

SOCIAL SERVICES EXPECTATIONS
for
CHILD FOSTER CARE PLACEMENT COMMUNICATION

In order to ensure positive experiences for children in foster care, the following expectations will be followed regarding placement support for foster families.

Expectations of Social Workers

At Time of Initial Placement:

- Provide all pertinent information regarding children needing placement to foster care provider. Complete the *Child Foster Care Placement Information Form* and provide this to the foster parents. The social worker will provide the foster parent with any additional information the agency obtains after placement has been made as it becomes available.
- Discuss with foster parents what style of communication will work best for on-going communication (email, phone calls, etc). This discussion may continue throughout the placement.

Placement Expectations of Social Worker:

- Contact the foster parent **within 2 business days following the placement** to discuss the well-being of the children in placement, provide support, and answer any questions of the provider.
- The social worker (placing or on-going) will visit the foster home in person **within the first month after placement**.
- All phone calls and emails from foster parents must be returned **within 1 business day** unless the staff is out of the office or dealing with an emergency situation. If this is not possible, the social worker will request the supervisor or backup worker in the unit return the phone call or email.
- Foster parents will be included in the discussion and provide feedback regarding the child's Out of Home Placement Plan. **There will be mutual agreement between the agency and foster parents regarding the foster parent responsibilities.** The Out of Home Placement Plan will be completed and a copy given to the foster parents.
- Foster parents will be consulted when there is a change in services, particularly in reference to the responsibilities of foster parents. The foster family's schedule will be taken into consideration throughout this planning process.
- The social worker will visit the foster child in the foster home at least **1 time each month**. During these visits, the social worker will meet alone with the child(ren) to discuss any questions or concerns they may be having in a private setting. The social worker will also meet with the foster parents to discuss any case updates or details. In addition to the monthly visit in the foster home, social workers may continue to have visits with children in other community settings as needed.

- Contact foster family **2 times each month (minimum)** regarding the adjustment and well-being of the child in foster care.
- Foster parents may be included in the initial and ongoing determination of a child's Difficulty of Care Points. Foster parents will be given written notice of the determination and of their right to appeal.
- Establish services in a timely manner in order to maintain stabilization of the placement.
- Maintain frequent contact with therapists and all supportive services for the children in care.
- Address any concerns regarding the foster parents' actions directly with the foster parent at the time the issue occurs in order to provide immediate feedback in the context of the situation. Should this area of concern continue after it has been addressed by the social worker, the social worker should discuss the concern with licensing staff. The licensing staff will assist in determining if a licensing complaint should be made. Staff will utilize the Intake and Resource Supervisor for consultation whenever needed. Licensing staff should be informed of any safety concerns immediately.
- Utilize the *Clarification of Roles* document to effectively work with the families we serve. This document clarifies responsibilities of staff within the agency.

Expectations of Foster Parents

- Assess potential placement requests and decide if the placement is a good fit for your family as well as other child(ren) in placement.
- Contact social worker directly to request additional support when needed. This may include more frequent home visits for added support and consultation.
- Utilize the *Contact Tree* should you have difficulty reaching a specific social worker.
- Provide feedback regarding each child's Out of Home Placement Plan. Ensure you are maintaining the foster parent's responsibilities noted in the Out of Home Placement Plan or that have been agreed upon by a child's team.
- During social worker visits at your home, allow the social worker time to meet alone with children.
- Complete the *Evaluation of Agency by Foster Home* form provided at the end of each placement and at the time of re-licensure.
- During placements, the agency encourages foster parents to provide feedback and to communicate their needs and concerns to the social worker, or the supervisor and administration as needed.

Expectations of the Agency

The agency is committed to providing quality care to children receiving foster care services. Financially, this includes timely processing of medical assistance for health care needs and provider payments. The commitment also encompasses a supportive and teamwork approach to meeting the needs of children in our care.

All documents referenced in this agency directive can be found on Share Point