

THE CARITAS FOSTER PARENT LAW

What you need to know about Foster Parent Rights and
Responsibilities



At Caritas, we believe that foster parents are the most vital, if not the most important, parts of our Foster Care Program. Without foster parents, there is no Foster Care Program.



The purpose of reviewing the Foster Parent Law is to emphasize the critical relationship between Foster Parents and Foster Care Case managers and how it leads to the safe and supportive transition of children in foster care and their successful development.

FOSTER PARENT RIGHTS

The right to be treated with dignity,
respect and consideration as a professional
member of the
child welfare team



This is the first and most important right of Foster Parents as it embodies the meaning behind each of the other rights.

Dignity, Respect & Consideration

What does this mean?

- ❖ Foster parents are always encouraged to provide input in the agency's service design and decisions for the child in care.
- ❖ Foster Care Case Managers are responsible for organizing and presenting pertinent information, within the bounds of confidentiality, about the child's background and case history to the foster parent (i.e. previous case managers, previous and/or current therapists, and could possibly include previous foster parents that have had experience with the child. These individuals should be made available to the foster parent for consultation.).
- ❖ Foster Care Case Managers should make an effort to hear and consider the foster parent's input before fully forming a final critical decision regarding the child. By simply asking the question, "What do you think?," can go a long way toward a successful outcome

Dignity, Respect & Consideration

- ❖ Licensing workers are trained to keep up with Traditional and Specialized Foster Parent placement preferences. Caseworkers work closely with a licensing worker to choose the best possible match for a child who needs a home.
- ❖ Foster Parents must be honest with the licensing workers to help match them with children that would work best in their home. The entire team should know that it is very difficult for most foster parents to say “no” to a placement and should respect that ONLY honesty can lead to a successful placement.
- ❖ Foster parents should always be invited and feel comfortable to attend ACRs. While some foster parents may not want this responsibility, others will appreciate the consideration and this team collaboration can lead to a successful goal.

Dignity, Respect & Consideration

- ❖ COURT: Foster parents should be informed of all upcoming court dates and times. It is also the responsibility of the case manager to educate the foster parent on general court proceedings and confidentiality matters.
- ❖ OTHER MEETINGS: Include Specialized Foster Parents in Spec Team monthly staffings (where applicable) and including Foster Parents in Child and Family Team Meetings. Caseworkers should strive to accommodate the foster parent's schedule if they are interested in attending.
- ❖ DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS: All conversations between case managers and foster parents should start with strength-based approaches, focusing on the successes and encouraging a collaborative approach to identified challenges or issues.

Dignity, Respect & Consideration

Foster parents and case managers should work hard to ensure that the relationship between the two is built on open communication and trust. Here are some great ways to help build a strong working relationship:

- ❖ Foster parents should try to attend monthly-held Foster Parent Support Groups. This is a great place to learn new information about foster care happenings, connect with others who may be experiencing similar issues, and gain new skills to support your child's or youth's development.
- ❖ case managers should make every effort to be available for foster parents in case of an emergency or critical issue. Always return phone calls and e-mails ASAP or within 24 hours. If you cannot be reached because of a vacation, illness or holidays, take the proper steps to be SURE YOUR foster parents have alternate contact information for you.

2. The right to the given standardized pre-service training and appropriate ongoing training to meet mutually assessed needs and improve their skills.

IMPORTANT FACTS ABOUT TRAINING

- ❖ Pre-Service Training = Foster & Adopt PRIDE (the prerequisite for Licensure)
 - ❖ Relatives caregivers participate in Home of Relative PRIDE (6 hrs)
 - ❖ Traditional caregivers participate in a 27 hour PRIDE classroom course
- ❖ In-Service Training = Any DCFS approved training taken AFTER licensure that will count towards a foster parent's required training hours. Examples include:
 - ❖ Specialized Foster Parent Training
 - ❖ Educational Advocacy
 - ❖ Adoption Conversion
- ❖ Licensed Traditional and Relative Foster Parents are required to have 16.0 credit hours each of in-service training WITHIN their 4 year license period.
- ❖ Licensed Specialized Foster Parents are required to have 16.0 credit hours each PER YEAR of in-service training. 4 years x 16.0 hours = 64.0 hours.

Where can Foster Parents find additional training?

- Ask or refer to your licensing worker!!!
- Caritas offers trainings (CPR, Specialized, Foster Parent Support Group, etc.)
- DCFS Lending Library Catalog
- The D-Net: DCFS classroom trainings (Educational Advocacy, Adoption Conversion, etc.)
- All upcoming area trainings can be found in the quarterly Foster Parent Newsletter by DCFS.

3. The right to be informed as to how to contact the appropriate child placement agency in order to receive information and assistance to access supportive services for children in the foster parent's care.

Foster Care Case Managers should ensure Foster Parents have contact information that they may need at any particular point in time.

- On-Call Emergency Number – Foster Parents should know this number as well as when and HOW to use it. case managers and foster parents need to be clear with what constitutes an “EMERGENCY”
- Contact List of Important People – Every foster parent should have a list of Caritas staff names and phone numbers and understand the role each staff member has in foster care.

4. The right to receive timely financial reimbursement commensurate with the care needs of the child as specified in the service plan.

\$ Reimbursement \$

BOARD PAYMENTS:

- ❖ Licensed Foster Parents' board payments are paid by Caritas
 - ❖ Board checks are mailed out no later than the 25th of every month and foster parents should receive them by approximately the 28th of the month
 - ❖ Licensed Foster Parents should contact their licensing worker regarding board payment issues

- ❖ Unlicensed Foster Parents' (Unlicensed HMRs) board payments are paid by DCFS
 - ❖ Board checks are mailed out typically around the 12th to 15th of every month
 - ❖ Unlicensed Foster Parents can contact the DCFS Payment Unit regarding board payment issues

\$ Reimbursement \$

OTHER PAYMENTS:

- ❖ Reimbursement for any additional expenses submitted by the foster parent must be:
 - ❖ Approved by the caseworker and supervisor
 - ❖ In accordance with the Foster Care Program Plan

These would include things such as mileage, special services fees, recreational fees, and licensure expense reimbursement.

- ❖ **Note:** Foster Parents should not contact the Accounting Department to dispute non-approval of any additional expenses. Caseworkers should advise them that they need to follow the chain of command for these types of disputes.

5. The right to be provided a clear, written understanding of a placement agency's plan concerning the placement of a child in the foster parent's home.

What makes up the written understanding?

The Caritas Foster Parent Placement Agreement

- ❖ This document is given to foster parents by the licensing worker while in the process of licensure. It is signed by the foster parent, and licensing worker and is kept in the Foster Family Home Licensing File.
- ❖ This agreement, made between the foster parent and the agency, includes many specific statements pertaining to the expectation of foster parents during their care of a foster care child: *(6 examples of the 19 total agreement statements)*
 - ❖ Support the child's permanency goal
 - ❖ Support relationships with family
 - ❖ Provide transportation to medical appointments
 - ❖ Support visitation plans
 - ❖ Keep medication logs
 - ❖ Provide two weeks of removal notice (30 days for children in specialized foster care)

What makes up the written understanding?

❖ Child-Specific Placement Agreement

- ❖ Foster parents receive a child-specific placement agreement from the child's caseworker prior to each new placement (or within 2 business days in the case of an emergency placement) detailing the agency's plan for the child/children as well as the expectations of the foster parents in implementing the plan.

❖ Notification of ACRs

- ❖ Foster parents should **ALWAYS** receive timely written notification of the next ACR if the birth parent is in agreement of their attendance.

❖ Notice of Decision

- ❖ Foster parents should be provided with a Notice of Decision 14 days prior to the movement of a child (except in cases where a Child Abuse Investigation is pending and child is believed to be at risk of harm)
- ❖ Caseworkers **MUST** inform the foster parent of their right to appeal a removal decision.

What makes up the written understanding?

❖ Child's Client Service Plan

- ❖ Foster parents should receive the child's most recent client service plan from the caseworker. This should be thoroughly discussed with the foster parents to ensure understanding. If possible, foster parents should be invited to participate in the Integrated Assessment. Furthermore, foster parents should be encouraged to participate in the development of any future service plans.

What are ways that foster parents can participate in the creating of a child's service plan?

- ❖ Offering personal recommendations
- ❖ Attendance at ACRs
- ❖ Participation in CFTMs (Child and Family Team Meetings)
- ❖ Involvement in the Integrated Assessment
- ❖ Participation in the IEP when applicable
- ❖ Participation in all other appropriate meetings
- ❖ Taking an active role in visitation plans

6. The right to be provided fair, timely and impartial investigation of licensing complaint issues and be provided the opportunity to have a person present during the investigation and due process; the right to be provided the opportunity to request and receive mediation and/or an administrative review of the decisions which affect licensing parameters; and the right to have decisions concerning a licensing corrective action plan specifically explained and tied to the licensing standards violated.

What do I need to know about a Foster Parent who is under investigation?

CONCURRENT INVESTIGATIONS

Foster Parents are under this investigation because there has been a hotline call made to the DCFS Child Abuse Hotline. This would involve DCFS Child Protective Services AND Licensing.

STAND-ALONE INVESTIGATIONS

Alternately, foster parents can be under investigation because they have violated one or more licensing standards. This would involve Licensing only.

What do I need to know about a Foster Parent who is under a Concurrent Licensing and DCP Investigation?

- ❖ Foster Care Case Managers must IMMEDIATELY communicate to licensing any information regarding the CA/N (Child Abuse and Neglect) Investigation from the DCP Investigator or other sources to ensure maximum cooperation and collaboration.
- ❖ Foster Care Case Managers DO NOT discuss fault or conduct their own interview relating to the allegations of a CA/N or Licensing Investigation. Child interviews are conducted by the DCP Investigator unless directly delegated to the caseworker by the Investigator for reasons of obtaining better information because of rapport.
- ❖ Foster Care Case Managers CANNOT disclose any information regarding any allegations or findings of a CA/N or Licensing Investigation with subsequent foster parents or anyone else other than appropriate professionals.

What do I need to know about a Foster Parent who is under a Stand-Alone Licensing Complaint Investigation?

- ❖ A child's caseworker is required to report any concerning behavior or environmental issues that occur during interaction with a foster parent to Licensing so that an investigation can be initiated if deemed necessary.
- ❖ case managers should treat a Stand-Alone Investigation the same way a Concurrent DCP/Licensing Investigation is handled to assure there are no violations to any foster parent rights.

What are the rights of a Foster Parent during these Investigations?

- ❖ The right for the investigation to be fair, timely, and impartial
- ❖ The right to have an friend or person of their choosing present during any Licensing interviews
- ❖ The right to receive mediation or administrative reviews of the finding decision or outcome
- ❖ The right to have their Corrective Plan (plan to correct any violated licensing standards) specifically explained to them and an opportunity to provide input for it

7. The right, at any time, during which a child is placed with the foster parents to receive available, additional or necessary information that is relevant to the care of the child.

8. The right to be given information concerning a child from the Department as required under Section 5 (u) of the Children and Family Services Act and from a child welfare agency as required under Section 7.4 (c-5) of the Child Care Act of 1969. [20 ILCS 520/1-15].

What is “necessary information” that should be shared with a Foster Parent?

- ❖ **ANY and ALL information required by the CFS 600-4 *Sharing Information with the Caregiver.***
 - ❖ Case Information and History
 - ❖ Health and Medical History
 - ❖ Educational Information and History
 - ❖ Placement History
 - ❖ Behavioral and Social Information and History
- ❖ This information should be shared before a placement is made if at all possible. In the case of an emergency placement, the child’s caseworker should provide this information as it becomes available.

Other helpful information can be provided to the Foster Parent via the Life Book.

- Life Books should be given to each child upon coming into care.
- These books track important information throughout childhood and should go with the child if he/she changes placement.

9. The right to be notified of scheduled meetings and staffings concerning the foster child in order to actively participate in the case planning and decision making process regarding the child in care, including individual service planning meetings, administrative case reviews, interdisciplinary staffings and individual educational planning meetings. *(part 1 of 4)*

Foster Parents are encouraged to attend and participate in meetings and staffings concerning children in their care

What kinds of meetings?

- ACRs (with biological parent consent)
- Service Plan meetings
- Child and Family Team Meetings
- Court hearings
- IEP meetings
- Family visits (with biological parent consent and/or agency consent)

How to properly notify:

- The Foster Parent Law states that Foster Care Case Managers will notify the Foster Parent in writing about an upcoming meeting, hearing, etc.
- After a verbal notification to a foster parent via telephone or in person, a follow up letter or email **MUST** be sent.
- These notifications should occur **14 DAYS PRIOR** to the meeting, hearing, etc.
- If an emergency meeting is scheduled, a follow up email or letter should still be sent after verbal notification (if time allows).
- The foster parent's schedule should be considered when scheduling meetings and they should also be given the option to participate via speaker phone if they so wish.

What reasons do Foster Care Case Managers normally offer when it comes to NOT inviting foster parents to a meeting?

They don't get along with the biological family - Unless a biological parent makes a specific request for the foster parent NOT to be in attendance, an invitation should always be made.

They don't get along with me or my supervisor - Every Caritas staff is trained to act courteous and professional in all situations. If there is a strained relationship between the case manager and foster parent, extra time should be added to repair this relationship.

They don't really have a good reason for being there - This statement is subjective. If a case manager has thoroughly informed the foster parent about the reason and purpose of the meeting or hearing – it is up to the foster parent to decide whether or not they have a “good reason” for being there.

They aren't going to offer anything or change any outcome by being there - Often, a foster parent's attendance may not change any outcome by being there – but there are instances when a foster parent's input has helped with the development of a new plan or given insight into a situation.

They are never available - Within reason, every effort should be made to agree on a mutually convenient time

9. The right to be informed of decisions made by the courts or the agency concerning the child

A child's caseworker should be vigilant and timely when it comes to informing Foster Parents about any decisions made about the child in their care.

They should also advise foster parents of their right to appeal these decisions according to Rule 337, Service Appeals.

Timely notifications to Foster Parent about a court or other decision made is required.

9. The right to have input concerning the plan of services for the child and to have that input given full consideration in the same manner as information presented by any other member of the team.

9. The right to communicate with professionals who work with the foster child in the context of the team, including therapists, physicians and teachers.

10. The right to be given, in a timely and consistent manner, any information a case manager has regarding the child and the child's family which is pertinent to the care and needs of the child and to the making of a permanency plan for the child.

Disclosure of information concerning the child's family shall be limited to the information that is essential for understanding the needs of and providing care to the child in order to protect the rights of the child's family. When a positive relationship exists between the foster parent and the child's family, the child's family may consent to disclosure of additional information.

How can Foster Care Case Managers support the “pertinent information” right ?

PRIOR TO PLACEMENT

- Give any and all child specific information during the initial placement call
- Encourage foster parents to review the child’s referral packet
- Provide the foster parents with “Let Me Tell You About My Child” from the biological parent(s)

DURING PLACEMENT

- Ensure that foster parents are made aware of any changes in case planning or visitation planning as soon as possible
- Communicate all information from other providers or professionals regarding the child
- Communicate all court decisions that affect the child’s case and outlook of the case

What should Foster Parents understand regarding what can and cannot be disclosed to them because of the laws of confidentiality?

Although a foster parent may find it helpful to know more information about a birth parent(s), it is important to keep in mind, that the child's caseworker is bound by laws of confidentiality.

However, when a positive relationship exists between the foster parent and the child's family, the child's family may consent to additional disclosures. Encouraging this type of relationship will provide an atmosphere of a team approach to family rehabilitation, which is the Department's ultimate goal.

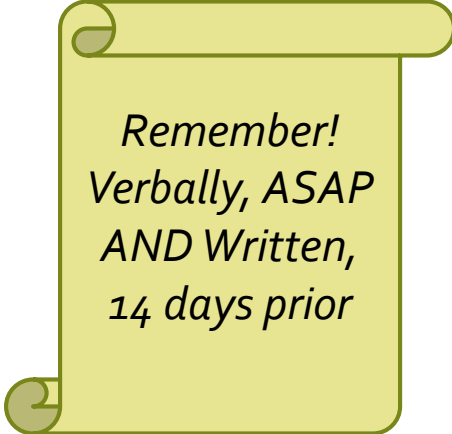
11. The right to be given reasonable written notice of:

- I. Any change in a child's case plan**
- II. Plans to terminate the placement of the child with the foster parent**
- III. The reasons for the change or termination in placement. The notice shall be waived only in cases of a court order or when the child is determined to be at imminent risk of harm**

What kinds of decisions are communicated with the Notice Of Decision (CFS 151)?

SOME EXAMPLES INCLUDE:

- A child has recently been stepped up to Specialized
- The child's goal has recently been changed from return home to adoption
- A child's visitation plans have been changed, for example, from 4 hours a week to overnight visitation



*Remember!
Verbally, ASAP
AND Written,
14 days prior*

Notice of Change of Placement

Appropriate timelines for notification should be followed **except** in instances when a child is at imminent **risk of harm**

This risk can be deemed by the child welfare worker, the supervisor, or a DCFS Child Protection Specialist (Investigator)

Foster Care Case Managers are required to inform the foster parent of their appeal rights regarding both types of decisions

Notice of Decision

- The foster parent has the right to appeal this decision by:
 - *An optional mediation and/or a fair hearing*
- Request must be in writing within 45 days of the notice and sent to the Administrative Hearings Unit

Notice of Change of Placement

- The foster parent has the right to appeal this decision by:
 - *Requesting a Clinical Placement Review*
- Request can be made immediately by telephone or by fax within 3 business days to the DCFS Clinical Placement Review Team

12. The right to be notified in a timely and complete manner of all court hearings, including notice of the date and time of the court hearing, the name of the judge or hearing officer hearing the case, the location of the hearing, and the court docket number of the case; and the right to intervene in court proceedings or to seek mandamus under the Juvenile Court Act of 1987.

Foster parents' rights in regards to the court

Notification

- Caseworkers are required to notify foster parents of all court hearings. The notice should include at the very minimum:
 - Date, time, name of judge or hearing officer, location, and docket number
- This notification should be in writing prior to all court dates as well as verbally

Participation

- Caseworkers are required to provide the contact information for the GAL to the foster parents and be advised that they have the right to contact them regarding the progress of the children in their home.
- In training and through the caseworker, foster parents are informed of appropriate intervention strategies and their rights in court

13. The right to be considered as a placement option when a foster child who was formerly placed with the foster parent is to be re-entered into foster care, if that placement is consistent with the best interest of the child and other children in the foster parents' home.

When a child re-enters care, the Foster Care Supervisor evaluates the case for acceptance

The Foster Care Supervisor ensures that previous foster parents are considered as a placement option dependent upon:

- Licensing capacity
- The foster parents' ability or desire
- The child's previous progress and adjustment in the home

If the child is NOT re-placed in the home a Critical Decision is completed which documents the reasons why and is placed in the child's case file.

14. The right to have timely access to the child placement agency's existing appeals process and the right to be free from acts of harassment and retaliation by any other party when exercising the right to appeal.

Licensing staff provide foster parents with appeal documents at the beginning of licensure

The appeal documents and information provided to foster parents include:

- CFS 1050-32, The Service Appeal Process
- The Caritas Foster Parent Grievance Procedure
- Information located within the Foster Parent Handbook
- Information obtained about appeals in PRIDE training

All staff should be familiar with and assist foster parents in understanding their rights to appeal agency decisions as well as filing grievances.

15. The right to be informed of the Foster Parent Hotline established under the Children and Family Services Act and all other rights accorded to foster parents concerning misconduct by Department employees, service providers, or contractors, confidential handling of those reports, and investigation by the Inspector General appointed under the Children and Family Services Act.

What should a foster parent do if they feel they have been subject to unjust treatment?

- Follow the chain of command with the complaint
 - Issues should try to be resolved with this step first. Chain of command would start with the FC Supervisor and Regional Director.
- File a grievance with the Director of Quality Improvement
 - To file a grievance, contact Kelly Le Chien at Caritas Headquarters:
 - Kelly.LeChien@Caritas Family.org
- If the foster parent feels that Caritas has not adequately resolved the issue, they can contact the Advocacy Center for Children and Families aka “The Advocacy Office”

FOSTER PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

How are foster parents made aware of their responsibilities under the Foster Parent Law?

- Foster Parents are required to read and sign the Agreement of Understanding between Caritas and the Foster Parent
- This agreement specifically illustrates each right and responsibility of the foster parent according to the Foster Parent Law.
- Foster parents are also given a copy of the Foster Parent Law EACH year by their licensing worker.

1. The responsibility to openly communicate and share information about the child with other members of the child welfare team.

Just like the Foster Care Case Manager, foster parents are expected to provide:

- An atmosphere of open communication and personal rapport
- Continued contact with the child welfare team by phone, e-mail, in home visits, etc.
- Behavioral logs if the case manager wishes to utilize them

2. The responsibility to respect the confidentiality of information concerning foster children and their families and act appropriately within applicable confidentiality laws and regulations.

Where do foster parents learn about the laws of confidentiality?

- Foster parents are trained in the confidentiality laws and regulations during PRIDE
- Foster parents are also required to read and sign the **Caritas Foster Home Confidentiality Agreement** and the **Caritas Foster Home Placement Agreement**

**3. The responsibility to
advocate for children in the
foster parent's care.**

In what ways can foster parents demonstrate that they advocate for their foster children?

- Foster parents are also charged with being “the voice” for their children regarding perceived needed services
- They should also ensure that their children participate in needed services
- Foster Parents are required to attend the DCFS classroom training “Educational Advocacy” in order to gain a better understanding of being an advocate in the child’s school life
- They should utilize the Caritas’ Educational Liaison if needed

What can caseworkers do to help foster parent to be an advocate?

- Always keep an open line of communication with frequent contact and good rapport
- Help foster parents gain greater knowledge of the child welfare system as a whole
- Help foster parents understand their rights regarding court hearings
- Encourage foster parents to be involved in ACRs, CIPPs, etc.
- Encourage and educate foster parents on how to utilize the Caritas Education Liaison
- Ensure that foster parents are aware of appeal processes

4. The responsibility to treat children in the foster parent's care and the children's families with dignity, respect and consideration.

Treating all with dignity and respect

- Foster parents learn the value of treating the child and the child's family with dignity and respect in PRIDE training
- Foster parents are also encouraged to attend trainings on separation and loss, reunification, and supporting familial relationships
- It is critical to keeping this right and responsibility in mind when dealing with emotion filled situations.

5. The responsibility to recognize the foster parent's own individual and familial strengths and limitations when deciding whether to accept a child into care; and the responsibility to recognize the foster parent's own support needs and utilize appropriate supports in providing care for foster children.

Foster parent's responsibility is to recognize their strengths, preferences and abilities and be honest with licensing workers PRIOR to a placement

Licensing Specialists track and monitor feedback from foster parents regarding placement preferences, strengths, and challenges by:

- Feedback from PRIDE trainers
- Feedback from caseworkers
 - It's important for Licensing workers to know how the foster parent is coping with placements. It is the Licensing worker's duty to take in information from all sources and use it to make matches in the future.
- Foster parents reports to Licensing Specialist regarding the children in their home
- Foster parents' own expressions of preferences

Caritas staff can support foster parents with this responsibility

- Foster parents are encouraged to be open about their own feelings without the threat of retaliation.
- Licensing staff identify the foster parents' support needs as they relate to the children in their home.
- When making an initial placement call to a foster parent, Caritas staff will share with the foster parent any and all known information whether good or bad
- When possible, on an initial placement call, the foster parent needs time to “digest” information about the placement before giving their answer.

6. Be aware of the benefits of relying on and affiliating with other foster parents and foster parent associations in improving the quality of care and service to children and families.

SUPPORT GROUPS!

What does
that
mean?

Caritas has thriving
and wonderful
support groups!
Foster parents are
encouraged to attend!



7. The responsibility to assess the foster parent's ongoing individual training needs and take action to meet those needs.

The agency has foster parents evaluate their own training needs by:

- Foster home surveys
- Recommendations from evaluators (licensing, caseworkers, supervisors, therapists, DCFS staff)
- Foster parent personal requests
- Post Training evaluations

8. The responsibility to develop and assist in implementing strategies to prevent placement disruptions, recognizing the traumatic impact of placement disruptions on a foster child and all members of the foster family; and the responsibility to provide emotional support for the foster children and members of the foster family if preventive strategies fail and placement disruptions occur.

Foster parents can prevent placement disruptions by:

- Utilizing respite stays
- Expressing concerns to caseworker and licensing worker
- Requesting placement stabilization meetings to establish strategies to make stress more manageable
- Attending Support Groups!
- Having a strong personal support network

9. The responsibility to know the impact foster parenting has on individuals and family relationships; the responsibility to endeavor to minimize, as much as possible, any stress that results from foster parenting.

What tools do foster parents have to manage the stress of fostering on their family?

- Licensing workers and foster parents collaborate during the home study process to identify stressors that fostering could bring
- Foster parents learn in PRIDE what kinds of stress come about when fostering
- Foster parents and licensing workers have on-going conversations about family stress and adjustment at monitoring visits
- Caritas offers Stress Management Training
- DCFS offers a digital training entitled “Managing the Impact of Placement on Your Family”
- Caritas offers counseling services to foster parents who are having difficulty dealing with the stress of fostering (on a case by case basis)
- Foster parents also have the option to be put on Inactive Status if they need to take “a break” from foster care

10. The responsibility to know the rewards and benefits to children, parents, families, and society that come from foster parenting and to promote the foster parenting experience in a positive way.

Foster parents understand benefits and promote the experience of fostering by:

- Learning benefits and rewards in PRIDE
- Agency staff encouragement and recognition
- Participating in foster parent recruitment
- Participating in training where foster care alumni share their experiences
- Participate in support groups

11. The responsibility to know the roles, rights, and responsibilities of foster parents, other professionals in the child welfare system, the foster child, and the foster child's own family.

How are foster parents educated on these roles?

- PRIDE Training
- Foster Parents become familiar with these roles by reading and signing the Caritas Foster Parent Placement Agreement and The Caritas Agreement of Understanding
- Foster Parents are given a new copy of the Foster Parent Law EACH year and sign a document that they have received it and have read it
- Foster parents are encouraged to take the DCFS Digital Training “Working as a Professional Team Member”
- Foster parents are also encouraged to ask questions as well as hold each other accountable

12. The responsibility to know and, as necessary, fulfill the foster parent's responsibility to serve as a mandated reporter of suspected child abuse or neglect under the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act; and the responsibility to know the child welfare agency's policy regarding allegations that foster parents have committed child abuse or neglect and applicable administrative rules and procedures governing investigations of those allegations.

How do foster parents become familiar with mandated reporting and investigations?

Mandated Reporting

- Foster parents are trained in PRIDE about being a mandated reporter, what to report and how to report
- Foster parents are also required to read and sign the CANTS 22B form, Mandated Reporter Status

Investigations

- When a foster parent is initially licensed, licensing workers educate the foster parent regarding the Agency's practices for investigations
- When a foster parents is under investigation they are also given a brochure entitled, "What You Need To Know About Licensing Complaint Investigations" – This brochure can also be found on caritasfamilysolutions.org
- The Agency also offers training regarding it's practices for Investigations

13. The responsibility to know and receive training regarding the purpose of administrative case reviews, client service plans, and court processes, as well as any filing or time requirements associated with those proceedings; and the responsibility to actively participate in the foster parent's designated role in these proceedings.

Foster parent education on their responsibility in these proceedings is made clear by:

- PRIDE training emphasizes that foster parents take an active role in each of these proceedings and foster parents are also informed of their rights in these proceedings
- Foster parents are also encouraged to call DCFS Legal Counsel regarding questions about the court process
- The entire child welfare team should always stress to the foster parent the importance of their participation

14. The responsibility to know the child welfare agency's appeal procedure for foster parents and the rights of foster parents under the procedure.

How are foster parents educated on the appeal process?

- Foster parents are given training on The Service Appeal Process in PRIDE and receive forms related to this
- Foster parents are also given written documentation by the licensing worker on the agency's appeal process at the time of initial licensure in the Foster Family Folder
- Foster parents are also acquainted with this information from the Foster Parent Law, Foster Parent Support Group, the child welfare team, as well as trainings that are offered

15. The responsibility to know and understand the importance of maintaining accurate and relevant records regarding the child's history and progress; and the responsibility to be aware of and follow the procedures and regulations of the child welfare agency with which the foster parent is licensed or affiliated

How do foster parents know and understand proper record keeping?

- In short, training through PRIDE and the Child Welfare Team help foster parents understand what records should be maintained. These records should be monitored by caseworkers and licensing staff at in-home visits. The records that foster parents are required to keep include (but are not limited to) for example:
 - Clothing receipts
 - Distribution of child's allowance
 - Medication logs
 - School and Medical records
 - The child's personal belongings

16. The responsibility to share information, through the child welfare team, with the subsequent caregiver (whether the child's parent or another substitute caregiver) regarding the child's adjustment in the foster parent's home.

Appropriate communication between caregivers regarding a child?

- Please remember per the Policy Interpretation 2000.15 issued in November 2000, information from one caregiver to another should only be shared through the caseworker
- Casework staff should always encourage and expect the foster parent to share all relevant information in the effort to enhance adjustment and stabilization
- The child's folder and Life Book should also go with them to each subsequent home
- Child and Family Team Meetings are a good place for the foster parent and biological parent to share information with each other regarding the child

17. The responsibility to provide care and services that are respectful of and responsive to the child's cultural needs and are supportive of the relationship between the child and his or her own family; the responsibility to recognize the increased importance of maintaining a child's cultural identity when the race or culture of the foster family differs from that of the foster child; and the responsibility to take action to address these issues.

The importance of foster parents to be respectful and responsive to a child's cultural needs

- Foster parents should be encouraged to help other foster parents regarding cultural issues like hair and skin care, foods, traditions, holidays, etc. Licensing staff and casework staff can work together to make these types of foster parent connections.
- DCFS as well as Caritas support community involvement and making placement decisions based on the child's neighborhood of origin.
- Foster parents who may not be as culturally aware are encouraged to take trainings about cultural diversity and support offered in the DCFS Lending Library Catalog or the Digital Training , "Promoting Children's Personal and Cultural Heritage."

Thank you for your time !

To take the quiz and gain credit for participating in this workshop, please click here:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FosterParentLaw>