



CONNECTICUT
Children & Families

2025 FOSTER CARE MAINTENANCE
PAYMENT REPORT
SPECIAL ACT NO. 25-6

Background

Foster parents are essential to the child welfare system. Children who cannot remain safely in their parental home, must have a place to reside while efforts toward reunification or another permanency plan are completed. The Department of Children and Families (DCF) has continued to provide resources and support to staff responsible for recruiting and supporting foster families, but there continue to be challenges related to recruitment and retention of foster families.

A national placement crisis currently exists across the country, including Connecticut. Foster families are experiencing increased challenges given the higher acuity of need for children coming into DCF care. The DCF Caregiver Advisory Group has developed strategies for recruitment and the data in this report could provide some important insight for policy makers.

Special Act 25-6 "AN ACT CONCERNING FOSTER CARE MAINTENANCE PAYMENTS" requires the Department to submit a report that includes information concerning foster care maintenance payments provided by DCF to foster parents in the state. While considering the data in this report, keep in mind that a 5% increase was provided to foster care rates in 2024 to attract more families to support our children.

Rates and Schedule of Payments in CT

Payments to Foster Care/Kinship Care families are typically made monthly.

See [DCF Policy 24-1-2 on Foster Care Expenses](#) for more information on additional services that are funded by the department and available to Foster Care/Kinship Care families, like healthcare coverage and part time daycare benefits via Care4Kids, among others.

See [DCF Policy 2-2 Fiscal Services Division pages 10-17](#) for additional information on Foster Care Expenses and Payments. Which includes Foster Parent Claim for Damages, Foster Care Reimbursement Structure, Clothing Vouchers, Payments to

Foster Families for Vacations, Exceptional Foster Care Rates, Wraparound Funds, Home and Vehicle Modifications, and others.

Connecticut Foster Care Board and Care Rate Effective 4/1/2024	Per Diem Rate	Rate for 31 Day Month	Rate for 30 Day Month	Rate for 28 Day Month	Annual
Foster Care & Kinship Care					
Age 0-5 Foster Care/Kinship Care	\$27.29	\$845.97	\$818.69	\$791.40	\$9,960.67
Age 6-11 Foster Care/Kinship Care	\$27.60	\$855.74	\$828.14	\$800.53	\$10,075.64
Age 12-17 Foster Care/Kinship Care	\$29.95	\$928.33	\$898.38	\$868.43	\$10,930.29
Age Over 17 Foster Care/Kinship Care					
Foster Care, Minor Parent & child	\$57.24	\$1,774.30	\$1,717.07	\$1,659.83	\$20,890.96
Medically Complex FC Class 1 Potential Condition:	\$31.50	\$976.50	\$945.00	\$913.50	\$11,497.50
Medically Complex FC Class 2 Medically at Risk:	\$42.00	\$1,302.00	\$1,260.00	\$1,218.00	\$15,330.00
Medically Complex FC Class 3 Intensive Med Need:	\$58.33	\$1,808.15	\$1,749.83	\$1,691.50	\$21,289.54
Medically Complex FC Class 4 Tech/Med Dependent	\$86.10	\$2,669.10	\$2,583.00	\$2,496.90	\$31,426.50

*Note: These rates are the same for Subsidized Adoption and Guardianship.

Comparison of Neighboring Jurisdictions

The model and structure of foster care maintenance payments of our neighboring states (MA, NY and RI) are somewhat comparable to CT and each other, but with some slightly different nuances that do not make them directly comparable.

Some examples of key differences include, but are not limited to:

- The age groups for payment structures being different in RI
- MA does not provide higher payment levels for children with different medical complexities like other states (including CT).

Massachusetts

Daily Rate – Foster parents receive a reimbursement for providing care at the daily rates the Department establishes. The current daily rate is below, and payments are provided twice a month (24 times per year).

- Ages 0–5: \$33.27
- Ages 6–12: \$37.71
- Ages 13+: \$39.40

Clothing Allowance – Foster parents receive a clothing allowance for foster children in their care at the rates below. This payment is provided on a quarterly basis.

- Ages 0–5: \$330.44
- Ages 6–12: \$340.82
- Ages 13+: \$410.02

Foster parents also receive \$100 to help pay for a birthday gift and \$200 for holiday gifts for each foster child each year.

New York

Maximum State Aid Rates for Foster Boarding Home Payments and Adoption Subsidies 2024–25 Rate Year (July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025)

Age 0 – 5			Age 6 – 11		Age 12 and Over	
Monthly Amount		Per Diem	Monthly Amount	Per Diem	Monthly Amount	Per Diem
Metro	1,102.52	36.25	1,299.19	42.71	1,318.95	43.36
Upstate	959.18	31.53	1,142.68	37.57	1,154.90	37.97

	Monthly Amount	Per Diem
Special Children	2,069.54	68.04
Exceptional Children	3,136.94	103.13
Extraordinary Children	3,816.64	125.48

*More information on how NY defines their levels of care can be found in their [Standards of Payment Manual for Voluntary Agencies](#) starting on page 91.

Rhode Island

The foster board maintenance payment for children and youth who enter foster care on or after August 1, 2020, is determined by their tier score identified by their Level of Need (LON) assessment. (See chart below for rates.) A child with the highest needs is Tier Score 5 and a child with the lowest needs is a Tier Score 1.

Most children and youth who are placed with foster families score at 1, 2 or 3. The goal of the LON assessment is to clearly identify each child's needs, what type of home would be the best fit for their needs, and what services might be needed for that child. The LON assessment tool is the cornerstone of the foster care system.

<u>Age Range</u>	<u>Tier 1</u>	<u>Tier 2</u>	<u>Tier 3</u>	<u>Tier 4</u>	<u>Tier 5</u>
0-3	\$35	\$35	\$75	\$85	\$95
4-11	\$45	\$45	\$75	\$85	\$95
12+	\$50	\$50	\$75	\$85	\$95
ERP-X: Ages 0-12	\$71	\$71	\$98	\$109	\$119
ERP-X: Ages 13+	\$82	\$82	\$104	\$115	\$125
Medical Rate	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100

Cost of Living

Foster care maintenance payments vary across the country. Each state's foster care rate can be found on the following links:

- [Families Rising: All States at-a-Glance - Summary of State Adoption Assistance Programs](#)
- [World Population Review: Foster Care Stipend by State 2025](#)

Given the large range of foster care rates, we analyzed the state's cost of living differential for the neighboring states used in this report.

State	Cost of Living Difference Compared to CT	Foster Care Per Diem Reimbursement Rates					
		Ages 0-3	Age 4	Age 5	Ages 6-11	Age 12	Ages 13-17
NY (Metro)	3.8%	\$36.25	\$36.25	\$36.25	\$42.71	\$43.36	\$43.36
RI	-2.2%	\$35.00	\$45.00	\$45.00	\$45.00	\$50.00	\$50.00
MA	4.3%	\$33.27	\$33.27	\$33.27	\$37.71	\$37.71	\$39.40
NY (Upstate)	3.8%	\$31.53	\$31.53	\$31.53	\$37.57	\$37.97	\$37.97
CT	-	\$27.29	\$27.29	\$27.29	\$27.60	\$29.95	\$29.95
State	Cost of Living Difference Compared to CT	Foster Care Per Diem Reimbursement Rates Adjusted for Cost-of-Living Difference Compared to CT					
NY (Metro)	3.8%	\$34.87	\$34.87	\$34.87	\$41.09	\$41.71	\$41.71
RI	-2.2%	\$35.77	\$45.99	\$45.99	\$45.99	\$51.10	\$51.10
MA	4.3%	\$31.84	\$31.84	\$31.84	\$36.09	\$36.09	\$37.71
NY (Upstate)	3.8%	\$30.33	\$30.33	\$30.33	\$36.14	\$36.53	\$36.53
CT	-	\$27.29	\$27.29	\$27.29	\$27.60	\$29.95	\$29.95
\$ Difference Between CT and Neighbor State Average		\$(5.91)	\$(8.47)	\$(8.47)	\$(12.23)	\$(11.41)	\$(11.81)
% Difference Between CT and Neighbor State Average		-18%	-24%	-24%	-31%	-28%	-28%

Conclusion

The Department recognizes the vital role of foster parents and licensed caregivers in the child welfare system, and it is essential more individuals step forward to serve in these roles. Families inquire about fostering because they are committed to helping children and families, and it is incumbent upon the state to offer them the necessary support. Providing appropriate support is critical to the recruitment and retention of qualified foster homes. While foster care maintenance rates in Connecticut have seen recent increases, they continue to be low when compared to our neighboring states, especially when adjusted for cost of living.