

# Northstar Adoption in SSIS

## Contents

- Adoption Workflow..... 2
  - Security Functions..... 2
  - System Requirements for Adoption..... 2
- Requirements to Open an Adoption/Guardianship Workgroup ..... 3
  - Inactivating Parental Relationships..... 4
    - Unknown Father- Parent Verification ..... 5
- Child Ward Folder ..... 6
  - Previous Parent Verification ..... 8
  - Sibling Verifications..... 9
- State Adoption Exchange Status Verification ..... 10
- Adoptive Placement ..... 14
  - Adoption Placement Agreement..... 14
  - Change in Placement Setting and Foster Parent Relationship..... 15
  - Adoption Placement Decision Summary ..... 16
  - Adoptive Placement Verification ..... 17
- Completing the Northstar Adoption Assistance Eligibility Determination..... 18
  - Setup Tab ..... 19
  - Document Tab..... 20
    - Eligibility Questions..... 21
      - Prescreen for eligibility..... 21**
  - Properties Tab..... 33
  - Required Documents..... 33
    - Sending Northstar Adoption Assistance Eligibility Determination to DHS for Approval..... 34
- Northstar Adoption Assistance Benefit Agreement ..... 35
  - Properties Tab..... 37
- Adoption Finalization..... 37
  - Entering Adoption finalization in Court Action ..... 38

End Placement in P/L/A Folder .....	39
Adoption Placement Finalize.....	39
End Placement in Continuous Placement Folder.....	41
Cancel Adoption Finalization.....	41
Adoption Disruptions.....	41
Print a Child Ward Summary .....	43
To close an Adoption/Guardianship workgroup: .....	44
Adoption Reports Available.....	44

# Adoption Workflow



*Hint:* This workflow represents the typical workflow for non-American Indian children under the jurisdiction of a county; for children under tribal jurisdiction the workflow could differ, including but in no way limited to such important practices as Suspension of Parental Rights.

## Security Functions

The Security Administration functions include Create adoption, View adoption, and Access adoption reports:

- **Create adoption:** allows workers to create and edit the new Child Ward folder and complete all verifications
- **View adoption:** allows worker only to view access to adoption related nodes
- Access adoption reports: allows workers to access the adoption related reports in Tools> General Report

## System Requirements for Adoption

In preparation for completing the Northstar Adoption work, ensure the following items are entered or open for the child:

- Legal Names (for the child, previous parents, siblings, and pre-adoptive parents)
- Date of Birth (for the child, previous parents, siblings, and pre-adoptive parents')
- Race
- Birth Location information (state and tribal wards)
- Citizenship Information (child and pre-adoptive parents)

- Relationships for parents and siblings, including the father detail); the *SSIS system at DHS requires two birth parents, even if one is unknown.*
- The Qualifies under ICWA Indicator should be completed on the client's Participant Node as well as ICWA Eligibility/Determination screens.
- The child and known legal parents (either biological/birth or adoptive), prospective adoptive parents (both relative and non-relative) and all siblings must be cleared to SWNDX to begin the Adoption verifications.
- Entry of accurate Continuous Placement record
- Entry of a Removal and Adoptions History folder within the Permanency folder
- Update Placement setting to Pre-adoptive Placement (when appropriate), with Foster Parent relationships defined
- The Business Organization record with the Pre-adoptive parents identified as the individual providers

In preparation for creating the Adoption Assistance Eligibility Determination, ensure the following is entered:

- Completed Court Action with Best Interests statement recorded (only required for initially Court Ordered Placements)
- A MAPCY Assessment

## Requirements to Open an Adoption/Guardianship Workgroup

It is a best practice to open an Adoption/Guardianship workgroup once a child is legally free for adoption (EX: post termination of parental rights on both parents). Having these items accurately entered will help the adoption process move smoothly in SSIS and ensure that system issues are not a barrier for finalization.

The following fields should be completed before opening an Adoption/Guardianship (A/G) workgroup in SSIS:

- Relationships with the child
  - Birth parents/previous parents relationships
    - Must be changed to an inactive status with an accurate inactive date EX: date of both TPRs completed)
  - Sibling relationships
- Child's citizenship information (only for child wards)
- Placement authority for the child's continuous placement must be voluntary or court ordered (Permanency older, continuous placement sub-folder)
- Child's Race information including ICWA.
- Child's ICWA eligibility. If the ICWA field dropdown menu is blank check the ICWA Eligibility/Determination screen.

- Child’s Legal name
- Previous parent’s legal names
- Sibling’s legal names
- Child’s birth location

The screenshot shows a form titled "Birth/Death Information". It contains several input fields:
 

- Date of birth: 6/12/2011 (dropdown)
- Age: 10 years (text)
- Date of death: (empty dropdown)
- Est. date of birth: (empty dropdown)
- Est. Age: (empty text)
- Birth location: County (Becker dropdown), State (Minnesota dropdown), Country (empty text)

To enter Birth Location information:

1. Expand Participants folder.
2. Highlight Client node.
3. On the client demographic screen, select a county from the **County** drop-down field; the **State** field auto fills with **Minnesota**.
4. If **Out of state** selected, select the state from the **State** drop-down field.
5. If **Out of U.S.** selected, enter the country name in the **Country** entry field.
6. Click **Save**.

The screenshot shows a form titled "US Citizenship". It contains several input fields:
 

- US citizenship status: U.S. Citizen/naturalized citizen (dropdown)
- Verification method: Birth Certificate (dropdown)
- US citizenship date: 6/12/2011 (dropdown)
- Date verified: 4/12/2022 (dropdown)

To Enter Citizenship information:

1. Expand the Participants folder.
2. Highlight the Client node.
3. On the Client Demographic screen, select the **US citizenship status** from the drop-down.
4. Select the **Verification method** from the drop-down field.
5. If Birth Certificate is selected for Verification method, the US citizenship date defaults to date of birth.
6. Select the **US citizenship date** using the date-picker.
7. Select the **Date verified** using the date-picker.
8. Click **Save**.

## Inactivating Parental Relationships

All relationships must be entered between each child client, their previous parents (either biological or adoptive parents), and all of the siblings of the child ward. This is required information to proceed with entering the child as a New Child Ward.

The image displays two side-by-side screenshots of a software interface for managing relationships. Both screenshots show a form for 'Person 1: Jan Brady's - SSIS Person #: 202494562'.

**Left Screenshot:**

- Relationship: Birth mother
- Person 2: Carol Brady - SSIS Person #: 202494548
- Summary: Jan Brady's Birth mother is Carol Brady
- Relationship status: Inactive
- Inactive date: 4/28/2020
- Inactive reason: Termination of parental rights
- Inactive reason detail: Involuntary (found by court or admitted by parent)
- Petition filing date: 4/1/2020
- Birth mother married at time of child's birth: Yes

**Right Screenshot:**

- Relationship: Birth father
- Person 2: Mike Brady - SSIS Person #: 202494652
- Summary: Jan Brady's Birth father is Mike Brady
- Relationship status: Inactive
- Inactive date: 4/28/2020
- Inactive reason: Termination of parental rights
- Inactive reason detail: Involuntary (found by court or admitted by parent)
- Petition filing date: 4/1/2020
- Birth father detail: Custodial (married to mother)

### To Inactivate Parental Relationships:

1. From the child's Clients Relationship folder, select the child's relationship with the first previous parent.
2. From the **Status** drop-down field, select Inactive.
3. Select **Inactive Date** in the next field.
4. From the **Inactive reason** drop-down field, select Consent to adopt, Death, Suspension of parental rights, Transfer of perm/legal physical custody to a relative or Termination of parental rights.
5. Select Involuntary (found by court or admitted by parent) or Voluntary (initial request by parent) from the **Inactive reason detail** field. These fields will only activate if your choices in Inactive reason are Transfer of perm legal/physical custody to relative or Termination of Parental Rights.
6. Select the date the petition was filed based on the Inactive reason indicated above in the **Petition filing date** field.
7. If the relationship is that of birth mother, the **Birth mother married at time of child's birth** Drop-down field is enabled and required. Select Yes, No, or Unable to determine.
8. If the relationship is that of birth father, the **Birth father detail** drop-down field is enabled. Select Adjudicated, Alleged, Custodial (married to mother), or Presumed.
9. Click **Save**.
10. Repeat for the second parent.

### Unknown Father- Parent Verification

If there is no established/adjudicated father, you will need to create a relationship by selecting **"Unknown Male"** on the **Person 2 field**.

Relationship: Sheila Snow's - SSIS Person #: 202612846

Person 1: Sheila Snow's - SSIS Person #: 202612846

Relationship: Birth parent

Lineage: [ ]

Person 2: [ ]

Name	Age	SSIS Person #
Barbara Snow	7	202642420
John Snow	42	202630371
Suzy Cue	0	202632397
Unknown Male		202633275
Unknown Female		202633272

Relationship status: Inactive

Status: Inactive

Inactive date: [ ]

Inactive reason: [ ]

1. Make sure to inactivate the relationship by selecting **Inactive** on the **Status Field**.
2. Enter the **Inactive date**
3. Enter the **Inactive reason**.
4. Enter the appropriate **Inactive reason detail**.
5. Enter the **Petition filing date**.
6. Enter the **Birth father detail**.

Relationship: Sheila Snow's - SSIS Person #: 202612846

Person 1: Sheila Snow's - SSIS Person #: 202612846

Relationship: Birth father

Lineage: [ ]

Person 2: Unknown Male - SSIS Person #: 202633275

**Sheila Snow's Birth father is Unknown Male**

Relationship status: Inactive

Status: Inactive

Inactive date: 3/10/2022

Inactive reason: Termination of parental rights

[Inactive reason detail:](#) Involuntary (found by court or admitted by parent)

Petition filing date: 2/1/2022

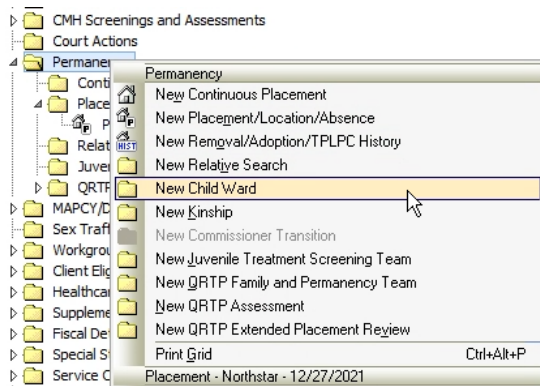
Birth father detail: Alleged

## Child Ward Folder

Before a Child Ward record is completed, the following fields must be complete and accurate:

- Childs must have inactive relationships entered with birthparents/previous parents relationships; an inactive status with an accurate inactive date EX: date of both TPRs completed). *A child ward folder cannot be created without inactive parent relationships.*
- Child's Birth Location
- Child's citizenship information
- Placement authority for the child's continuous placement must be voluntary or court ordered and documented in the continuous placement. (Permanency folder>continuous placement>authority tab)
- Child's Race information

- Child’s ICWA eligibility on person node and ICWA eligibility/determination screens.
- Child’s Legal name (must match SSIS, birth certificate, and court orders)
- Previous parent’s legal names (must match SSIS, birth certificate, and court orders)
- Sibling relationships
- Sibling’s legal names



 A screenshot of the 'Child Ward Information' form. The form contains the following fields:
 

- Guardianship type:
- Effective date:
- Status at DHS:
- Guardianship active:
- Workgroup:
- Primary Contact:
- Legally Responsible Agency:
- AD Ward ID:
- Person Ward ID:
- DHS Number:

To Open a New Child Ward:

1. Select the child’s Permanency folder.
2. Access **Action** menu.
3. Select **New Child Ward**.
4. On the **Child Ward Information** tab, select Guardianship type of DHS guardianship or Tribal guardianship.
5. Select the **Effective date** of guardianship.
6. **Status at DHS** field defaults to Agency initial set up.
7. The **Guardianship active** field defaults to Yes.
8. Select the workgroup to be associated with the Child Ward from the **Workgroup** drop-down field.
9. Select the social worker’s name to be the primary contact with the State Adoption Unit from the **Primary Contact** drop-down field.
10. Choose the **Legally Responsible Agency** from the dropdown list.
11. The **AD Ward ID#** field auto fills with an SSIS system generated number.

12. The **Person Ward ID #** field auto fills with an SSIS system generated number.

13. Click **Save**.

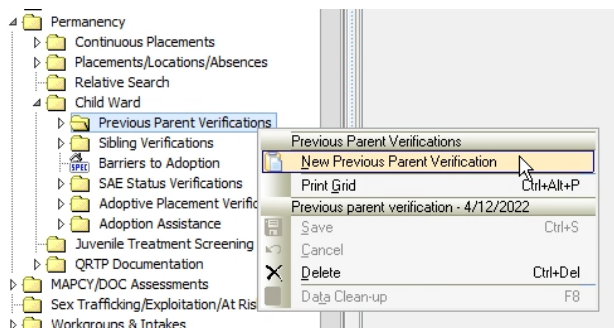
Once the Child Ward record is created, the Status at DHS field on the Child Ward Information tab displays Agency initial set up. Once DHS workers verify the Previous Parents, the status changes to Successful submission to DHS. Once the Child Ward has been set up on the state side, the status changes to Active at DHS.

Child Ward Information		Child Ward Event Summary	
Event	Date	Worker	
▶ Previous parent verification	4/12/2022	Jepson, Erica	
Sibling verification	4/12/2022	Jepson, Erica	

The Child Ward Event Summary tab maintains a record of actions in the child ward folder.

## Previous Parent Verification

SSIS requires entry of two birth parent relationships, or a minimum of one adoptive parent relationship, to be Inactive prior to allowing a worker to create the previous parent verification. Workers should not enter Verified date and Verified by until all previous parent relationships have been entered and their status Inactivated. Previous Parent names get pulled from the relationship folder. Once workers verify the Previous Parents, the Status at DHS field on the Child Ward Information tab displays Successful submission to DHS.



Previous parent verification

All pre-guardianship parents for this child are entered into the SSIS relationship screen and all parent/child relationships have been ended.

Verified date: 04/12/2022      Verified by: Jepson, Erica

Check the child's most recent previous parents:

	Name	SwNDX #	Relationship	Inactive date	Inactive reason	Birth father detail
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Bear, Annie		38390676 Birth mother	04/12/2022	Termination of parental rights	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sparrow, Andy		38390682 Birth father	04/12/2022	Termination of parental rights	Adjudicated

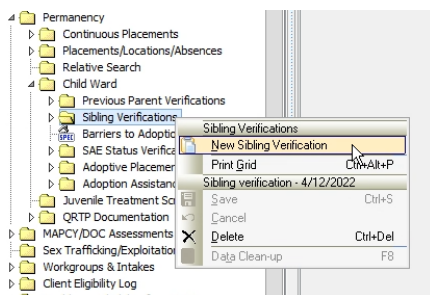
To verify that all previous relationships have been inactivated:

1. Expand the **Child Ward** folder.
2. Highlight the **Previous Parent Verifications** folder
3. Access **Action** menu and select **New ParentVerification**.
4. Review list of Previous Parents for accuracy.
5. Use the mouse to click and check the check box indicating that each previous parent is indicated in the list and are to be verified as previous parents.
6. Click **Save**.
7. From the Verified date field, use the date-picker to select the date the county or tribal worker is verifying that they have ended all of the child’s previous parents’ relationships.
8. In the Verified by field, select the social worker’s name from the drop-down field.
9. Click **Save**.

A dialog box displays upon saving when the Verified date and Verified by fields are entered, warning workers that verifying submits data to the state and finalizes the screen so that it is no longer editable and cannot be deleted. **Once Parent Verifications are complete, DHS staff is notified of the child and can start their portion of work in the Adoption process. Before this, the child is not known to DHS Adoptions staff.**

## Sibling Verifications

All sibling relationships must be entered into SSIS at the county/tribal agency prior to verifying sibling relationships to the State Adoption unit. If a sibling relationship known to the county or tribal worker does not display on the Sibling Verification screen, **do not** enter a Verified date, click Save, and return to the Child Ward’s Client folder to enter the sibling relationship. If there are no siblings a Sibling Verification is not required. Siblings above the age of 18 do not need to be included on the verification. Best Practice is to select only siblings under guardianship together. All persons being “sent” from county/tribal agencies must be cleared to the state as SWNDX is the link that holds agency and DHS data together.



Sibling verification

All known sibling relationships for this child have been entered into SSIS and are listed in the grid below. If the grid is blank, the child has no known siblings at the time of verification.

Verified date: 04/12/2022      Verified by: Jepsen, Erica

Child's sibling relationships in SSIS

	Name	SWNDX #	Relationship
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sparrow, Jack	38390688	Brother
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Bear, Adam	38390673	Brother
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Bear, Amanda	38410660	Sister
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sparrow, Mia	38390679	Sister

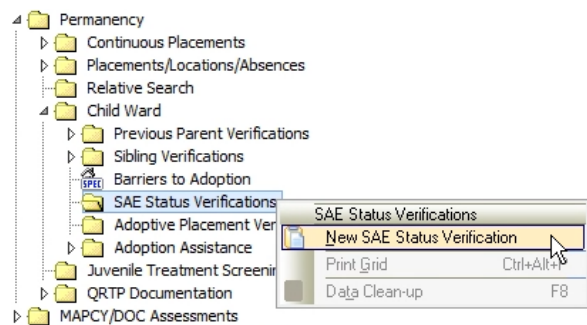
### To Verify Sibling Relationships:

1. Expand the Child Ward folder.
2. Highlight the Sibling Verifications folder
3. Access Action menu and select New Sibling Verification.
4. All Child sibling relationships entered in SSIS default as checked. Workers can uncheck sibling relationships that do not apply. Agency workers should uncheck any siblings not under DHS Guardianship.
5. Double check that the sibling information entered is accurate.
6. Enter Verified date.
7. Enter **Verified by**.
8. Click **Save**

## State Adoption Exchange Status Verification

The agency worker enters and verifies data in SSIS that is transmitted electronically to DHS as a State Adoption Exchange. Data entry options to meet this SAE requirement are:

- **Register**
- **Defer**
- **Exempt**



### To Open an SAE Status Verification:

1. Expand the Child Ward Folder
2. From the SAE Status Verifications folder, Access the Action Menu and select **New SAE Status Verification**.

Type	Name
SAE Status Verification	SAE Status Verification

SAE status verification Document

SAE status verification

The SAE registration status information is correct. If the child is being registered, the SAE Registration Document is complete and accurate.

Verified date: 4/14/2022 Verified by: Jjepson, Erica

Registration information

Registration status: Exempt

Reason: Child placed with parents under signed APA

When completing an Adoptive Placement Verification, the system creates the SAE Status Verification, making the 'Registration Status: Exempt' and the 'Reason: Child placed with parents under signed APA'. If this is completed, workers will not have to create a new SAE exempt record.

To enter Exempt for the SAE Registration Status Verification:

1. From the SAE Status Verifications screen, select **Exempt** in the **Registration status** drop-down field.
2. Select **Child placed with parents under signed APA** as exemption reason in the **Reason** drop-down field.
3. Click **Save**.
4. Enter **Verified date**.
5. Enter **Verified by** name.
6. Click **Save**.
7. A warning displays and asks if you would like to continue. Select yes if you want to save the SAE Verification or information or Select No if you do not want to.

The Verified date and Verified by name fields are disabled until the Registration status of Exempt is saved by the worker. No information displays on the Report or Document tabs with the Registration Status of Exempt.

Type	Name
SAE Status Verification	SAE Status Verification

SAE status verification Document

SAE status verification

The SAE registration status information is correct. If the child is being registered, the SAE Registration Document is complete and accurate.

Verified date: [ ] Verified by: [ ]

Registration information

Registration status: Deferred

Reason: [ ]

- Child is hospitalized for daily care - cannot place with a family
- Current foster parents considering adoption
- Diagnostic study in progress for this child
- Potential adoptive family considering adoption

To enter Deferred for the SAE Registration Status Verification:

1. From the SAE Status Verifications screen, select **Deferred** in the **Registration** status drop-down field.
2. Select the reason the SAE registration is deferred in the **Reason** field.
3. Enter **Verified date**.
4. Enter **Verified by** name.
5. Click **Save**.
6. A warning displays and asks if you would like to continue. Select yes if you want to save the SAE Verification or information or Select No if you do not want to.

SAE status verification | Document

SAE status verification

The SAE registration status information is correct. If the child is being registered, the SAE Registration Document is complete and accurate.

Verified date: 07/12/2025 | Verified by: Jepson, Erica

Registration information

Registration status: Registered

Reason:

To enter Registered for the SAE Registration Status Verification:

1. From the SAE Status Verifications screen, in the **Registration** status drop-down field select Registered.
2. Enter **Verified date**.
3. Enter Verified by name.

Type	Name
SAE Status Verification	SAE Status Verification

SAE status verification | Document

Description

- State Adoption Exchange Registration

Double click on State Adoption Exchange Registration

4. Select the Document tab.
5. Double click on the State Adoption Exchange Registration in the Setup tab displays.

**Description**  
 State Adoption Exchange Registration

Setup | Document | Properties | Document | Properties

No required fields needed to complete.  
 Document template: State Adoption Exchange Registration  
 Description: State Adoption Exchange Registration

Document  
 Document: State Adoption Exchange Registration

Elements  
 Registration Date: 4/14/2022

Ward event  
 Ward event: SAE status verification

Agency data  
 Agency data: [Redacted]  
 Responsible agency: [Redacted]

Worker  
 Adoption worker: Jepsom, Erica  
 First name: Erica  
 Last name: Jepsom  
 Phone: [Redacted]  
 E-mail: erica.jepsom@state.mn.us

Child Ward  
 Child ward: Tia Sparrow  
 First name: Tia  
 Middle name: [Redacted]  
 Last name: Sparrow  
 Date of birth: 06/12/2011  
 Gender: Female  
 Primary language: English  
 Qualifies under ICWA: No  
 Hispanic heritage: No

6. Review the Setup tab for accuracy.
7. View and confirm information entered into the Setup tab.

**Description**  
 State Adoption Exchange Registration

Setup | Document | Properties

**E**

**State Adoption Exchange Registration**

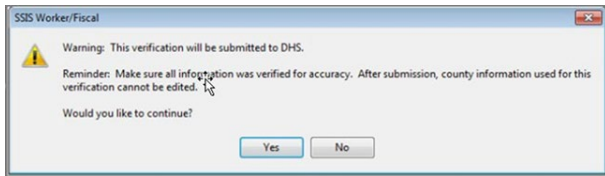
**Agency Information**  
 Responsible Agency: MNPrairie  
 Worker: Erica Jepsom  
 Phone: [Redacted]  
 Email: erica.jepsom@state.mn.us  
 Registration Date: April 14, 2022

**Child Information**  
 Name: Tia Sparrow  
 DOB: 06/12/2011  
 Gender: Female  
 Primary Language: English  
 ICWA Applies: No  
 Hispanic Heritage: No

**Race Information**

Race	Tribe or ethnicity	Tribal enrollment status
Caucasian		

8. Enter all pertinent information in the Child description (for publication) section; Diagnosis Information, and Worker Recommendations sections.
9. Click Save.
10. Select SAE status verification tab.
11. Enter Verified date.
12. Enter Verified by.
13. Click Save.



14. A warning displays, informing worker that after submission the SAE verification cannot be edited. Select Yes if you do want to submit the SAE Verification or No if you do not want to submit the SAE Verification
15. Immediately mail photo directly to the MNADOPT

The information entered on the Document tab, and the photo of the child ward is published on the Minnesota Adoption (MN ADOPT) website and the Federal USAadoptKids website to assist in recruiting permanent families for children under DHS Guardianship or Tribal Guardianship.

To print an SAE Registration Document:

1. Select the SAE Status Verification folder.
2. Select the **Document** tab.
3. Click the **Editor** Button.
4. The SAE Document displays.
5. Select **Print**.
6. Click **OK**.

## Adoptive Placement

Before a placement can become a pre-adoptive home, the prospective adopting parents must receive full disclosure by receiving a redacted copy of the child's social and medical history. Then an adoptive placement agreement can be signed. The agency needs to also fill out the Adoption Placement Decision Summary. The placement must then be changed to a pre-adoptive placement in SSIS. Then the adoption placement verification screen can be filled out in SSIS and sent for approval from DHS.

## Adoption Placement Agreement

The Northstar Adoption Placement Agreement (APA) is an agreement between the adopting parent(s) and the agency duly authorized by the commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Human Services to place a child for adoption.

In entering this agreement, the agency certifies there is:

- an adoption study approving placement of the child in the adopting parent(s) home;
- that background studies were completed on required individuals according to state and federal law; and
- a redacted copy of the child's Social and Medical History for a Child in Foster Care (DHS-6754A).

### Adoption Placement Agreement for a Child under Guardianship of the Commissioner

This agreement is among the adopting parent(s), John Rhinehart and John Rhinehart; Test Policy County Family Services, duly authorized by the commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Human Services to place the child for adoption; and the commissioner.

In entering into this agreement, Test Policy County Family Services certifies there is an adoption study approving placement of the child in the adopting parent(s)' home, and that background studies were completed on required individuals according to state and federal law.

The adoptive placement decision for Apollo Thirteen is made by Test Policy County Family Services, on 05/12/2022, by mutual agreement with adopting parent(s), in consideration of the agreements made herein. Adopting parent(s) received full disclosure of Apollo Thirteen's social and medical history, including a redacted copy of Apollo Thirteen's Social and Medical History for a Child in Foster Care (DHS-6754A), on or before this date.

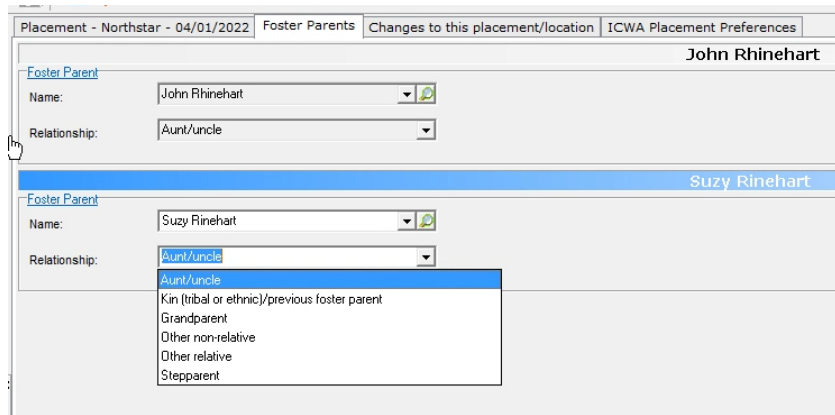
### To Complete an Adoption Placement Agreement:

1. From the Workgroup Chronology folder, access the Action menu and select **New Document**.
2. Complete a document Template Search.
3. Highlight the **Adoption Placement Agreement** from the template list; click on Select.
4. Complete the **Setup** tab.
5. Click Save.
6. Select the **RTF Document** tab.
7. Select the blue “E” button. The Document displays.
8. Select the correct date that the APA is being executed. Ensure the child's legal name is accurately entered. Print the Document to obtain needed signatures and submit to DHS

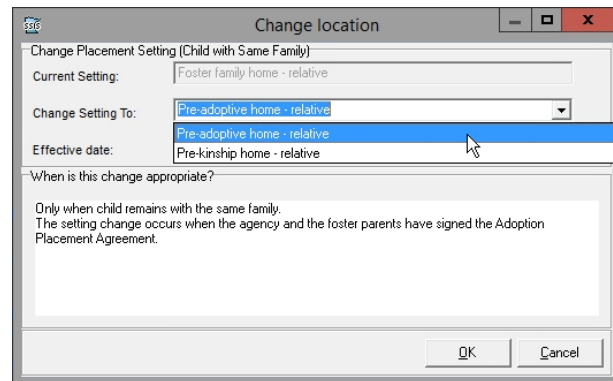
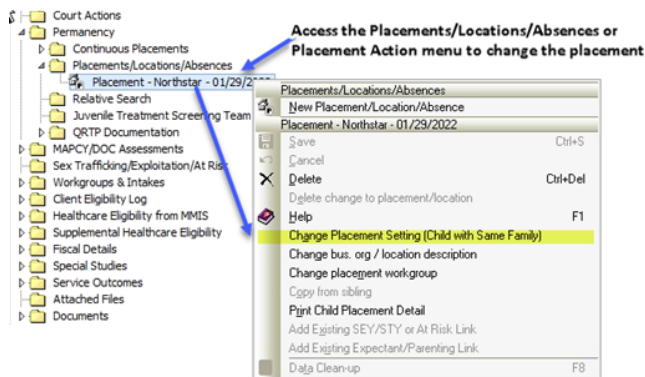
## Change in Placement Setting and Foster Parent Relationship

Once the pre-adoptive family and the local agency sign an Adoption Placement agreement (APA) the placement setting should be changed from foster care to pre-adoptive.

- If the child is moving from their current foster home to the pre-adoptive home, end the foster home setting with the reason “pre-adoptive placement” and start a new placement with the setting “pre-adoptive home- relative “ or “pre-adoptive home- non-relative “
- Ensure the correct relationship of the child to the Foster parent is selected on the foster Parents tab of the Placement/Location/Absence folder.



- If the pre-adoptive family is the current foster family, change the placement setting from foster care to pre-adoptive using the changes to this placement/location tab.



To Change Placement Setting to Pre-adoptive home:

1. Access the Placements/Locations/Absences or Placement **Action** menu and select **Change Placement Setting (Child with Same family)**.
2. Select **Pre-adoptive home** from the **Change Setting To** field.
3. Select the effective date.

## Adoption Placement Decision Summary

The Adoption Placement Decision Summary is filled out by the adoption worker to document a summary of how the agency made an adoptive placement decision for a child under the guardianship of the Commissioner. It summarizes the individual needs of the child and includes an assessment of the adopting parent(s)' ability to meet the needs of the child. It also documents the agency's relative search and placement considerations as well as placement with siblings. In addition, this document verifies a background check was completed on all adopting parent(s) with no disqualifications and the adopting parent(s) have been provided full disclosure, including receiving a redacted copy of the child's social and medical history.

### **Adoption Placement Decision Summary for a Child under Guardianship of the Commissioner**

This document provides a summary of how county social services agency staff, as agents of the Commissioner of Minnesota Department of Human Services, made an adoptive placement decision for a child under guardianship of the Commissioner. It accompanies a child's Adoption Placement Agreement (DHS-0312).

#### **Instructions:**

Answer each question in each section in relation to the child who is the subject of this form and their adopting parent(s).

Submit this form, along with the child's Adoption Placement Agreement (DHS-0312) and all required documentation, to your county social services agency's assigned records and eligibility consultant at the Minnesota Department of Human Services. Acceptable submission methods are:

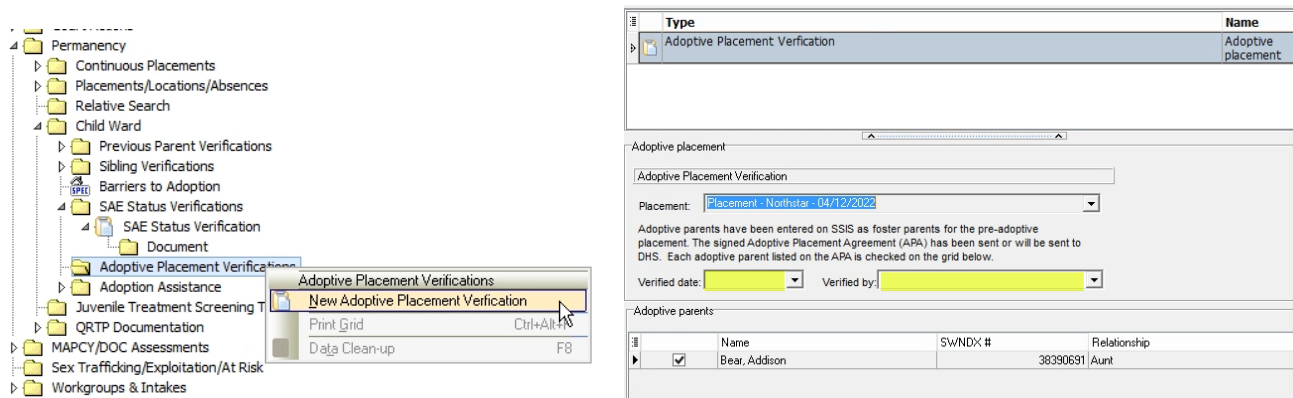
- Secure email
- Attached documents in Social Services Information System
- Secure fax: FAX #
- Mail:

To Complete an Adoption Placement Decision Summary:

1. From the Workgroup Chronology folder, access the Action menu and select **New Document**.
2. Complete a document Template Search.
3. Highlight the **Adoption Placement Decision Summary** from the template list; click on Select.
4. Complete the **Setup** tab.
5. Save.
6. Select the **RTF Document** tab.
7. Select the blue "E" button. The Document displays.
8. Ensure the child's legal name is accurately entered. Complete the document and print for Submission to DHS, along with all required attachments.

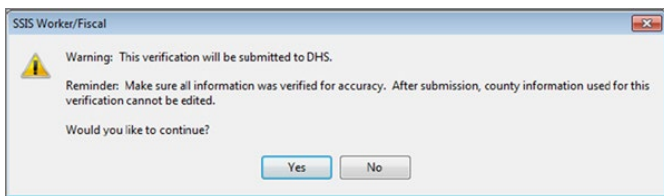
## **Adoptive Placement Verification**

The Agency enters and verifies the date the agency verified placement. This is transmitted via SSIS Adoption Placement verification to DHS as an adoptive placement event. When completing an Adoptive Placement Verification, the system creates the SAE Status Verification, making the 'Registration Status: Exempt' and the 'Reason: Child placed with parents under signed APA'. This will help DHS and MNADOPT remove the child from the State Adoption Exchange timely.



To Complete an Adoption Placement Verification:

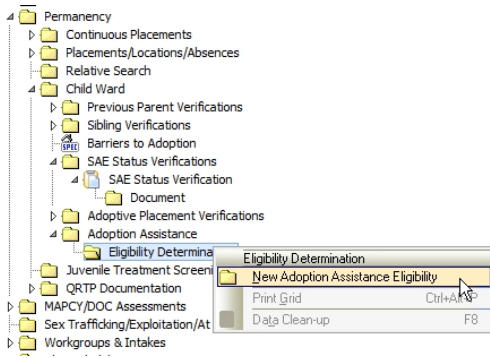
1. Expand the Child Ward folder; Highlight the **Adoptive Placement Verification** folder.
2. Access **Action** menu.
3. Select New **Adoptive Placement Verification**.
4. Verify the **Placement** field displays the appropriate placement.
5. Verify that the name of each pre-adoptive parent listed matches the names of the pre-adoptive parents that signed the Adoptive Placement Agreement.
6. Enter the **Verified date**.
7. Enter the **Verified by**.
8. Save.



9. A Warning displays, asking "Would you like to continue?" Select **Yes** or **No**.

## Completing the Northstar Adoption Assistance Eligibility Determination

The Adoption Assistance Eligibility Determination is created from the Child Ward node.



To complete an Adoption Assistance Eligibility Determination Setup tab:

1. Expand the Child Ward folder and highlight the Adoption Assistance folder
2. Access the Action menu and select **New Adoption Assistance Eligibility**
3. On the Setup tab, in the Document template filed, select **Northstar Adoption Assistance Eligibility Determination**. This will autofill into the Description field; you can remove this and enter new information into the Description field if desired.
4. The Status field displays as **Draft** and the Status Change date displays the date/time the Adoption Assistance Eligibility document was opened.
5. Select the **Document** tab to complete the questions.

## Setup Tab

The Eligibility Determination has a set-up screen that must be filled out prior to answering questions that determine both eligibility for the program and the funding source (Title IV-E or Non–Title IV-E funds).

To Complete the Adoption Assistance Setup Tab:

1. The Document template field auto-fills with Adoption Assistance Eligibility Determination.
2. Complete the Setup tab.
3. Click the Document tab.

Watch for blank or accurate fields in the following fields:

- Citizenship status

- Removal from home
- Best interest statement
- ICWA applies
- FC payment prior to guardianship
- IV-E FC pymt during cont. plcmt.

To prevent a false not eligible Adoption Assistance Eligibility result, you must go to the appropriate section of the Tree View to enter the information, return to the Adoption Assistance Eligibility Setup tab and click the refresh button(s) to have the information autofill into the previously blank fields.

## Document Tab

Northstar Adoption Assistance Eligibility Determination Document will guide the worker through a series of questions based on how the previous question was answered. If you need additional guidance in answering the question click on the help text (hover the cursor over the text, if it turns into a hand there is help text available) in the question. As the questions are answered a list of required supporting documents is being compiled. The worker will need to review the Required Documents Tab to view the list. Based on how the questions are answered, the Eligibility Determination Document will calculate the child's eligibility for Adoption Assistance and whether it will be IV-E or Non-IVE assistance. It is important to check accuracy, i.e. correct name, spelling, etc. on all documents and SSIS before sending eligibility documents to DHS. DHS will verify receipt and accuracy of document(s) as part of the approval process.

**Pre-screen for Eligibility**

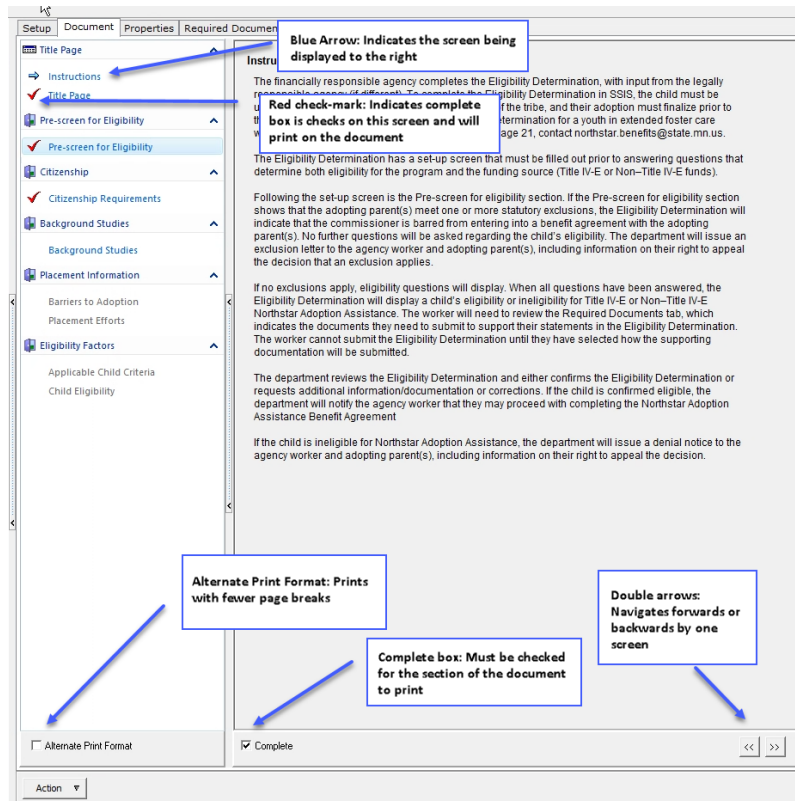
Does the adopting parent(s) for this child meet any of the exclusion factors that would bar the commissioner from entering into a Northstar Adoption Assistance benefit agreement with the adopting parent(s)?  ▾

Is the adopting parent(s) willing to adopt this child without receiving Northstar Adoption Assistance benefits?  ▾

**This hand indicates there is HELP text for this question. Help text is available for eligibility questions when this hand appears.**

The screenshot shows a web form titled "Pre-screen for Eligibility". It contains two questions, each followed by a "No" button with a dropdown arrow. A mouse cursor is hovering over the second question, and a blue callout box with a hand icon points to the question text. The callout box contains the text: "This hand indicates there is HELP text for this question. Help text is available for eligibility questions when this hand appears."

## Eligibility Questions



To Complete an Adoption Assistance Eligibility Determination Document tab:

1. Review the fields on the Title Page and ensure the data that merged in from the Tree View folders is accurate. If not update the information on the Setup Tab.
2. Complete each section: **Prescreen for Eligibility, Citizenship Requirements, Background Studies, Placement Information (Barriers to Adoption, Placement Efforts), and Eligibility Factors (Applicable Child Criteria, Child Eligibility)**. This document should be completed from top to bottom, as fields display based on how previous fields were answered.
3. The Complete checkbox auto checks to ensure this screen prints on the document.
4. Click on each Navigation bar (or advance the screens by clicking the double-arrows at the bottom right of the screen) and answer the questions as listed.
5. Click **Save**.

### Prescreen for eligibility

Following the set-up screen is the Pre-screen for eligibility section. If the Pre-screen for eligibility section shows that the relative custodian(s) meet one or more statutory exclusions, the Eligibility Determination will indicate that the commissioner is barred from entering into a benefit agreement with the adoptive parent(s). No further questions will be asked regarding the child's eligibility. The department will issue an exclusion letter to the agency worker and adoptive parent(s), including information on their right to appeal the decision that an exclusion applies.

## Help for Prescreen Eligibility Questions

***Does the adopting parent(s) for this child meet any of the exclusion factors that would bar the commissioner from entering into a Northstar Adoption Assistance benefit agreement with the adopting parent(s)?***

The commissioner is barred from entering into adoption assistance benefit agreements with the following individuals:

- Child's biological parent or stepparent
- Child's relative with whom the child resided immediately prior to child welfare involvement
- Individual who is adopting the child via a direct adoptive placement under Minn. Stat., section 259.47, or equivalent in tribal code
- Child's legal custodian or guardian (except for relative custodians receiving Northstar Kinship Assistance on behalf of the child)
- Individual who is adopting the child, and the child is not a citizen or resident of the United States and was either adopted in another country or was brought to the United States for the purpose of adoption

If adopting parent(s) meets one or more of the above items, then an exclusion applies.

***Is the adopting parent(s) willing to adopt this child without receiving Northstar Adoption Assistance benefits?***

Agency staff should ask adopting parent(s) this question. It is a required question under state and federal law for establishing eligibility for adoption assistance. It fulfills a portion of the requirement that the agency make reasonable, but unsuccessful, efforts to place the child without adoption assistance.

Once agency staff have made an adoptive placement decision for a child, agency staff must provide full disclosure to the prospective adoptive parents. Following full disclosure, agency staff should ask the prospective adoptive parents if they are willing to adopt without adoption assistance.

If they say they cannot adopt the child without adoption assistance, the requirement for a reasonable, but unsuccessful, effort to place the child without providing adoption assistance will be met. It is not necessary for the agency to "shop" for a family while the child remains in foster care.

If they say they can adopt the child without adoption assistance, the requirement for a reasonable, but unsuccessful, effort to place the child without providing adoption assistance will not be met. In this case, agency staff should print the statement *Prospective Adoptive Parent Statement to Decline Northstar Adoption Assistance*, found in the Child's Documents folder. Submit a copy to DHS.

If no exclusions apply, eligibility questions will display.

## Age and Citizenship

***Does the child meet the qualified alien requirements under PRWORA on their own without regard to the citizenship or immigration status of the adopting parent(s)?***

**Note:** A child must be a U.S. citizen or meet qualified alien requirements under the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) to be eligible to receive adoption assistance benefits.

Consult with your county/tribal agency or Policy Quest if you are unsure whether a child meets qualified alien requirements.

If the child is not a U.S. citizen or in one of the excepted groups at section 403(b) of PRWORA, but is a qualified alien who has not lived in the U.S. as a qualified alien for five years, at least one adopting parent must be a U.S. citizen or qualified alien.

A child who is not a U.S. citizen or qualified alien is not eligible for adoption assistance, even if at least one adopting parent is a U.S. citizen or qualified alien.

If a child is an undocumented immigrant, consult with your county/tribal attorney to see if it is possible for the child to obtain special immigrant juvenile status or another status that meets qualified alien requirements.

If a child's citizenship/immigration status is unknown or blank, determine the child's citizenship/immigration status before proceeding with the Eligibility Determination.

***Is at least one adopting parent a US citizen or qualified alien under PRWORA?***

**Note:** Consult with your county/tribal agency or Policy Quest if you are unsure whether a child or adopting parent meets citizenship or qualified alien requirements.

If the child is not a U.S. citizen or in one of the excepted groups at section 403(b) of PRWORA, but is a qualified alien who has not lived in the U.S. as a qualified alien for five years, at least one adopting parent must be a U.S. citizen or qualified alien.

**Background Studies**

***Was a background study completed for each required person?***

***Did the background study reveal the adopting parent(s) has ever been convicted of a felony involving child abuse or neglect, spousal abuse, a crime against a child (including child pornography), or a crime involving violence, including rape, sexual assault or homicide (but not including other physical assault or battery)?***

***Did the background study reveal that the adopting parent(s) has ever been convicted of a felony involving child abuse or neglect, spousal abuse, a crime against a child (including child pornography), or a crime involving violence, including rape, sexual assault or homicide (but not including other physical assault or battery)?***

***Did the background study reveal that the adopting parent(s) has been convicted of a felony involving physical assault, battery, or a drug-related offense within the past five years?***

**Note:** Background studies must be fully compliant according to federal Adam Walsh requirements. See Minnesota Statutes, section 245C.33.

These are permanent federal barrier crimes that make adoptive parents ineligible to receive adoption assistance on behalf of a child. See Minnesota Statutes, section 256N.23, subdivision 4.

## **Placement Information**

### ***What is the primary reason the child cannot be placed with adopting parent(s) without providing adoption assistance?***

**Note:** This is part of the special needs determination that a child must meet to be eligible for adoption assistance. See Minnesota Statutes, section 256N.22, subdivision 2. This is also referred to as “barrier to adoption.”

In determining which reason is the primary reason, agency staff should rule out disability prior to considering sibling-based reasons. The at-risk reason should be considered last.

If selecting that the child is being adopted by their sibling’s adoptive parents, for whom they receive adoption assistance, please note that the sibling’s adoption assistance does not need to come from Minnesota. It also does not need to include a monthly payment (for example, at risk or high risk benefit agreements).

### ***Does ICWA apply?***

**Note:** If answered yes, questions regarding placement preference will be asked. To be eligible for adoption assistance, the child’s adoptive placement must comply with ICWA adoptive placement preference order, which is:

1. If the Indian child’s tribe established a different order of preference by resolution, then the Indian child’s tribe’s adoptive placement preference order. If there is no established order, then:
2. a member of the child’s extended family;
3. Other members of the Indian child’s tribe; or
4. Other Indian families.

Only the court can authorize deviation from ICWA adoptive placement preference order. If unknown, consult with your county attorney.

### ***Is the child being adopted by a relative?***

**Note:** Answering “yes” to this question waives the documented search requirement for the special needs determination. Waivers to this requirement are available when children are being adopted by:

- A relative
- A foster parent with whom a child developed significant emotional ties while in the foster parent’s care as a foster child
- Their sibling’s adoptive parent(s).

Relative is defined in statute as:

- An individual related to the child by blood, marriage, or adoption
- A legal parent, guardian, or custodian of a child's sibling
- An important friend with whom a child has resided or had significant contact.

However, for purposes of this question, do not answer "yes" if the child's adopting parent(s) is:

- Their foster parent, and their foster parent did not have a relationship with the child and/or was unknown to the child prior to the child's current continuous placement episode (also known as non-relative foster care).
- Their sibling's adoptive parent(s).

While these two circumstances fall under the statutory definition of "relative," the three waiver options distinguish these two circumstances from the overall definition of relative. Answering "no" will lead to additional questions regarding the other two waiver options that relate to these two circumstances.

***Is the child being adopted by a foster parent with whom they developed significant emotional ties while in their care as a foster child?***

**Note:** Answering "yes" to this question waives the documented search requirement for the special needs determination. Waivers to this requirement are available when children are being adopted by:

- A relative
- A foster parent with whom a child developed significant emotional ties while in the foster parent's care as a foster child
- Their sibling's adoptive parent(s).

The child does not need to be currently residing with the foster parent to answer yes to this question, but the child must have been placed in their home for foster care placement at some point.

For purposes of this question, do not answer "yes" if:

- The child's relationship with their foster parent was established prior to the current continuous placement episode. Relationships established prior to the current continuous placement episode are considered to fall under the "relative" status as "an important friend with whom the child resided or had significant contact." If this is the case, go back to the previous question and answer "yes" to "Is the child being adopted by a relative?" instead.
- The child is being adopted by their sibling's adoptive parent(s).

***Does the child meet the age requirement to be considered an applicable child for Title IV-E?"***

**Note:** Answering "yes" to this question waives the documented search requirement for the special needs determination. Waivers to this requirement are available when children are being adopted by:

- A relative
- A foster parent with whom a child developed significant emotional ties while in the foster parent's care as a foster child

- Their sibling’s adoptive parent(s).

***“Was a relative search conducted?”***

***“Does Safe Place for Newborns apply?”***

**Note:** If a relative search was not conducted at any point during a child’s continuous placement episode, and Safe Place for Newborns does not apply, the child is not eligible for Title IV-E or Non-Title IV-E adoption assistance.

If the court waived the relative search in its entirety, so the agency did not conduct a relative search, but Safe Place for Newborns does not apply, the child is not eligible for Title IV-E or Non-Title IV-E adoption assistance.

Agencies must make reasonable, but unsuccessful, efforts to place children for adoption without providing adoption assistance. This is verified through a documented search, which includes a relative search.

If Safe Place for Newborns applies, a relative search is not required.

***Did the legally responsible agency consider adoptive placement with a relative?***

**Note:** As part of a documented search, agencies must consider adoptive placement with a relative.

If an agency makes diligent efforts to identify relatives, but is unable to identify any living relatives despite these efforts, the agency should select yes to this question if the agency would have considered adoptive placement with a relative had they been able to identify living relatives of the child.

If an agency makes diligent efforts to identify, notify, and engage relatives, but is unable to establish contact with any of the relatives despite these efforts, the agency should select yes to this question if the agency would have considered adoptive placement with a relative had they been able to establish contact with any of the child’s relatives.

If an agency did not consider adoptive placement with a relative because the court waived the relative search in its entirety, or because the court ordered the agency not to consider any of the child’s relatives, the child is not eligible for Title IV-E or Non-Title IV-E adoption assistance.

***Does the child meet the minimum standard for the State Adoption Exchange registration requirements?***

**Note:** As part of the documented search, agencies are required to register children who are legally free for adoption on Minnesota’s State Adoption Exchange within 45 days of the child becoming legally free for adoption.

This requirement is met when a child’s registration status is consistent with their situation, which can include Registered, Deferred, or Exempt. The child does not need to be listed on the public website to meet this requirement.

Consult with permanency support unit staff at DHS if unsure whether a child’s registration meets this

requirement.

***Was the adoptive placement located through the State Adoption Exchange?***

**Note:** Answer yes to this question if the adoptive placement was identified as a result of registering the child on the State Adoption Exchange, including if the child’s adopting family found the child on the public website and reached out to the agency or if the agency located the child’s adopting family because the adopting family was registered on the State Adoption Exchange.

***Were additional efforts made to place the child without providing adoption assistance?***

**Note:** If an agency met requirements regarding relative search, ICWA, and State Adoption Exchange, but was unable to identify an adoptive family for the child, the agency must employ other recruitment methods to complete the documented search requirement.

**Eligibility Factors**

***Does the child meet the age requirement to be considered an applicable child under Title IV-E?***

**Notes:** The set of Title IV-E pathway eligibility criteria a child must meet depends on whether the child is an applicable child or a non-applicable child. If a child is an applicable child, it does not mean they are automatically eligible for Title IV-E; it just means they must meet a different set of criteria than a non-applicable child.

A child can be considered an applicable child based on their age or sibling relationship.

The applicable age for a fiscal year is based on the federal fiscal year (FFY), which runs October 1 through September 30. To meet the age requirement to be considered an applicable child under Title IV-E, a child must turn that age during the federal fiscal year in which their adoption assistance benefit agreement is entered into. In SSIS, this is determined by the creation date of a child’s eligibility determination. For example, if a child’s birthday is September 20, 2018, and the child’s eligibility determination is created on January 3, 2020, the child is considered an applicable child because the child will turn age 2 during the federal fiscal year in which the child’s adoption assistance benefit agreement was entered into.

The applicable age for each FFY is as follows:

<b>Federal Fiscal Year</b>	<b>The applicable age</b>
2017-2023	2
2024	2 (or, in the case of a child for whom an adoption assistance agreement is entered into on or after July 1, 2024, any age)
2025 and later	Any age

Create date is used to determine Applicable Age calculation.

***Is this child a sibling of an applicable child, who is being adopted at the same time by the same parent(s)?***

**Note:** If a child does not meet applicable age requirements on their own, they may still be considered an applicable child if their sibling is an applicable child and they are being adopted at the same time by the same parents.

If the child is a non-applicable child, additional questions will be asked.

***Applicable child questions:***

***Was the child eligible for Title IV-E Adoption Assistance in a previous adoption where the adoptive parent(s) has died, or the adoption has dissolved?***

**Note:** A child's eligibility for Title IV-E adoption assistance may be from another state. It may also have been based on a child being considered at risk or high risk. It does not matter if payments were made or not.

This does not apply if a child was eligible for non-Title IV-E adoption assistance, regardless of state.

Adoption dissolution means adoptive parents' rights were terminated or suspended, or they executed an irrevocable consent to adoption.

***Has the child been determined eligible for Supplemental Security Income based solely on the medical or disability requirements of the Social Security Act without regard to SSI income requirements, and/or has the State Medical Review Team made a disability determination based on the child's disability?***

**Note:** Applicable children do not need to be eligible to receive SSI payments. They only need to meet the medical or disability requirements. This can be determined through SSI application or through the State Medical Review Team disability determination process.

A child who is eligible to receive SSI payments also meets this requirement.

***Was the child in the care of a county or tribal social services agency at the time of initiation of adoption proceedings?***

**Note:** DHS defines "initiation of adoption proceedings" as follows:

- For state wards: The date the child was ordered under guardianship of the commissioner of human services
- For tribal wards: The date the child was made a ward of the tribe

***At the time of initiation of adoption proceedings, the child was in the care of the county or tribal social services agency pursuant to:***

**Note:** If the value displayed below is blank, protective hold, or court-reviewed voluntary, the child is not

eligible for Title IV-E or Non-Title IV-E Adoption Assistance. Make sure the court actions screen and the child's method of removal are updated, then refresh the eligibility determination set up screen to update this screen with the correct method of removal.

***Did the removal court order contain the best interest or contrary to the welfare language?***

**Note:** If the value displayed below is blank, when it should read yes or no, make sure the court actions screen and the child's method of removal are updated, then refresh the eligibility determination set up screen to update this screen with the correct method of removal.

***Did the child's removal coincide with the court order authorizing the child's removal for the current continuous placement episode?***

**Note:** A child's removal from their home must "coincide" with the court order authorizing the child's removal. Coincide means that the child's removal must have occurred by the end of the next business day following the court order authorizing removal.

If a child's removal does not coincide with the court order authorizing their removal, the child is not eligible for Title IV-E adoption assistance unless DHS has determined there are extenuating circumstances.

***Did DHS determine extenuating circumstances existed as to why the child's removal did not coincide with the court order authorizing the child's removal?***

**Note:** If a child's removal does not coincide with the court order authorizing their removal, the child is not eligible for Title IV-E adoption assistance unless there are extenuating circumstances. Only the Title IV-E unit at DHS can determine if there are extenuating circumstances that apply. Do not answer yes if DHS has not made this determination.

If an agency believes extenuating circumstances exist, the agency must contact their Title IV-E trainer or their records and eligibility consultant at DHS to initiate the process.

***Did the child reside with their minor parent while the minor parent was in foster care?***

**Note:** To meet this requirement, the child may or may not have been in foster care at the same time as their minor parent who was in foster care. However, the child must have lived at some point with their minor parent while their minor parent was in foster care. If this requirement is met, there will be additional questions regarding the removal of the child's minor parent. Refer to the help text if further information regarding those questions is needed.

***If yes to above question, the child resided in the same foster care placement with their minor parent, and the minor parent was in foster care pursuant to:***

***Did the removal court order for the child's minor parent contain the best interest or contrary to the welfare language?***

**Note:** Do not use the child's removal method. Refer to the child's minor parent's removal method.

***Did the minor parent's removal coincide with the court order authorizing the minor parent's removal?***

**Note:** A minor parent's removal from their home must "coincide" with the court order authorizing the minor parent's removal. Coincide means that the minor parent's removal must have occurred by the end of the next business day following the court order authorizing removal.

If a minor parent's removal did not coincide with the court order authorizing their removal, the minor parent's child is not eligible for Title IV-E adoption assistance unless there are extenuating circumstances. Only the Title IV-E unit at DHS can determine if there are extenuating circumstances that apply. Do not answer yes if DHS has not made this determination.

If an agency believes extenuating circumstances exist, the agency must contact their Title IV-E trainer or their records and eligibility consultant at DHS to initiate the process.

***If no, Did DHS determine extenuating circumstances existed as to why the minor parent's removal did not coincide with the court order authorizing the minor parent's removal?"***

**Note:** If a minor parent's removal did not coincide with the court order authorizing their removal, the minor parent's child is not eligible for Title IV-E adoption assistance unless DHS has determined there are extenuating circumstances.

***Have foster care payments been paid on the child's behalf while in out-of-home placement prior to the issuance of the court order transferring the child's guardianship to the commissioner or making the child a ward of the tribe?***

**Note:** At this point, the child is not eligible for Title IV-E adoption assistance. This question will determine whether the child is eligible for non-Title IV-E adoption assistance.

To answer yes to this question, foster care payments must have actually been paid on the child's behalf. These payments must have been made while the child was placed out of their home, and before the effective date of the court order that transferred the child's guardianship to the commissioner or made the child a ward of the tribe.

***Non-Applicable child questions***

***Was the child eligible for Title IV-E Adoption Assistance in a previous adoption where the adoptive parent(s) had died, or the adoption has dissolved?***

**Note:** A child's eligibility for Title IV-E adoption assistance may be from another state. It may also have been based on a child being considered at risk or high risk. It does not matter if payments were made or not.

This does not apply if a child was eligible for non-Title IV-E adoption assistance, regardless of state.

Adoption dissolution means adoptive parents' rights were terminated or suspended, or they executed an

irrevocable consent to adoption.

***Is the child eligible to receive Supplemental Security Income prior to the finalization of the adoption?***

**Note:** Non-applicable children must actually be eligible to receive SSI payments. This means they must meet all SSI eligibility requirements, including income requirements.

The child does not need to actually receive payments.

***Were there any trial home visits during the current continuous placement episode?***

**Note:** If a trial home visit extended beyond 6 months, and the court did not authorize the extension, then agency staff must consult with their Title IV-E trainer to determine whether the trial home visit has an impact on the current continuous placement episode and Title IV-E eligibility.

Agency staff may be asked to submit court documentation regarding trial home visits.

Consult with the agency's assigned records and eligibility consultant if questions remain.

***Was at least one Title IV-E foster care payment made on behalf of this child during this continuous placement episode?***

**Note:** Answer "yes" to this statement if at least one Title IV-E foster care payment was made on behalf of this child during this continuous placement episode, **and** the Title IV-E claim/s **were** properly made.

Answer "no" to this statement if at least one Title IV-E foster care payment was made on behalf of this child during this continuous placement episode, **but** the Title IV-E claim/s **were not** properly made. In this case, the child's foster care payments show as Title IV-E in SSIS, but Title IV-E claims should not have been made. This can happen if Title IV-E eligibility was incorrectly determined and corrected at a later date, and/or Title IV-E claims could not be backed out timely. You will need to explain why you are answering "no" to this statement.

***The child was removed from the home and placed in foster care in accordance with:***

**Note:** If the value displayed is blank, protective hold, or court-reviewed voluntary, the child is not eligible for Title IV-E or Non-Title IV-E Adoption Assistance. If this is not accurate, go to the court actions screen and update the child's method of removal, then refresh the eligibility determination set up screen to update this screen with the correct method of removal.

***Did the removal court order contain the best interest or contrary to the welfare language?***

**Note:** If the value displayed below is blank, when it should read yes or no, make sure the court actions screen and the child's method of removal are updated, then refresh the eligibility determination set up screen to update this screen with the correct method of removal.

***Did the child's removal coincide with the court order authorizing the child's removal for the current continuous placement episode?***

**Note:** A child's removal from their home must "coincide" with the court order authorizing the child's removal. Coincide means that the child's removal must have occurred by the end of the next business day following the court order authorizing removal.

If a child's removal does not coincide with the court order authorizing their removal, the child is not eligible for Title IV-E adoption assistance unless DHS determines there are extenuating circumstances (next question).

***Did DHS determine extenuating circumstances existed as to why the child's removal did not coincide with the court order authorizing the child's removal?***

**Note:** If a child's removal does not coincide with the court order authorizing their removal, the child is not eligible for Title IV-E adoption assistance unless there are extenuating circumstances. Only the Title IV-E unit at DHS can determine if there are extenuating circumstances that apply. Do not answer yes if DHS has not made this determination.

If an agency believes extenuating circumstances exist, the agency must contact their Title IV-E trainer or their records and eligibility consultant at DHS to initiate the process.

***Did the child meet AFDC eligibility requirements (in accordance with program rules in effect on July 16, 1996) at the time the child's removal was initiated (i.e., AFDC eligibility month)?***

**Note:** Consult with your agency's financial assistance area, or your agency's Title IV-E trainer, if there are questions about a child's AFDC eligibility.

***Did the child reside with their minor parent while the minor parent was in foster care?***

**Note:** To meet this requirement, the child may or may not have been in foster care at the same time as their minor parent who was in foster care. However, the child must have lived at some point with their minor parent while their minor parent was in foster care.

***Was at least one Title IV-E foster care payment, which covered the minor parent and child, paid on behalf of the minor parent?***

**Note:** To answer yes to this question, at least one Title IV-E foster care payment must have actually been paid to the provider. The payment must have been paid on behalf of the minor parent, not on behalf of the child. The payment amount must have included the costs of care for the child of the minor parent, in addition to the costs of care of the minor parent.

***Have foster care payments been paid on the child's behalf while in out-of-home placement prior to the issuance of the court order transferring the child's guardianship to the commissioner or making the child a ward of the tribe?***

**Note:** At this point, the child is not eligible for Title IV-E adoption assistance. This question will determine whether the child is eligible for non-Title IV-E adoption assistance.

To answer yes to this question, foster care payments must have actually been paid on the child’s behalf. These payments must have been made while the child was placed out of their home, and before the effective date of the court order that transferred the child’s guardianship to the commissioner or made the child a ward of the tribe.

## Properties Tab

This tab displays basic information about the Adoption Document, including **Last Edited Date**, and **Last Changed By** fields.

The screenshot shows a software interface with a tabbed menu at the top containing 'Setup', 'Document', 'Properties', and 'Required Documents'. The 'Properties' tab is active. It is divided into two sections: 'Document Properties' and 'Template Properties'.  
**Document Properties:**  
- Description: Northstar Adoption Assistance Eligibility Determination  
- SSIS Document #: 202748646  
- Created Date: 4/14/2022 1:58:10 PM (dropdown) | Created By: Jepson, Erica  
- Initial Submission Date: (dropdown)  
- Legally Responsible Agency: Big Stone  
- Status: Draft  
- Determination: Eligible for Title IV-E  
- Determination Reason: (empty field)  
- At Risk: No | Applicable Child: Age  
- Infant Benefit Level: E | Child Benefit Level: E | Teen Benefit Level: E  
- Child Care Level: 0 | Extraordinary Level: (empty field)  
- Last Edited Date: 4/14/2022 2:22:13 PM (dropdown)  
- Last Changed Date: 4/14/2022 2:22:13 PM (dropdown) | Last Changed By: Jepson, Erica  
**Template Properties:**  
- Name: Northstar Adoption Assistance Eligibility Determination  
- Document Template #: 345409  
- Document Identification: 05/01/2022  
- Format: Forms  
- Description: Northstar Adoption Assistance Eligibility Determination

## Required Documents

There are several required documents to submit to the State. Use the Required Documents tab to select the specific document your Agency is submitting to DHS. It is important to check accuracy, i.e. correct name, spelling, etc. before sending them to DHS. DHS will verify receipt and accuracy of document(s) as part of the approval process.

The listed of required documents is created based on the Child Ward/Guardianship Type and answers to the questions in the Adoption Assistance Eligibility Determination. For each document agency staff must select the document from Requirement Met By dropdown and how it was sent from the Submission Method dropdown. MAPCY rating reports are required to be submitted for all children. The Preschool rate will be determined by the date the adopting parent signs the Adoption Assistance Benefit Agreement.

*To Complete the Required Documents Tab:*

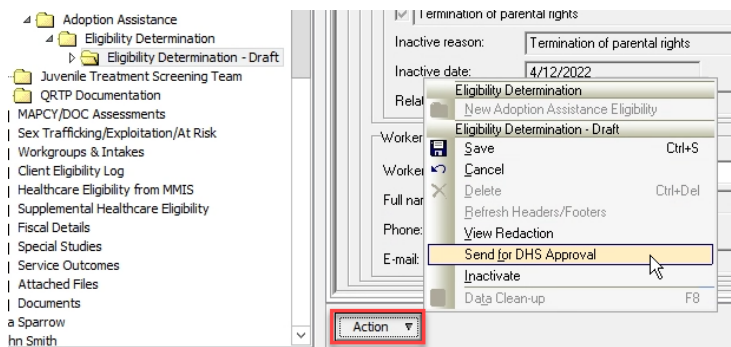
1. Click on the **Required Documents** tab.

2. For each field repeat the following steps:
  1. Select the required document from the **Requirement Met By** field drop-down menu.
  2. Select the submission method from the **Submission method** drop-down menu.
  3. Enter comment in the **Comment** field if/as applicable.
  4. Click **Save**.

After the documents are submitted for approval DHS staff will review and indicate if they have received the documentation and if it has been verified by checking the applicable boxes for each Required Document.

*To Send Adoption Assistance Eligibility Determination Documentation to DHS:*

1. From the Eligibility Determination folder, Access the Action menu
2. Select **“Send for DHS Approval”**. A dialogue box displays, stating if they are eligible for Title IV-E or Non-Title IV-E Adoption Assistance.



Send the documents to DHS according to the method chosen in the Submission method of the Required Documents tab. If documents are being submitted through SSIS from the Adoption Assistance Eligibility screen, access the **Action** menu and select **Send Elig Document to DHS**. Documents sent through email must be sent secure. Documents should be sent to the agency’s assigned Records & Eligibility worker, if the worker does not know who the agency’s worker is contact [northstar.benefits@state.mn.us](mailto:northstar.benefits@state.mn.us). Documents sent through email must be sent secure.

### **Sending Northstar Adoption Assistance Eligibility Determination to DHS for Approval**

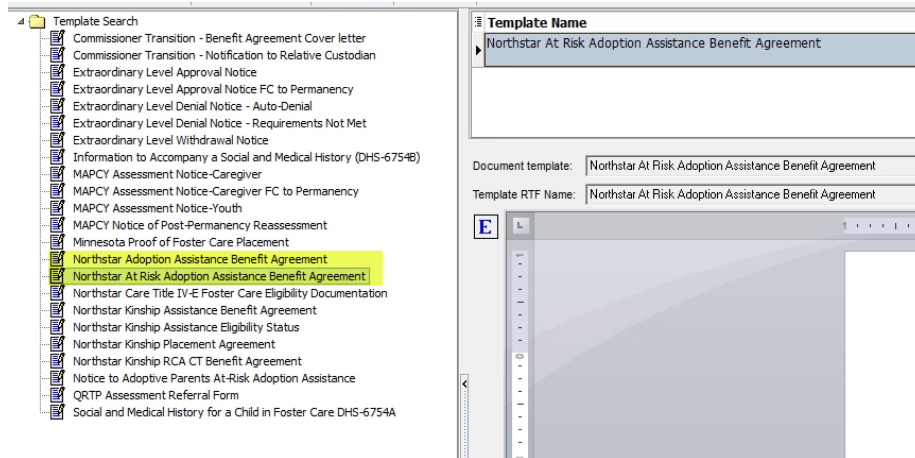
After the agency completes the adoption eligibility determination screens, has sent all supporting documentation to DHS, the final step in NAA eligibility determination is for the agency to send the eligibility information to DHS for Approval in SSIS.

To Send for DHS Approval:

1. From the Adoption Assistance Eligibility Determination screen, while on the Setup tab access the **Action** menu.
2. Select **Send for DHS Approval**.

# Northstar Adoption Assistance Benefit Agreement

After DHS approval of the Adoption Assistance Eligibility Determination, the financially responsible agency worker will be notified to proceed with completing the Northstar Adoption Assistance Benefit Agreement. The worker will need to choose Northstar Adoption Assistance Benefit Agreement or Northstar At Risk Adoption Benefit Agreement.



To Create a Northstar Adoption Assistance Benefit Agreement:

1. From the child's Document folder, access the Action menu and select **New Document**.
2. Complete a Document Template Search.
3. Select State in the Group Type field and Select Adoption Assistance in the Category field.
4. Highlight the correct **Northstar Adoption Assistance Benefit Agreement**; choose **Select**.

**Setup** RTF Document Properties Redaction

No required fields needed to complete.

Document template: Northstar Adoption Assistance Benefit Agreement

Description: Northstar Adoption Assistance Benefit Agreement

Status: Draft Finalized date:

---

**Document**

Document: Northstar Adoption Assistance Benefit Agreement

**Elements**

Creation Date: 5/6/2022

**Agency**

Agency: Test Policy County Family Services

Agency name: Test Policy County Family Services

Is agency county or region: Yes

**Participant**

Participant: Rover Thirteen

Date of birth: January 01, 2011

18th birthday: January 01, 2029

**Child ward**

Child ward: DHS guardianship 04/01/2021

Legally responsible agency: Aitkin

Adopting parent 1: John Rhinehart

Adopting parent 2: Suzy Rinehart

**Eligibility determination**

Eligibility determination: 05/05/2022 - Title IV-E

Funding source: Title IV-E

Approved benefit level: Level D

Child care level: 0

Extraordinary level: 0

Monthly basic preschool entry-rate payment: \$416.00

Monthly basic school-age entry-rate payment: \$831.00

Monthly supplemental preschool payment: \$111.00

Monthly supplemental school-age payment: \$222.00

Monthly gross preschool entry-rate payment: \$527.00

Monthly gross school-age entry-rate payment: \$1,053.00

---

Display the language lock? yes

Has a monthly payment reduction been negotiated? yes

Monthly gross preschool payment reduction:

Monthly gross school-age payment reduction:

Negotiated monthly net preschool payment:

Negotiated monthly net school-age payment:

The Adoptive Name of the child is: Rover Rhinehart

### To Complete the Setup tab and RTF Document Tabs

1. On the Setup tab, complete all applicable fields.
2. Click the **RTF Document** tab and click the Blue E, editor button. Ensure the document is complete and

accurate.

3. Save.
4. Click **Print** to print a copy and obtain signatures of Case Worker, Supervisor, adoptive parent (s).
5. Send to DHS staff for review and signature. The NAA Benefit Agreement must be:
  - a. Signed by adopting parents, workers, and supervisor.
  - b. Submitted to DHS in the mail (original signatures needed by DHS).

## Properties Tab

This tab displays basic information about the Adoption Assistance Benefit Agreement, including Last Edited Date, and Last Changed By fields.

The screenshot shows a software interface with a 'Properties' tab selected. It is divided into two sections: 'Document Properties' and 'Template Properties'.  
**Document Properties:**  
- Description: Northstar Adoption Assistance Benefit Agreement  
- SSIS Document #: 202754572  
- Created Date: 5/6/2022 2:38:34 PM (dropdown arrow) | Created By: Kratt, Eric  
- Last Edited Date: 5/9/2022 3:32:46 PM (dropdown arrow)  
- Last Changed Date: 5/9/2022 3:32:47 PM (dropdown arrow) | Last Changed By: Kratt, Eric  
**Template Properties:**  
- Name: Northstar Adoption Assistance Benefit Agreement  
- Document Template #: 348354  
- Category: Adoption Assistance  
- Group: State  
- Template Status: Active  
- Document Identification: 04/08/2022  
- Format: Forms  
- Description: (empty text box)  
A note on the right side of the Template Properties section states: 'Documents and Service Plans associated with templates with a "Template Status" of Inactive cannot be copied using the Copy Document and Copy Service Plan menu options.'

When received, DHS reviews the Northstar Adoption Assistance Benefit Agreement.

- DHS must sign the Agreement to make it fully executed.
- DHS will send an introduction/information packet to adopting parent(s) and worker.
- The Preschool rate will be determined by the date the adopting parent signs the Northstar Adoption Assistance Benefit Agreement.

## Adoption Finalization

Once an adoption has been finalized in court, there are several steps that need to be completed in SSIS.

- Enter Adoption finalization in Court Action
- End the Placemen tin P/L/A Folder

- Enter a Finalization Verification before the Continuous Placement is ended.
- End the Continuous placement in the Continuous Placement folder

## Entering Adoption finalization in Court Action

The screenshot shows a software interface for entering a Court Action. On the left, a tree view shows the following folders: Relationship, Education, Employment, Diagnosis/Conditions/Substance, Health/Insurance, Medication/Checkup, CWB/Infant and Toddler Intervention, Expectant/Parenting Youth, CMH Screenings and Assessments, Court Actions (selected), Court: Juvenile 3/28/2022, Court:, Permanency, MAPCY/DOC Assessments, Sex Trafficking/Exploitation/At Risk, Workgroups & Intakes, Client Eligibility Log, Healthcare Eligibility from MMIS, Supplemental Healthcare Eligibility, Fiscal Details, Special Studies, Service Outcomes, Attached Files, and Documents. The main window is titled 'Court Action' and has a tab for 'ICWA QEW'. Below the title bar are three tabs: 'Court Hearing' (selected), 'Child Findings', and 'QRTP Placement Approval'. The form contains the following fields: 'Regarding' (Rover Thirteen), 'Court Type' (Juvenile), 'Petition Type' (Adoption), 'Filing Date' (04/27/2022), 'Petition Detail' (empty), 'Hearing Type' (Disposition), 'Date' (05/06/2022), 'Hearing also included a QRTP Placement Review' (checkbox), 'QRTP Review Type' (empty), 'Order/Disposition' (Adoption finalization checked), and 'Date' (5/6/2022). Other options in the Order/Disposition list include Case plan, Dismissal, Emergency protective care (EPC), Hearing continued, Specific services, Transfer of jurisdiction, and Transfer of venue accepted.

1. Right Click on New Court Action
2. **Regarding** field will be populated if entering a **Court Action** under a client's folder, if entering in **Case Detail** folder select the person from the **Regarding** dropdown menu.
3. Select **Court Type**
4. Select **Petition Type** and Select **Date**.
5. Select **Hearing Type** and Select **Date**.
6. Select **Order/Disposition** and Select **Date**.
7. **Save** your Court Action.

## End Placement in P/L/A Folder

Placement - Northstar - 04/01/2022 Foster Parents Changes to this placement/location ICWA Placement Preferences

Placement / Location / Absence Information

Setting: Pre-adoptive home - non-relative

Reason: Safety/stability

Potential Specialized Setting certification: N/A

Start Date: 4/1/2022 12:00 AM Entry Date: 4/23/2022 09:14 AM

Classification: Placement - Northstar Effective date: 04/12/2022 11:20:57

Workgroup: Thirteen Apollo CP Case Management 4/12/2022

Bus org / provider: Pinehat Family Foster Care

Location description:

End reason: Discharged from agency placement responsibility

End date: 5/6/2022 12:00 AM End Entry Date: 5/10/2022 03:35 PM

Disruption reason:

Disruption detail:

School district attending:

Notice of change of foster care placement/location/absence was provided to the court?  Yes  No

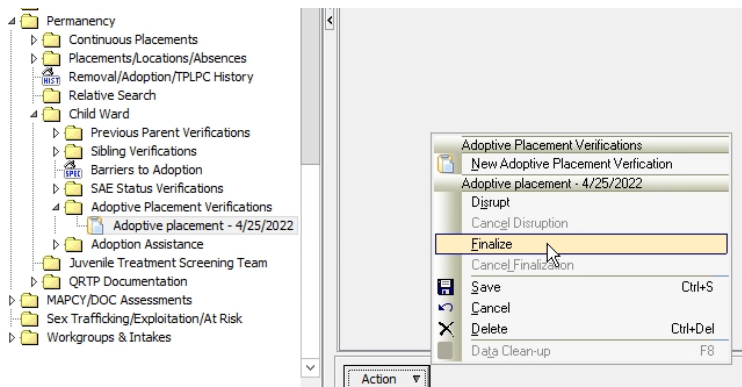
Run a way debriefing form completed?  Yes  No

ICPC receiving state:  Check if no payment will be made to the provider

Does another agency or state have financial responsibility for this child -courtesy supervision by this agency?  Yes  No

1. Locate Person's Placement Location and Absence Folder
2. Select appropriate End Reason from drop down menu.
3. Select the appropriate End Date and Time.

## Adoption Placement Finalize



Adoptive placement

Adoptive Placement Verification

Placement: Placement - Northstar - 04/12/2022

Adoptive parents have been entered on SSIS as foster parents for the pre-adoptive placement. The signed Adoptive Placement Agreement (APA) has been sent or will be sent to DHS. Each adoptive parent listed on the APA is checked on the grid below.

Verified date: 04/14/2022 Verified by: Jepson, Erica

Adoptive Placement Finalized Verification

Verified date: 5/5/2022 Verified by: Jepson, Erica

Adoptive parents

	Name	SWNDX #	Relationship
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Bear, Addison	38390691	Aunt

*To finalize an adoptive placement:*

1. Select child's Placement node under the **Permanency** folder.
2. In the End reason drop-down field select Discharged from agency responsibility.
3. Enter End date.
4. Click **Save**.
5. Select child's **Continuous placement** node.
6. Enter Discharge reason of Adoption finalized.
7. Enter Discharge date.
8. In the AFCARS finalized adoptive placement information section, select **within state, another state, or another country** in the **Child was placed for adoption from** drop-down field.
9. In the Child was placed by drop-down field, select Public agency, Private agency, Tribal agency, Independent person, or Birth/legal parent.
10. Click **Save**.
11. Select Adoptive Placement Verifications folder under Child Ward folder.
12. Access **Action** menu.
13. Select **Finalize**.
14. Confirm the adoptive parents checked in grid are accurate.
15. Enter Verified date.
16. Enter Verified by.
17. Click **Save**.

## End Placement in Continuous Placement Folder

Cont plcmt - 04/01/2022	Authority	Removal Conditions	Permanency Plans	Reviews	ICWA Adoptive Placement Preferences	Siblings
Removal Information						
Cont Placement #:	202757660	ICWA:	Elig/Determ - 04/23/2022 - No, ICWA/MIFPA does not apply			
Start Date:	04/01/2022	Entry Date:	4/23/2022 9:14:19 AM			
Target Population:	Child welfare/protection					
Supervising Agency:	County social services	Effective Date:	4/1/2022			
Tribes:						
Reason Discharged:	Adoption finalized					
Discharge Date:	5/6/2022	Discharge Entry Date:	5/10/2022 4:08:57 PM			
Hours Out Of Home:	<input type="radio"/> Less than 24 hours <input type="radio"/> 24 or more hours					
Is the child receiving SSI (Title XVI) or other Social Security, such as RSDI?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No					
Is the sole reason for this placement the child's disability?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No					
Caretaker family structure prior to placement						
Family Structure:	Unmarried couple					
Caretaker 1:	Atlantis Thirteen					
Caretaker 2:	Discovery Thirteen					
AFCARS finalized adoptive placement information						
Child was placed for adoption from:	Within state					
Child was placed by:	Public agency					

1. Locate Person's Continuous Placement Folder
2. Select Reason Discharged
3. Select Discharge Date and Discharge Entry Date will auto-fill.
4. The AFCARS finalized adoptive placement information section auto-fills in the Child was placed for adoption from and Child was placed by fields

## Cancel Adoption Finalization

Finalization only works when a worker hasn't verified the adoptive placement finalization by entering information in the Verified date and Verified by fields.

To cancel finalization of an unverified finalized adoptive placement:

1. Select Adoptive Placement Verification folder.
2. Access **Action** menu.
3. Select Cancel Finalization.

## Adoption Disruptions

If a pre-adoptive placement disrupts before the adoption is finalized, the agency county is required to enter the disruption into SSIS.

End reason: Pre-adoptive placement disruption

End date: 5/6/2022 12:00 AM End Entry Date: 5/10/2022 03:50 PM

Disruption reason: Agency decision

Disruption detail: Parent unable to meet child's needs

To disrupt a pre-adoptive placement from the Permanency folder, expand the Placement/Location/Absences Folder:

1. In the **End reason** drop-down field choose Pre-adoptive placement disruption.
2. Enter **End date**.
3. In the **Disruption reason** drop-down field, select one:
4. Agency decision
5. Parent request
6. Child request
7. Tribe decision (ICWA child only)
8. Court initiated
9. Death of caregiver
10. In the **Disruption detail** drop-down field, select the appropriate option.
11. Click **Save**.

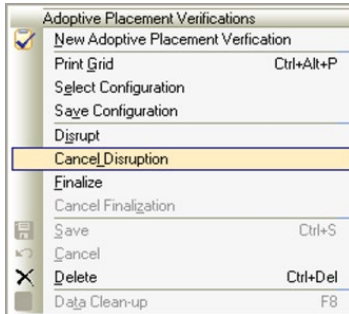
The screenshot shows the software interface for managing adoptive placements. On the left, a file explorer shows the folder structure, with 'Adoptive Placement Verifications' selected. The main window displays the 'Adoptive Placement Disruption Verification' form. The form includes fields for 'Placement', 'Verified date', and 'Verified by'. A yellow highlight is placed over the 'Disrupt' button in the 'Adoptive Placement Verifications' list. Below the form, a table lists adoptive parents:

	Name	SWNDX #	Relationship
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rhinehart, John	39500655	Uncle
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rinehart, Suzy	39500652	Aunt

Select the Adoptive Placement Verifications folder.

1. Access Action menu.
2. Select Disrupt.
3. Enter Verified date.
4. Enter Verified by.
5. Click Save.
6. Select Placements/Locations/Absences folder.
7. Access Action menu.

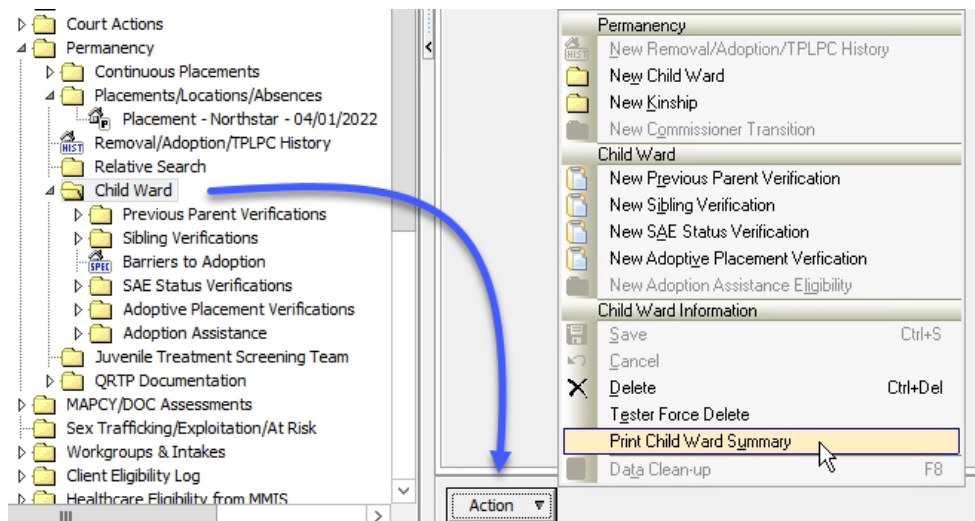
8. Select New Placement/Location/Absence.
9. Enter child's new placement information.
10. Click Save



To cancel an unverified disruption of an adoptive placement:

1. Select the disrupted Adoptive Placement Verification node.
2. Access **Action** menu.
3. Select **Cancel disruption** (This is only available before the verified date field is selected and saved).

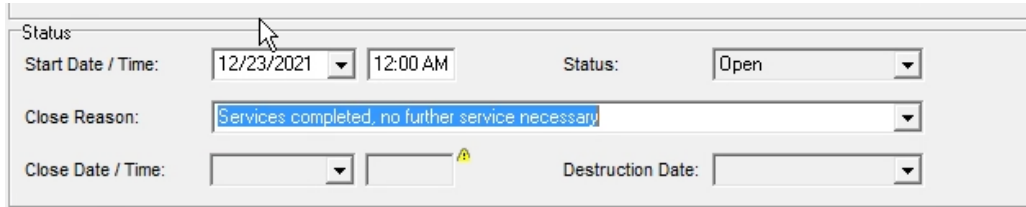
## Print a Child Ward Summary



In certain circumstances Workers may wish to print a child ward summary.

1. Select the **Child Ward** folder.
2. Access the Action menu and select **Print the Child Ward Summary**.
3. The **Setup** tab displays; select Report Sections you would like to display (all sections checkboxes are default as checked).
4. Select the **Search** button. The Child Ward Summary displays on the preview tab.
5. Review and select **Print**.

## To close an Adoption/Guardianship workgroup:



Status: Open

Start Date / Time: 12/23/2021 12:00 AM

Close Reason: Services completed, no further service necessary

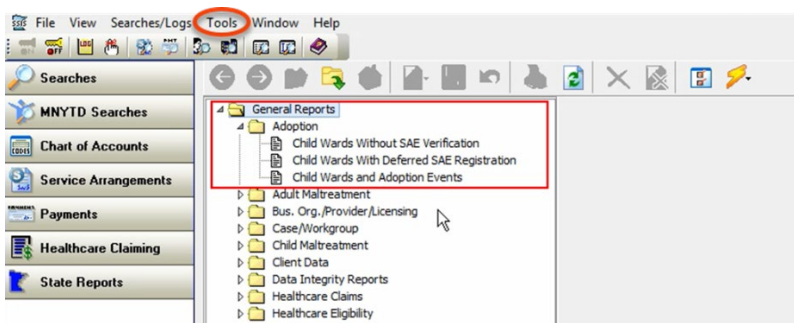
Close Date / Time: Destruction Date:

1. Complete AFCARS Data Clean-up requirements
  - a. Access **Action** menu and select Data Clean-up.
  - b. Complete all data clean-up
2. Select the tree tab.
3. Select the Adoption/Guardianship Case Management Workgroup folder.
4. In the Close reason drop-down field select the appropriate close reason.
5. Enter **Close date/time**.
6. Click **Save**.

## Adoption Reports Available

- Child Wards Without SAE Verification
- Child Wards With Deferred SAE Registration
- Child Wards and Adoption Events

The security function “Access adoption reports” is required.



To Access Adoption Reports:

1. Click **Tools** on the Main application menu.
2. Select General Reports.
3. Expand **Adoption** folder.
4. Select Child Wards without SAE Verification, Child Wards with Deferred SAE Registration or Child

Wards and Adoption Events report node.

5. Complete **Setup** tab.
6. Click **Search**.
7. View report details on **Preview** tab.