Ending the modifications to child foster care licensing requirements

The following modification ends on July 1, 2021 (end of the peacetime emergency):

1. During the peacetime emergency, license holders are required to be familiar with Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines on COVID-19. This is an ongoing requirement, as the guidance will evolve during the pandemic. DHS will communicate current guidance and any updated guidance via email and on the DHS website directly to licensed foster residence settings and to county and private agency licensors who are expected to share this guidance with family foster care providers. If a person receiving services or the license holder, a household member, caregiver, or staff person has symptoms of COVID-19, the license holder must follow the MDH and CDC guidelines specific to the situation and program capabilities. In addition, if any of these individuals tests positive for COVID-19, the license holder must notify MDH and the county or private licensing agency and follow any guidance provided by MDH.

The following modifications end on August 30, 2021 (60 days after the end of the peacetime emergency):

1. Unlicensed Emergency Relative Placement: Minnesota Statutes, section 245A.035, Subd. 5

   Time to complete an application for licensure for an emergency relative placement is extended from within ten days of placement to within 30 days of placement.

2. Long-term substitute caregivers: Minnesota Rules, part 2960.3090, subp. 2

   The training requirements are temporarily suspended for long-term substitute caregivers who provide more than 30 cumulative days of substitute care in a 12-month period. As required in Minnesota Statutes, section 245A.144, if caring for infants or children through five years of age, these caregivers are required to complete training on reducing the risk of sudden unexpected infant death and abusive head trauma. These trainings are available online.

3. Child foster residence setting staffing: Minnesota Rules, part 2960.3220, subp. 5

   Staff must be 18 years of age or older. Providers are not required to request a variance from the county in order to have staff younger than 21 years of age work in the program.

4. Orientation training (family child foster care): Minnesota Rules, part 2960.3070, subp. 1

   Orientation training may be condensed to less than six hours. The timeline for relative foster parents to complete orientation is extended. At a minimum, the training must include emergency procedures and maltreatment reporting requirements, and as required in Minnesota Statutes, section 245A.144, for
foster care providers caring for infants or children through five years of age, training on reducing the risk of sudden unexpected infant death and abusive head trauma.

5. Orientation training (child foster residence setting): Minnesota Rules, part 2960.3210, subp. 1
   Orientation training may be condensed to less than six hours. At a minimum, training must include emergency procedures and maltreatment reporting requirements, and as required in Minnesota Statutes, 245A.144, for foster care providers caring for infants or children through five years of age, training on reducing the risk of sudden unexpected infant death and abusive head trauma. This training is available online. All staff in a foster residence setting must continue to complete two hours of mental health training, as required in Minnesota Statutes, 245A.175.

6. Mental health training: Minnesota Statutes, section 245A.175
   At least one license holder in the home must complete two hours of mental health training prior to the nonemergency placement of a child in a foster care home. The requirement for all staff providing care in foster residence settings to complete this training is unchanged. This training is available online.

7. Child passenger restraint systems training: Minnesota Statutes, section 245A.18, Subd. 2
   Due to limited availability of the in-person training, license holders, staff persons, and caregivers that transport a child under eight years old in a motor vehicle are not required to complete the training on child passenger restraint systems in motor vehicles during the peacetime emergency. Instead, before transporting a child under eight years old in a motor vehicle, license holders, staff persons, and caregivers who have not already had the in-person training must review online information on the federal National Highway Traffic Safety Administration website (https://www.nhtsa.gov/equipment/car-seats-and-booster-seats#install-instructions) and watch the “how to choose the right seat” video, as well as car seat installation instruction videos for each type of car seat they will be using based on the age and size of the child/children they are transporting.

8. Licenses for child and adult foster care, community residential settings, and family child care that are set to expire through the COVID-19 peacetime emergency will be automatically extended for three additional months.
   Note: the last extension will be issued for licenses expiring on July 31, 2021. Licensors are expected to be resuming onsite licensing reviews. License holders are expected to cooperate with the relicensing process and submit all necessary paperwork in a timely manner.