



525 E. Huron River Drive P.O. Box 727  
Belleville, Michigan 48112

## GUIDING HARBOR ADOPTION PROGRAM STATEMENT

### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:**

Guiding Harbor is a private, non-profit organization that provides child caring and child placement services for abused and neglected children. Our services include: Adoption, Foster Care, Supervised Independent Living and Residential Programs. Guiding Harbor is licensed by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and nationally accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). Our Adoption Program offers permanency for youth in providing for their physical, emotional and social needs by connecting them with a permanent family placement. Through the recruitment and development of adoptive homes Guiding Harbor is able to make adoption a reality for children awaiting permanency.

Guiding Harbor's Adoption Program is committed to finding permanent homes for children who are legally free for adoption. The focus of the program is the recruitment and development of adoptive homes for children in the child welfare system. Children enter the child welfare system as a result of neglect, and/or physical, sexual, or emotional abuse. They bear the scars of their neglect, abuse and frequent moves and may act out their pain and feelings of loss. It is our philosophy that all children have the right to emotional nurturance, understanding, educational guidance, and necessary care in a stable, wholesome family environment. They need families who can provide unconditional love and that permanent home.

Children serviced are between the ages of birth to 18 years of age, who are Permanent State or Court Wards. The children placed for adoption are often:

- Children with special needs.
- Sibling groups of two or more children.

Our adoptive parents make a commitment to a child in need of a permanent family.

### **TYPES OF ADOPTION PROVIDED**

- State and Court Ward Adoption



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- Relative Adoption

Guiding Harbor does not provide adoption services for children released under the Safe Delivery Act unless those children have been placed in foster care through DHHS.

### **SERVICES PROVIDED TO APPLICANTS**

#### **Intensive Preparation and Assessment Services**

- Orientation and Training
- Child and Family Visitation
- Child and Family Assessments

#### **Case Management Services**

- Case Conferences and Treatment Planning
- Psychiatric/Psychological Referral Services
- Court Responsibility
- Educational Planning Assistance
- Supervision and In-home Visits
- Treatment Intervention

#### **Post Adoption Services**

Referrals will be provided for:

- Post –Finalization Services
- Counseling Services

#### **Legal Representation**

Adoptive parents have a right to independent legal representation when adopting a child, however Guiding Harbor does not pay for the cost of the representation.



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### **Adoption Subsidies**

There are two types of adoption subsidies, which may be granted to adoptive parents to help them meet the unique financial needs of “special needs” children. A medical subsidy may assist in paying for expenses that result from a physical, mental, or emotional condition, which existed before the adoption. A maintenance subsidy provides a monthly payment for the support of the adopted child until the child reaches 18 years of age. The FIA determines the eligibility of the child for a subsidy.

**Note:** This statement is provided to all persons inquiring about the agency’s adoption services.

### **GEOGRAPHIC AREA COVERED**

The children that are placed with our agency, are primarily from Southeastern Michigan communities, however, Guiding Harbor does accept children statewide.

### **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR ADOPTIVE APPLICANTS**

- **Application**– All applicants are required to complete an application
- **Age**– All applicants must be adults
- **Marital Status**– Single or married applicants may apply, however married couples must both be eligible to adopt.
- **Health**– All applicants must be of such physical, mental and emotional health to assure appropriate care of children.
- **Family Assessment**– This is an in-depth study of the family (including relationship history, domestic violence history, substance abuse history, criminal history, Central Registry and protective service history), child rearing and discipline history and attitudes, their motivation to adopt, education, employment and current financial status of the family, adjustment of the families own children, attitudes towards accepting an adoptive child for permanent placement, the families capacity to give love, guidance and affection to an adoptive child, three references from non-related persons, the families identified characteristics of a child that they wish to adopt.
- **Good Moral Character**- The family’s criminal and protective service history including past convictions, and prior licensure must reflect Good Moral Character.
- **Home/Environment**- The environment of the applicants’ home and community must be safe and suitable to meet the needs of the child (ren).



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## **FEES, CHARGES, EXPENSES, REFUNDABLE AND NONREFUNDABLE FEES**

Guiding Harbor does not charge a fee for its services.

Any fees that are required through Court and /or legal fees will be charged to the foster parent prior to the receipt of the “Final Order Placing Child”.

## **TRAINING REQUIREMENTS**

All persons seeking approval as adoptive parents must participate in a minimum of 12 hours of Parent Resources for Information, Development & Education (PRIDE) training prior to the legal adoptive placement of a child. Foster parents who have completed PRIDE and have a current foster care license are not required to repeat PRIDE sessions. Adoptive parents who have completed PRIDE within the last two years are not required to repeat PRIDE sessions.

- All prospective adoptive parents will participate in an orientation that includes:
  - o An overview of the lifelong process of adoption and its meaning;
  - o The process for completing an adoption;
  - o The needs of children awaiting adoptive families;
  - o Benefits and responsibilities of openness in adoption and the range of openness;
  - o The availability of adoption subsidies and post adoption services; and
  - o Criteria used to determine eligibility for adoption parenthood.
  
- All Guiding Harbor pre-adopt parents are prepared for adoption through education, training, information and support that address the following:
  - o Attachment and bonding
  - o Possible impacts of adoption on the family
  - o Changing roles and relationships when the child and prospective adoptive parent already know each other;
  - o Maintaining connections with the child’s community or tribe;
  - o Child development, discipline, and parenting techniques;
  - o Raising a child of a different race, ethnicity, culture or religion;
  - o Caring for a child with special needs
  - o Behavioral and emotional needs of adoptive children
  - o Helping a child cope with separation and loss, history of maltreatment, and identity development.
  - o Post adoption services availability



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## **PROCEDURES FOR SELECTING ADOPTIVE PARENTS FOR A CHILD**

Children and families are matched based on the family's ability to best meet the needs of the child. Guiding Harbor accepts adoptive families without discrimination as to race, ethnicity, religion, language, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability/handicap, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression or economic status. Placement with a particular family is based upon specific areas of consideration for each child which includes:

Placement considerations for the child are:

- Relative placement
- Foster parent placement
- Sibling placement
- Placement able to meet the child's special needs
- Religious preference of the child
- The wishes of the child
- Continuity of Relationships
- Availability and timeliness of placement

The agency encourages and permits the biological parents/guardian to provide identifying information to the adoptive family to assist in meeting all of the developmental, emotional, physical and mental health needs of the child prior to finalization.

Guiding Harbor does not encourage or dissuade contact between the adoptive family and the biological parent/family.



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GUIDING HARBOR  
ADOPTION PROGRAM STATEMENT OF NEED  
SIGNATURE PAGE

My/Our signature below acknowledges that I/We have read, reviewed and completely understand the Guiding Harbor Adoption Program Statement as written. It is understood that a violation by the perspective adoptive parent(s) may result in a complaint against the adoptive home. It is further understood that the adoptive parent(s) can grieve a violation by the agency according to the agency's grievance procedure.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Adoptive Parent Signature Date

\_\_\_\_\_





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Adoptive Parent Signature Date

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Guiding Harbor Worker Signature Date

**\*NOTE THIS MUST BE SIGNED BY BOTH ADOPTIVE PARENTS IF APPLICABLE. A COPY OF THE STATEMENT OF NEED IS GIVEN TO ALL PERSPECTIVE ADOPTIVE PARENTS.**

KD: 11/2020

