHS tab there is a Consent to Release Information, is it required on all caregivers?

   Answer

   Consent forms are not mandatory for a potential caregiver to complete and are very specific in nature. However, if a consent form is requested as part of the information gathering process within a home study then it is required to be uploaded as an attachment to the UHS. For example, if the caregiver discloses that she is under medical care for a specific diagnosis, the worker may want to request that the caregiver complete a release of information for their physician so information can be obtained for the assessment process. Thus, if there is an agency specific release of information form requested that the potential caregiver sign, then it must be uploaded as part of the UHS process.

General UHS Questions:

8. Is there an updated CFOP for Unified Home Study?

   Answer

   Final CFOP sent out to all on 5/31/18.
   http://centerforchildwelfare.fmhi.usf.edu/kb/DCF_Pol/CFOP_170/CFOP170_1-Ch5.pdf

9. ICPC Home Study Requests on parents are currently being completed through the UHS in FSFN. Will they continue to complete them the same way?

    Answer
    The UHS in FSFN should not be utilized for ICPC home study request. The UHS is only utilized for providers (Relative/ Non-Relative, Licensing, Adoption). The Other Parent Home Assessment is being utilized for the non- maltreating parent and progress updates should be utilized for an assessment of the parents (this includes the physical conditions to the home) These documents should be used for ICPC purposes.

10. At what point does the Person Provider Inquiry (PPI) become frozen?

    Answer
    The PPI is frozen once it is accepted, this creates the Person Provider. Any changes to the Provider, including new Household members should be added directly to the Person Provider page. Once the Person Provider page is updated the household members will be updated on the UHS until it is approved.

11. What is the expectation for a capacity change during the licensing year? This does not appear to be an addendum non-adoption option in the new functionality.

    Answer
    That would be a change in circumstances and the Addendum Not-Adoption choice.

12. I know all children in the home are added to the UHS, are they included as participants in the Person Provider Inquiry (PPI) step or just in the UHS?

    Answer
    The children will need to be added to the PPI and then the information will pull them into the UHS.

13. Is there a merge feature to merge PPI's if duplicates were created in error or if there are any duplicates remaining in the system?

    Answer
    Not as of now, it is suggested that the PPI with the most information attached be used to create a Person Provider. The other PPIs should be 'not accepted' and the reason selected from the dropdown menu would be "other-see person provider inquiry comments." The worker should then document the PPI being a duplicate in the Person Provider Inquiry Comments hyperlink under the Text group box.

14. Will a signature page be created for the worker to have the caregivers sign during the initial home visit?

   Answer
   There will be a signature page for Emergency placement UHS only. This is currently being designed and will be released soon. If the caregiver signs the signature page the completed UHS must still be shared with the caregiver.

15. If the Hotline, CPI or CM coming across a PPI that was not completed during the UHS Clean-up, what should be done with that PPI?

   Answer
   If the original PPI was not created by the current worker's Agency then that worker would not complete the clean-up process but would create the new UHS from the Provider, if there is one created, and then let the other agency know as a courtesy that there was a pending PPI that needs to be completed. This question needs further discussion and planning by OCW.

16. When completing an OPHA for placement with non-maltreating parents are Fingerprints required on the parent and their household members?

   Answer
   If the child is being released to the non-maltreating parent, fingerprints on the parent and household members needs to be obtained. This is described in detailed in CFOP 170-7. Chapter 5 and FAC 65C 28.011. However, the safety criteria have been met within the Progress Update and reunification is being achieved, only locals, CCIS, FSFN and Sexual Offender checks at the national and state levels should be obtained. The OPHA can be found on the Center's Website (http://www.centerforchildwelfare.org/FSFN/OPHA_Form_10_25_13.doc) and should be included in FSFN. The information obtained for reunification should be documented in a Progress Update. Fingerprints would be completed for parents using the same process as for relatives and non-relatives to have fingerprints completed.

17. The agency in the UHS is not showing the correct agency, how can this be updated?

   Answer
   The Agency Name displayed on the UHS is the Agency Name Associated with the Unit of the worker. This can be updated by selecting Maintain on the menu bar, then Organization, then unit. There are security restrictions and this may need to be completed the agency's IT department.

18. Why is the "Water Safety Advisory," "Firearms Safety," and "Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and Ways to Help Prevent It" are no longer user modifiable on the Unified Home Study Word Document?

    Answer
    This is described in detail in CFOP 170-1 Chapter 5-6, however the caregiver(s) should indicate on the copy of the home study they sign that this information has been provided to them.

19. How do I change a provider address?

    Answer
    You must be assigned to the Provider to change the Provider Address.
    From your desktop click Provider Work in your Banner Bar.
    Select the Provider, then from the Maintenance dropdown select Provider Address Maintenance and Click Create.
    From the Provider Address Maintenance Screen, you can Insert new addresses and end date old addresses. You can also click on the hyperlink in the "Address Type" Column to update any of the previously entered addresses.

20. How does the Length of Florida Residency calculate?

    Answer
    FL Residence Length calculates Years and Months based on Person Management Primary Addresses documented; only calculates based on continuous length of time in FL. If the person moves out of state, the calculation starts back over based on the FL address following the out of state residence.

21. What date should be entered in the date completed box within the Home Evaluation group box on the Demographics tab?

    Answer
    All home studies should be reviewed, signed and dated by the family, the worker who completed it, and the supervisor. The date completed box should contain the date of the last signature obtained.

22. What do I do if I click links or buttons in FSFN and nothing happens?

    Answer
    Clear your Cache/Cookies.
    Reset Internet Explorer to Default Settings.
    Reconfigure IE for FSFN settings in regards to adding trusted sites & compatibility view settings.

Reinstall FSFN dependencies including FSFNActiveX.msi, and NEWFSFN3.msi.
Reload appropriate OCX version.
Verify VPN connectivity.
Refer to "Technical Information" section of the FSFN Intranet site.
http://fsfn.dcf.state.fl.us/

23. What is meant by Due Date vs Completed Date on Licensing Checklist?

Answer
The "Due Date" is the date due to the Region, the "Completed Date" is the date the item was actually submitted to the Region.

24. Can I upload just the signature page of the UHS?

Answer
The entire UHS must be uploaded to FSFN. It is not duplication of work. The UHS is a legal document and removing the signature page from the rest of the document is not appropriate. There have been times in the past when FSFN updates and shows different information as well as the Caregiver can sign the UHS and the worker could update FSFN, which would not be what the Caregiver signs. For these reason the entire UHS must be uploaded to the UHS section of FSFN.

Out of County Inquiries:
25. How should the Unified Home Study be completed when the caregiver lives in a different county?

CBC Answer
The CBC should include in their local working agreement for out of county request regarding UHS. There is nothing in current policy that gives guidance on if the primary or receiving county is responsible for creating the Provider. It is suggested that the primary county complete and assign the provider when the request is made. The receiving county would complete the Home Study and make a recommendation. The primary county would have the final approval of the home study since they have jurisdiction of the child. The final approval should be made after the UHS has been reviewed by the court.

DCF Answer
The primary county is responsible for creating the Person Provider Inquiry and submitting the background checks prior to requesting the OTI. In emergency situations in which the checks have been requested/completed by other methods to prevent delay of placement the primary county may request and OTI. The receiving county is responsible for completing the recommendation and outcome of the UHS. Prior to **denial** of the UHS the receiving county shall notify the primary county and discuss all

issues and concerns, If the primary county wishes to approve the home study the following must be completed:

1. The receiving county must complete the recommendations box.
2. The primary county supervisor must complete the outcome box and final approval.
3. An Operations Manager/ Program administrator must approve the final placement when it overrides a denial from the receiving county.

26. How do we end our assignment to the provider after closing a denied home study? It gives the error message that someone else needs to be assigned as primary.

    Answers
    A provider must be assigned to someone even if they are inactive. Each agency has a generic provider to store inactive providers.

References

27. If the CPI gets 2 references on an Emergency Home Study, once the case is transferred to Case Management and is converted to a Relative/Non-Relative Home Study, is the Case Manager responsible for gathering 2 additional?

    Answer
    Case Management will need to obtain additional references for the Relative/ Non-Relative Home Study. This is referenced in the updated CFOP 170-1, Chapter 5.

28. Are references required within 45 days of Case Transfer with the updated Relative/Non-relative UHS?

    Answer
    Yes, new references from Case Management are warranted when the Relative/Non-relative UHS is completed.

29. In the past only references were required for Caregiver 1 and 2. Now do all adults in home including adult children have to provide them? We have a family that has six adults living in the home. None of them will provide care to the children except the person adopting. Would we have to get personal references on the other five people who are not providing care?

    Answers
    The requirements for references when completing an adoption home study are outlined in 65C-16.005 F.A.C. A minimum of 5 references are required as well as the need to assess other household members living in the home. Which includes the employer, a

relative (1 relative only). All other references must be obtained from persons who have observed the prospective adoptive parent in the role of caregiver or can speak to the applicant's ability to parent a child. School references and adult child references are not inclusive in this count. Adult child references have always been requirement for adoption home studies. Individuals who are operating in a caregiver capacity in the home must be evaluated. If 6 adults are living in the home, can it honestly be stated that they will not be acting in any caregiver capacity (none of these adults will have no interaction with the child or provide safety to them, if not that would be a concern in my assessment of this family in general)? Acting in caregiver capacity can include providing financial support in maintaining the home, helping with pick up etc. Lastly, a potential reference, if appropriate can be used for more than one person if they have a relationship and able to reflect on each individual.

30. When must references be completed, prior to the placement of the child(ren) or prior to approval of the UHS?

    Answer
    References must be obtained prior to the approval of the UHS, not prior to the placement of a child. As the UHS may be completed in an emergency situation and references may not be available in exigent circumstances.

31. If a UHS is being denied, are references still required?

    Answer
    No, references are only required if the UHS is being approved.

Reporting:
32. Will there be a report to track non-approved Unified Home Studies and a report to track yearly renewals?

    Answer
    OCWDRU is creating a report to track Unified Home Studies.