**ORIENTATION CHECKLIST** 9.22.2016

### MISSION

*Our mission is to provide displaced children with love, caring, stability, intervention, therapeutic services and a sense of belonging in a warm and nurturing home that will develop in them a strong mind and esteemed character contributing to their success in the family unit, community at large and their future. Georgia Hope’s goal is for permanency. We provide young people a temporary home until permanency is secured back to birth families, relatives and/or loving adoptive parent…from temporary foster care to forever families.*

### PURPOSE

The purpose of Georgia Hope Inc. (GHI) is to provide love, quality care, guidance, discipline, and support with education objectives in a loving, healthy and nurturing foster home. Georgia Hope is a private, non-profit Child Placing Agency for foster care and adoption. The children we serve are aged birth to 18 years and are placed in homes regardless of gender, race, and religion. For adoption, GH shall consider a child’s racial, cultural, ethnic, and religious heritage to preserve them to the extent possible without jeopardizing the child’s right for placement and care. Children will feel safe and develop relationships of trust, satisfaction and safety in our homes. This will be achieved through individual assessment and attention by our program staff of professionals in an effort to help our children develop, become self-sufficient and productive young people in the society.

Please **initial** each box:

* To attain and maintain **Full Approval Status**, caregivers must:

(1) Demonstrate the maturity, fitness, skills and competency to successfully protect, nurture, and meet the developmental needs of children;

(2) Support the Agency’s established case goals and permanency plan for child(ren) placed in their care;

(3) Be a US citizen or Permanent Legal Resident;

(4) Be at least 10 years older than the child to be placed, if married;

(5) Be at least 25 years of age, if unmarried;

(6) Have no substantiated Child Protective Services (CPS) history;

(7) Abstain from illegal drug use and prescription drugs and alcohol;

(8) Have sufficient income to maintain their family excluding the amount of the per diem received for any child(ren) in foster care.

* Georgia Hope Inc. (GHI) is a private, non-profit Child Placing Agency for foster care and adoption working with base level/traditional children, teen mothers, behaviorally challenged children and adolescents and medically fragile children between the ages of 0-18 years of age. Children may remain in care to age 21 years through the Independent Living Program.
* Clients are referred through the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS).
* **Children Served**: Children that are best served through GHI are base level or traditional children with little to no behavior challenges, teen mothers and/or pregnant teens, youth with moderate emotional and/or behavioral management problems such as aggressiveness towards inanimate objects, animals and/or people, including themselves. Delinquent behaviors such as truancy and running away, drug or alcohol problems, verbal aggression directed toward other persons; previous psychiatric hospitalizations and other restrictive placements, sexual acting out, destruction of property, substance abuse, personality disorders, suicidal behaviors or ideations, medical hindrances and learning disabilities. These items will be reviewed further during IMPACT Training.
* **Reimbursement Rates**: Per diem for a base child is based on the child’s age: 0-5 years $15.27, 6-12 years $17.26 and 13-18 years $19.65. Children with higher designations receive between $35-80 per day. The per diem is paid effective the date of actual placement. Pre-placement visits are not reimbursed.
* The **verification** process includes several steps.

Step 1: Orientation (The process you are currently completing.)

Step 2. Background Clearances

Step 3. Home Visits and Interviews of family members

Step 4. IMPACT FCP (23 hour foster parent certification training)

MAPP is also acceptable. GHI certifies it’s foster and adoptive parents through IMPACT FCP.

* **Transportation**: Foster parents are required to have dependable transportation and submit copies of a Georgia driver’s license and current automobile insurance. Foster parents are responsible for transporting children to weekly therapy, medical and dental appointments, family visits (if necessary), support groups, court, family team meetings, etc. Foster children must receive a medical evaluation within 72 hours of entering your home.
* **Insurance**: Medicaid/Amerigroup covers GHI foster children for all medical and dental needs.
* **Background Checks**: Each family member in the home over 18 must complete an FBI fingerprint a d background check.
* **Medical**: All adults and children in the home must have a medical exam. Adults and children ages 16 and older must have a TB test and RPR test prior to certification.
* Full-time foster parents may work outside of the home, although must provide plans for being with foster children on holidays from school/work, at times of illness/injury or suspension.
* **Home Visits**: The home certification process will include several home visits of the applicant’s home to assess compliance with State regulations. GHI will conduct a home study and interview all members of the household prior to certification. GHI will interview all adult children not living in the home. (The home study is the property of GHI but can be purchased for a fee.) Once certified Agency case workers will make monthly visits to your home for safety, compliance and to meet with foster children placed in your home.
* **Capacity**: Foster families can foster up to 3 children without a capacity waiver but no more than 6 children in all may be able to live in a home including foster children, adoptive children and birth children. Any child placed in a home over 3 children including siblings will require a capacity waiver.
* **Living Space**: Foster children must have his or her own bed (in place prior to placement), dresser (can be shared), closet space, light, space available to complete work and at least 80 square feet of personal living space. If two children are sharing a bedroom, the room must be at least 100 square feet. Adults (18+) cannot share a bedroom with a foster child.
* **Septic Tanks**: Homes with septic tanks and/or wells must be inspected prior to placement of children and annually, at the applicants expense by the health department in the county of residence.
* If fire hazards are noted at the time of the Health and Safety Assessment, a fire inspection will be requested through the fire department in the applicant’s county of residence. Homes will be equipped with smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors and fire extinguishers on each level of the home.
* Hazards: All alcohol, firearms and medication (prescription and over-the-counter) and dangerous chemicals (labels with “keep out of reach of children”) must be locked up at all times while foster children are placed in the home. It is recommended that no alcohol be consumed in front of foster children.
* **Changes in the Home**: GHI staff must be notified immediately of any and all changes to the foster parent’s household composition. This is required throughout the duration of the foster parent’s contracted service with GHI. This also includes persons including children moving in or out.
* **Case Workers:** A GHI (agency) Case Workers will be assigned to each foster home for ongoing development, training and support. Your GHI Case Worker will be your first line on communication for concerns and issues concerning your home or your foster children in care. Case Workers will be required to make **scheduled and unannounced visits** at least bi-weekly to your home. Phone contacts may also occur on weeks the Case Worker is not in the home.
* **Documentation**: Foster parents are required to maintain daily documentation (daily medication administration, progress reporting, case plans, goals, etc.) on each foster child in the home. Documentation will be submitted by the 1st of the month.
* Support groups and training will occur on a monthly basis.
* **Training:** All foster parents must complete 25 hours of training annually. Secondary foster parents must complete 15 hours of annual training. Training is **required monthly** through GHI monthly training meetings held at the Agency office. Training dates coincide with the date of reimbursement. Checks are picked up following training.
* **Reimbursement:** Monthly training must be completed prior to or at the time of check disbursement.
* **Respite**: Respite services are available and recommended for GHI parents. Respite will include the opportunity to take 10 nights per year paid foster care with 30 day advance notice.
* **Foster Parents as Advocates**: Foster parents serve as advocates for the children that are placed in their home ensuring that foster children are enrolled and attend an educational and/or vocational program, attend therapy, maintain contact with birth families, etc.
* **Discipline**: Corporal punishment is prohibited in disciplining children in foster care this includes spanking, slapping, pinching, demeaning a child, locking a child in a room, etc. Further policies and procedures on topic is further discussed during IMPACT training.
* **Corporal Punishment:** GHI has a zero tolerance policy for corporal punishment and/or physical restraint. GHI employees are mandated reporters. Should a foster parent use corporal punishment the foster home may be placed on a corrective action plan pending investigation.
* **Reporting**: Foster parents are required to report critical incidents immediately to GHI either by calling the office or calling your Agency Case Worker. The Case Worker will immediately staff the incident with the GHI Supervisor or Director to ensure all safety precautions have been taken. If the incident consists or a suicide attempt or death, the Case Worker will contact the DFCS Case Manager or DFCS Supervisor immediately. If the critical incident include an allegation of abuse or neglect, GHI will notify DFCS immediately. For all other incidents, the Case Worker will contact the DFCS Case Manager and licensing department within 24 hours. The critical incident must be documented and emailed or faxed GHI immediately following the incident. GHI will make appropriates reports to DFCS and Licensing by the next business day following the incident. Incident reporting will be reviewed during IMPACT training.
* **Office Hours**: In any situation that you are not sure on how to handle, one of GHI’s most valuable support service staff is always there by phone to assist you. The normal business hours in the office are Monday-Friday 9:00 am-5:00 pm. After 5:00pm, please contact your Case Worker by cell phone or the on-call phone.
* **Grievances:** All grievances should be reported directly to the agency Case Worker or the Case Workers Supervisor. The matter will be discussed and a response will be provided to you in writing within 3 days. If the matter needs to be addressed with the Director, the response time is 5 days. If the matter needs to be brought to the Board of Directors the response time is 7-10 days.

**Confirmation of Orientation**:

I (printed name), \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ attended the GHI orientation on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and understand the policies as outlined above.

Applicant (1)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Applicant 2)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Orientation Leader (1)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_