

Foster Care Q&A



Q. How can I become a Foster Parent?

A. CT Department of Children & Families serves Connecticut families. State regulations guide the licensing process of families. The first step is to complete an inquiry by calling 1-888-543-4376, or online at <https://cafafct.org/foster-care-adoption-programs-information-request-form/>

The next step is to attend an information session. You will learn the agency's mission, who we serve, the philosophy that foster care is a support to families.

For more on Info Sessions, visit: https://fasu.dcf.ct.gov/events/FASU_Events_Calendar.asp

Q. Are there age requirements for applicants?

A. Yes, you must be at least 21 years old.

Q. Who can foster?

A. Any adult, single or married, who is able to provide a safe, loving home to a child is eligible to foster. There is no discrimination on the basis of race, age, gender identity or expression, marital status, or actual or perceived inherent sexuality. Foster parents can be as young as 21 or they can be seniors. Parents may be renting a residence or may own their home. **NOTE:** All prospective parents must attend classes (either virtually, in-person or hybrid.) The course covers a wide range of subjects that may be helpful in parenting a child with special needs, and includes a home study. In addition, prospective parents must pass federal, state and local criminal history and DMV background checks. In total, the licensing process may take 4 months or more to complete.



Q. Does a recent marriage, divorce, birth of a child, death of a loved one or other major change/event in the family affect the application process?

A. Yes. Any major life change will be assessed on an individual basis. Sometimes a brief wait is encouraged. Families need stability before considering the addition of a child.

Q. Is there a minimum income requirement?

A. The family must have sufficient income to cover their own living expenses (rent, heat, electric, food, insurance, medical, etc.) without the monthly stipend for the care of the foster child.

Q. Is home ownership a requirement?

A. No. You can rent or own an apartment, single-family house or condominium. You need to have a separate bed for each foster child and separate rooms for children of the opposite sex ages three and older.

Q. Can I work outside of my home?

A. Yes, provided the plan is approved by the child's social worker and is guided by the age and the needs of each child.

Q. Does the child have medical insurance?

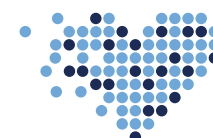
A. Yes, each child has coverage paid for by the State through a managed care company.

Q. Can I choose which children are placed in my home?

A. Families identify their preferences regarding placement at the time of licensing. A recommendation is shared by the licensing worker so the placement specialist is informed what type of child will fit best in the family. We plan for the most ideal match so the first placement a child has can be the last.

Q. Can I foster if I already have a child or children?

A. Yes, you can. Families who have parenting experience are a great resource for waiting children. Some families foster children while their biological children are still in the home. Many families who have grown children may experience "empty nest" feelings and will foster, most often fostering an older child or sibling group.



Q. Is there a limit to the number of children allowed in my home?

A. Yes. The maximum number of children allowed, including your own, is six. The maximum number of foster children placed in the home is three at the same time.

Q. Can single individuals or parents foster?

A. Yes. Foster care by single parents is permissible and supported. LGBTQIA+ individuals are also encouraged to foster in Connecticut.

Q. Can same gender couples foster?

A. Yes. Foster care by same gender couples (both married and those couples living in the same household) is encouraged and supported.

Q. Are there subsidies available for families?

A. Yes, foster families receive a stipend to help cover some of the costs of caring for a child.

Q. Are there health requirements for foster parents?

A. Agencies will require physical examination reports from a doctor for the primary caretakers and all members of the household. This does not mean that you must be in perfect physical condition. Families must be physically and mentally capable of providing care to a child.

Q. Other than the assigned social work, who might be visiting my home?

A. The child's attorney, support worker, advocate or service provider may be conducting home visits. These are usually planned.

Q. How long do the children stay with foster families?

A. Children need families for the entire time they are in care. DCF strives to reunify children within 12 months of separation. If reunification is not possible, children will need permanency. Some foster families provide short-term respite care up to 14 days or overnight for DCF Careline. Some foster families adopt children from foster care.

