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| Governor, Lt. Governor ODJFS Banner |

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| **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**May 24, 2023 |

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| **MEDIA CONTACTS:**Dan Tierney (Governor): 614-644-0957Hayley Carducci (LG): 614-404-8616Bill Teets (ODJFS): 614-403-2331 |

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| ****Governor DeWine, Lt. Governor Husted Announce Launch of New Statewide Online Portal to Streamline Adoption and Foster Care Process****(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—Ohio Governor Mike DeWine and Lt. Governor Jon Husted today announced the launch of a statewide, [online portal](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDAsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vZm9zdGVyYW5kYWRvcHQuamZzLm9oaW8uZ292LyIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyMzA1MjQuNzcyMTQ1NzEifQ.TxXRsTnq0g71xbBqR8Q2MSClWd7zCmsDcFui_JMNkqQ/s/1842807377/br/203633492277-l) where Ohioans can inquire and apply to become foster or adoptive parents.“As a state, we must give our children the support they deserve to succeed, and that support includes an adult to care for them,” said Governor DeWine. “This new tool will streamline the foster parent and adoption certification process making it more accessible than ever.”“With about 15,000 young people in our foster care system, there’s no doubt Ohio needs more foster and adoptive families,” said Lt. Governor Husted. “I know firsthand the impact this will have, as I was in foster care and then adopted. Anything we can do to improve this process is going to make a difference in the lives of a lot of kids.”InnovateOhio and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) developed OCAF with the goal to make Ohio a leader in simplifying the pathway toward becoming a foster or adoptive parent. The new tool gives users the ability to complete and submit applications electronically, whereas before it was all done on paper. The redesigned online application creates a more streamlined, user-friendly experience that increases efficiency and accuracy.Prospective caregivers can access the portal from Ohio’s [FosterandAdopt.ohio.gov](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDEsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHA6Ly9mb3N0ZXJhbmRhZG9wdC5vaGlvLmdvdi8iLCJidWxsZXRpbl9pZCI6IjIwMjMwNTI0Ljc3MjE0NTcxIn0.bcLIug0w86h_qDehXZAOWLHtI0eTpjl7mxp5IfToK0M/s/1842807377/br/203633492277-l) website and can either select an agency they prefer to work with or from a local agency chosen at random. Live chat support will be available during regular business hours.“If Ohioans are willing to open their hearts and homes to youth in foster care, we want to break down the barriers that stand in the way,” said ODJFS Director Matt Damschroder. “The OCAF portal does just that.”Agencies and state administrators now have access to data dashboards and reports that highlight, in real-time, inquiry and application data across the state and by the agency. This also enables easier and more direct communications with interested individuals and families.Later this year, Ohio agencies, group homes, and residential facilities will be able to use OCAF to complete inquiries, applications, and certifications. Eventually, it will be a one-stop-shop for prospective and certified caregivers to track their progress in pre-service training as well as the home study and certification processes.For more information, contact your [local children services agency](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDIsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vZm9zdGVyYW5kYWRvcHQuamZzLm9oaW8uZ292L3dwcy93Y20vY29ubmVjdC9nb3YvODMyZDY3MjQtYTdjNC00MjEwLWJlNjctNGQ2NDA1ZWI1YTgyL09DQS1JVEgtU3RhdGV3aWRlLURpcmVjdG9yeS1QREYtRklOQUwucGRmP01PRD1BSlBFUkVTJkNWSUQ9b2o0dnBUdiIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyMzA1MjQuNzcyMTQ1NzEifQ.-bLokoaGE1JLiy-IJl7hHiV_XhIo6tO5lpgBcm1P_uE/s/1842807377/br/203633492277-l).**-30-** |

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