

Foster Care

Different Ways to Foster:

Emergency Foster Care – Emergency homes are homes in which the family foster parents agree to provide temporary, short-term care for any child who is referred by the child-placing agency in an emergency situation. Family foster parents in an emergency family foster home would be expected to accept any child referred by the child-placing agency at any hour of the day or night. The preferences according to age, sex, or condition of children shall be identified prior to approval of the home as an emergency foster home. Placement of a child would be of short duration.

Planned-Term Family Foster Homes – Planned-term family foster homes are homes in which the family foster parents agree to provide 24 hours per day care for a particular child in foster care. There will be an agreement between the child-placing agency and the family foster parents that the family can care for that child as a substitute family until such a time as a permanent plan can be developed and implemented for that child.

Respite Family Foster Homes – In certain situations, placement arrangements are needed for a child in foster care to stay overnight. A weekend, with a family or individual may be needed to provide family foster parents a brief time-out from the stress of foster parenting. Birth/legal parents in crisis may also need a brief time-out from parenting a child. The type of family foster homes used in these cases is called respite family foster homes.

Specialized Family Foster Homes – These are homes in which both parents have received training in addition to pre-service family foster parent training. They have been approved to accept children with physical, mental, emotional, and/or social handicapping conditions of such degree that only those with special training can provide needed services.

Foster to adopt option – Once Parental Rights have been terminated the children may be adopted. One may apply to DCFS to adopt a child.

Ages of Children in Foster Care as of September 2016:

- 0-5 years old - approx. 178,822 children
- 6-11 years old - approx. 118,946 children
- 12-17 years old - approx. 124,927 children
- > 17 years old - approx. 13,316 children

Source: Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) FY 2016 data

Some of the general requirements for becoming a Foster Family include:

- Foster homes shall not have more than five unrelated minor children in care. The foster home may care for more children if they are related to the caregiver. The foster home shall not have more than eight children in their home, including their own children.
- Homes will not be approved if there are transient roomers or boarders
- An applicant must be ages 21-65 years (exceptions may be made for the age requirement)
- If an applicant is currently married, either he or she must have been married for at least 2 years
- An applicant must complete pre-service training
- An applicant must complete CPR/First aid training
- A criminal background check and motor vehicle safety check are required for anyone residing in the home age 14 and above
- A child abuse/neglect registry check is required for anyone residing in the home age 10 and above