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Foster Parent Law Implementation Plan 2013

Family Service Center
Foster Parent Law Implementation Plan 2013

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Foster Parent Law implementation Plan Annual Report 2012

Family Service Center is committed to improving the lives of our clients by providing support, guidance, and education to adoptive, foster and teen parent families.

Family Service Center strived to improve this year's plan by meeting with foster parents to identify strengths and weaknesses of the plan by meeting with a panel of foster parents at our foster parent meeting. Staff was also given a copy of the 2012 report to review and provide insight and suggestions. Family Service Center appreciates the help and guidance that foster parents and staff provided this year for shaping our new implementation plan for 2013.

Deficiencies identified in our 2012 plan

The 2012 plan didn't identify and describe specific ways staff treat foster parents with dignity and respect in their interpersonal relationships and practices.

- The majority of the first narrative was redone to explain the many ways foster parents are treated with dignity and respect at Family Service Center.
- The details were strengthened in narrative #2. All of the trainings provided by the agency were listed in the narrative. Information was added about holding a court and service appeal training:
- Family Service Center continues to utilize community-based and in-house workshops such as trainings on Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, Love and Logic Parenting Program, CPR and First Aid,

Shaken Baby Syndrome, court and service appeal training and trainings to help foster parents with tax related questions. Family Service Center is host to DCFSs trainings in house, such as PRIDE, Educational Advocacy classes, Trauma for caregivers, and Adoption Certification classes, making them more readily accessible to our foster parents.

Family Service Center also now provides specialized foster care services so a narrative specific to that was added:

- Specialized foster parents are required to obtain an additional twelve hours of training each year. If the specialized foster parent has a child or children in the home, those training hours must be specific to that child or children.

A description was added for the way our agency provides timely assessment for payment commensurate with the type of care.

- The agency just started allowing foster parents to use direct deposit. This allows the foster parents a more convenient and timely manner to receive their foster parent board payment. • If a licensed caregiver has not received their payment within a week they are urged to call the Family Service Center bookkeeper at 528-8406. If you are an unlicensed provider you will need to contact the DCFS payment hotline at 1-800-525-0499. Unlicensed providers are also asked to notify the caseworker or supervisor if they need assistance in a payment matter. Due to reduced operational hours effective 02/01/2010 if you need to speak with a payment specialist at DCFS please call between 8:30 am and 11:00 am CST Monday through Friday.

Only the sign-in sheets that directly relates to the plan are being included. A new signature sheet was created to clearly identify the approval of the completed plan by foster parents. The number of

attachments was also reduced per the suggestions.

Successful Accomplishments in the 2012 Plan:

1. The agency has redone its website to make it easier to operate and to provide more accessible information to foster parents.
2. The agency now has a specialized contract allowing the agency to maintain children within the agency and possibly in the same placement if possible after an identified need of higher level of care.
3. Behavior specialists are now on staff to assist specialized foster parent to deal with crisis situations in the home.
4. The agency has a new licensing worker that has started to do more recruiting and has added more training to the foster parent meeting schedule based on needs identified by foster parents.
5. The agency understands the importance's of foster parent meetings and now offers nine meetings instead of seven to provide more support.
6. Foster parents are able to call the agency 24 hours/seven days a week for assistance. This seems to help deescalate some stressful situations.
7. Foster parents receive payment in a timely manner and now have the option of direct deposit.

Most challenging parts of our 2012 plan:

Family Service Center values our foster parents input in developing the implementation plan. Foster parent meetings are always attended by the same individuals each month. The agency encourages all foster parents to attend and provides a meal and child care as an incentive. The agency has also started doing prize raffles for household cleaning and toiletry items. The foster parents seem excited each month about the raffles and it saves them the expense of buying certain items. While we value the foster parents that do attend it limits input because we have the same foster parent input year after year regarding the plan.

Sections of the Plan Not Implemented

Foster parents were not referred to the Land of Lincoln FAPA group. Most foster parents feel very supported internally by Family Service Center and don't identify a need to have additional supports by external agencies. FSC would be happy to refer any foster parent that identifies a need for extra support to any community based foster parent support groups.

The agency will also strive to better utilize the Child caregiver matching tool to find the best possible placement match for foster children when a placement is needed. The tool is currently completed within 60 days of placement as outlined by DCFS rules and regulations. The agency would like to complete the tool before the placement is made if possible to ensure that the foster home and child are the best possible placement match.

Foster Parent and Staff Involvement in the development of plan

All the agency foster parents are invited to foster parent meetings each month. Three meetings are usually devoted to reviewing the plan and making changes based on the foster parents input. The licensing worker takes all the suggestions made and inputs them into the new implementation plan. The revised plan is then presented to the foster parents to review at the October meeting. The foster

parents vote on approving the plan. If any deficiencies are still noted those will be corrected and the plan is presented again to the foster parents for approval at the November meeting.

Agency staff is encouraged to review the implementation plan and provide information to the licensing worker or licensing supervisor about needed changes. The staff is viewed as a valuable resource for information since they work the most directly with foster parents. Staffs are asked to review changes made and note any deficiencies. Once corrections are made then staff are asked to provide signatures of their approval.

Staff Training on the Implementation Plan

The licensing worker presented the 2013 implementation plan to the staff after one of the weekly staff meetings. Staff was asked to review the plan, with the licensing worker highlighting important details in each section. Staff was then asked to fully review the plan and offer any suggestions or feedback. The licensing worker came up with a short quiz to give to the workers to make sure the plan was read in its entirety and it was fully understood. Staff was encouraged to meet with the licensing worker or Director of Social services with any questions regarding the plan.

New casework staff meets with either the Director of Social services or the foster care supervisor to review the implementation plan during an initial orientation.

Impact of the Implementation Plan on Daily Service Delivery

The Implementation plan serves as a guide for staff and foster parents on how foster parents rights and responsibilities should be handled. The plan helps to guide the foster care process and create a team mentality. Communication is very important between all members of the foster care team.

Availability of the Implementation Plan to Foster Parents

Foster parents were mailed a copy of the approved Implementation Plan. A copy is also included in the “expandable files” given to each foster parent at the time of placement of a child in their home. The licensing worker will have copies when the monitoring visits occur. Foster parents can also request an additional copy of the Implementation Plan at any time. The 2013 Implementation plan and training calendar will also be made available on the agency website.

Foster Parent Law Grievances

Family Service Center did not have any Foster Parent Law grievances filed this year.

Development and Review of Foster Parent Law Grievance Procedure

The grievance procedure is reviewed and discussed with the foster parents at one of the Implementation Plan meetings. Foster parents are asked for any suggestions they have towards the procedure. Foster parents and staff members present at the meeting then vote whether or not to approve the Foster Parent Law Grievance Procedure.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Bell, M.A.
Director of Social Services

Policy Statement

Foster Parent Law Grievance Procedure

Year 2013

Policy Statement: Family Service Center will maintain a foster parent grievance procedure. Caseworkers will inform the foster parents of their right to initiate a grievance and provide foster parents with a copy of the procedure when needed.

This grievance process is to be used by foster parents only for grieving alleged violations of the Foster Parent Law that are not covered by an already-existing grievance or appeal process. E.g., it cannot be used to address issues that are covered by the service appeal process, the appeal process for indicated cases of child abuse/neglect, the process for appealing licensing investigation findings or license revocations, etc.

Section 1. "Grievance" refers to a dispute or disagreement raised by a foster parent against an employee of the Agency, Family Service Center, involving the interpretation of application of any actions or course of action in service to the foster parent.

Section 2. The grievance shall be put in writing and should clearly state the following:

- a. The exact nature of the grievance
- b. The act or acts of commission or omission
- c. The exact date or dates of the act of commission or omission
- d. The identity of the party or parties who claim to be aggrieved
- e. The identity of the party or parties alleged to have committed the act of commission or omission
- f. The specific action or course of actions that are alleged to have taken place,
- g. The remedy which is being sought.

Section 3. Procedure: Before initiating a written grievance, the foster parent should raise any matter of disagreement, concern, or dispute with their caseworker or the foster care supervisor of the caseworker in order to informally resolve as many matters as possible. In the event that a satisfactory settlement is not or cannot be reached, grievances shall be processed in the following manner:

Step 1: The foster parent shall present the grievance orally to the caseworker, or the foster care supervisor explaining the nature and circumstances within five (5) working days after its occurrence. The foster care supervisor shall then attempt to resolve the matter and shall respond to the foster parent within five (5) working days after the presentation of the grievance.

Step 2: If a satisfactory settlement is not reached under step one; the grievance is presented by the foster parent to the Foster Parent Implementation Plan Liaison in writing on the form described in Section Two (2) within five (5) working days after the expiration time set forth in Step One (1). The Foster Parent Implementation Plan Liaison shall issue a written decision to the foster parent within ten (10) working days after the date of the receipt of the written grievance.

Step 3: If satisfactory settlement is not reached under Step Two (2), the grievance shall be presented by the employee for the foster parent to the Executive Director in writing in the form described in the form described within five (5) working days after the expiration of the time limit set forth in Step Three (3). The Executive Director shall issue a written opinion to the foster parent within ten (10) days after the date of receipt of the written grievance.

Step 4: If satisfactory settlement is not reached under Step Three (3), the foster parent shall resubmit the written grievance after receipt of the response from the Executive Director as outlined in Step Three (3), above to the Family Service Center Board of Directors for review. The foster parents may request a meeting, with legal counsel if desired, to present the grievance to the Agency Family Service Center Board of Directors. The findings and opinions of the Family Service Board of Directors, in nature is a recommendation, are then transmitted to the Executive Director, whose decision shall be final.

Section 4: The internal foster parent grievance process does not replace any other criminal or legal actions outside of the Family Service Center agency which may be warranted.

Foster Parent Law implementation Plan 2013

Foster Parent Rights:

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

•Family Service Center (FSC) is “family oriented” and foster parents are considered critical members of the Child Welfare Team. The majority of our children in foster care reside in the homes of relatives. We respect the knowledge, of the children and the biological family, which relative caregivers bring to the team. We consider the foster parent(s) to possess intimate knowledge of the children in their care. All staff recognizes that, for relative foster parents, their involvement with family continues long after agencies have stopped services. Their involvement as members of a Child Welfare Team is critical to planning for the needs and best interests of children.

•FSC strives to treat all of our foster parents with dignity and respect. Foster parent’s phone calls are always returned promptly. FSC staff works around the foster parents schedule to arrange for meetings. The agency just started allowing foster parents to use direct deposit. This allows the foster parents a more convenient and timely manner to receive their foster parent board payment. Foster parents are asked by their caseworker and licensing worker if they feel they are treated with dignity and respect. If the foster parent does not feel they are treated with dignity and respect the supervisor is notified to correct the problem immediately.

•Foster parents are strongly encouraged to participate in the formulation of their child’s service plan. Letters, phone calls and notifications at home visits are made to foster parents making them

aware of court dates, Administrative Case Reviews (ACR's), Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meetings, clinical staffing and other meetings where foster parent participation is important. If the foster parent cannot be present for the meeting, FSC staff will make accommodation for the foster parent to be present by phone or staff will provide the foster parent with paperwork or a summary of the meeting. Whenever a new service plan is prepared (usually every six month) the foster parent should receive a copy of the plan.

- Child and Family Team Meetings (CFTM) give foster parents another opportunity to participate in permanency planning for their child. CFTM's are another example of meetings that are scheduled around the foster parent's schedule. CFTM's will be covered in the Foster Care 101 training provided annually by FSC.

- When a foster parent is struggling with a foster child in their home, FSC will do everything within our means to maintain the placement. FSC has recently implemented the use of behavioral specialists who are available 24 hours a day for crisis situations. The behavioral specialist can provide crisis management to deflect hospitalization or they may simply provide the foster parent with a few hours of respite. The behavioral specialists are also equipped to provide parenting suggestions and teach alternate parenting approaches that are geared towards a difficult child. If the foster parent feels that the placement is not going to work out, then fourteen days notice in writing will need to be provided to the caseworker, supervisor or licensing staff.

- (FSC) staffs practice is to provide a safe, stable and nurturing environment for children in their foster care placement. FSC staff strives to eliminate multiple moves of foster children. FSC foster parents are strongly encouraged to participate in planning for any and all foster children in their home. Staff will utilize the Sharing Information form with the Caregiver (CFS 600-4) when placing a

child in a new home. The form is to be completed within 10 days of placement and should detail the child's personal history for the caregiver. If the child is placed under emergency conditions, this information will be provided verbally to the caregiver and then followed with the Sharing Information with the Caregiver form. This form must also be provided to the child's Guardian ad litem (GAL) within 10 days.

- If a foster child must be moved from the foster parent home by FSC, a Notice of Decision will be given to the foster parent and the child will be moved in two weeks. The Notice of Decision will also contain information on how a foster parent can appeal the decision to move a child from their home.

- FSC staff is available to the foster parent 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. During regular office hours, caseworkers, supervisors and licensing staff can be reached at 217-528-8406. If there is an emergency afterhours please contact the on-call worker by calling the on-call phone at 217-685-8119.

- Family Service Center holds Foster Parent appreciation activities and events including Halloween parties, Christmas parties, and the Foster Parent appreciation picnic in May and various discussions at foster parent meetings.

- Surveys are sent out in May and October each year to find out what components of the program have been successful and where the agency needs to make improvements to ensure foster parents are being treated with dignity and respect as professional members of the child welfare team.

- The Family Link, our monthly newsletter is mailed out to all foster parents and staff and is used as a communication tool to let foster parent know about future activities and training opportunities. The

newsletter is well liked and foster parents often make suggestions to staff about items they would like to see in the newsletter.

- A list of important numbers that foster parent may need is given to them when a child is placed in their home. At the suggestion of the foster parents a telephone tree was started and continues to grow. Names and telephone numbers are added when the foster parent gives the worker permission.

2. The right to be provided standardized pre-service training and appropriate ongoing training to meet mutually assessed needs and improve the foster parents' skills

- Family Service Center foster parents attend the mandatory DCFS (Department of Children and Family Services) PRIDE training which utilizes the co-training approach. Foster parents who provide relative care and become licensed need only to attend two training sessions; this can either be done in a classroom setting or through videos that can be watched at home. Unrelated caregivers, who are referred to as traditional foster parents must take the entire nine *session* training course in the classroom setting. Foster parents are also encouraged to take the educational advocacy class which is a six hour training course to educate them on the educational rights of the foster child they are caring for in their home. The Educational Advocacy Class is now a requirement for renewal of the foster parent license.

- All licensed foster parents are provided with a copy of the Licensing Standards for Foster Family Homes, which are explained in-depth by the agency's licensing representative. Foster parents are given the opportunity to ask questions about these licensing standards during the initial home visit and during regular licensing monitoring visits twice each year. Caseworkers have direct contact with the foster parents and the children; while the licensing worker has indirect

contact with the children.

- Family Service Center continues to utilize community-based and in-house workshops such as trainings on Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, Love and Logic Parenting Program, CPR and First Aid, Shaken Baby Syndrome, court and service appeal training and trainings to help foster parents with tax related questions. Family Service Center is host to DCFSs trainings in house, such as PRIDE, Educational Advocacy classes, Trauma for caregivers, and Adoption Certification classes, making them more readily accessible to our foster parents.

- Foster Parents are required to complete sixteen hours of approved training credits in order to renew their foster parent license (renewals are completed every four years). A foster parent who is taking children for specialized placement must complete an additional twelve hours per year. Six of the twelve hours will be general training on specialized care. The remaining hours will be used for training specific to the specialized child in the home.

- During monthly contacts with the caseworker and bi-annual contact with the licensing worker, the foster parent has the right to request training in areas specific to meet their needs or the needs of the children placed in their home. The caseworker and licensing worker have the responsibility to follow through with attempting to find such training opportunities. Caseworkers will continue to assess the foster parents need for training during these monthly contacts, as well. On occasion, trainings are offered throughout the community. A monthly newsletter is sent by the licensing worker and notifies foster parents of upcoming DCFS and community trainings.

- The agency develops a training calendar for the fiscal year at the July foster parent meeting that includes a number of agency-sponsored trainings. Foster parents and relative caregivers will be

invited to attend any training offered by the agency. A light meal and childcare will be provided during these trainings. Ongoing input from foster parents occurs in communication with their individual caseworker.

- Foster parents are strongly encouraged to actively participate in their child's therapy as much child-specific training, advice and support can be received from the child's therapist.

- The agency maintains an extensive library of books, workbooks, tapes and some videos that are available for foster parent use. If foster parents check out materials and believe it is related to caring for the foster child in their home, they are able to complete the credit for prior learning form (CFS 574) and submit it to the licensing worker. Foster parents are asked to keep in mind that every four years they are required to obtain sixteen training hours to be able to renew their foster care license. Specialized foster parents are required to obtain an additional twelve hours of training each year. If the specialized foster parent has a child or children in the home, those training hours must be specific to that child or children. Attendance at foster parent meetings, in-service trainings and as mentioned above, reading books or watching videos will count towards training hours.

- Casework and licensing staff are trained to identify the training needs of foster parents. If staff sees a need for training it will be discussed during supervision or weekly staff meeting. If the supervisory staff agrees on the assessment then training will be provided to the foster parent during the bi-annual monitoring visits.

- Family Service Center staff also makes use of the Child and Caregiver Matching Tool (CFS 2017). The Matching Tool is completed by the caseworker.

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 their care.

- The name and phone number of the licensing worker and case worker are provided at the case handoff. Family Service Center staff can be reached Monday through Friday 8:30-5:00 at (217)528-8406.
- Each family has 24 hour access to the foster care staff. All foster care staff maintain cell phones with caller ID and voicemail. An on-call schedule has been implemented. The caseworkers and foster care supervisors rotate carrying the on-call phone. During non-office hours, foster parents should call the on-call phone at (217)685-8119 in the case of an emergency. The on-call worker will respond to the foster parents. Should the emergency require the involvement of the family's caseworker, the on-call worker will contact the caseworker. During business hours, the foster parents should use the office number/voice mail (217)528-8406 to contact the agency.

- In the event of a psychiatric or behavioral emergency, foster parents should first contact the on-call worker. The on-call worker may direct the foster parent to call the CARES(Crisis and referral entry service) hotline the child is in need of a SASS (Screening, Assessment and Support Services)screening and possibly psychiatric hospitalization. A child who is in specialized foster care may have a behavioral specialist assigned to him or her. The behavioral specialist may also be available to respond to a psychiatric or behavioral emergency.

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

- Payment to licensed foster parents is mailed on the 25th day of each month. If a holiday falls on the 25th of the month, then checks are mailed on the 24th of the month. If the 25th falls on a Sunday, the

checks will be mailed on the 26th. Payment for foster parent services is always a month behind. For example if a child is placed in your home on September 15th you won't receive a check until October 25th. The payment received on October 25th would be for services provided from September 15th – September 30th. Your payment for November will be for the full month of October. The agency just started allowing foster parents to use direct deposit. This allows the foster parents a more convenient and timely manner to receive their foster parent board payment.

- If a licensed caregiver has not received their payment within a week they are urged to call the Family Service Center bookkeeper at 528-8406. If you are an unlicensed provider you will need to contact the DCFS payment hotline at 1-800-525-0499. Unlicensed providers are also asked to notify the caseworker or supervisor if they need assistance in a payment matter. Due to reduced operational hours effective 02/01/2010 if you need to speak with a payment specialist at DCFS please call between 8:30 am and 11:00 am CST Monday through Friday.

- Respite is provided on a case by case basis and usually only provided for emergency circumstances. Please notify your caseworker as far in advance as possible if respite is needed. Foster parents, who provide respite, receive a reimbursement after the foster parent has turned in a verification letter stating when the respite took place. Family Service Center pays \$30 per child per 24 hours of care to respite providers.

- The Family Service Center Board of Directors establishes a fee

policy for *traditional* licensed foster parents as follows:

Maintenance	0-11 months	1 - 4 years	5 - 8 years	9 - 11 years	12 + years
Board	335.00	337.00	339.00	346.00	354.00
Clothing	37.00	42.00	56.00	65.00	74.00
Allowance*	12.00	13.00	14.00	24.00	43.00
Total	\$384.00	\$392.00	\$409.00	\$435.00	\$471.00

The specialized foster care rate is \$43.98 per day.

*Personal Allowance for children age 4 and under is to be used by foster parents for incidentals (toys, rattles, etc), which becomes the property of the child.

Unlicensed foster parents:

# of Children	Payment Amount
1	\$295.00
2	\$ 590.00
3	\$ 735.00
4	\$ 948.00
5	\$ 1120.00

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.

- At the time of placement, the foster parent is considered to be an active participant in the development of the service plan for the child. All foster parents are provided a copy of the Foster Parents Rights

and Responsibilities. Caseworkers discuss the rights and responsibilities as they pertain to specific considerations for the child in placement in that home (i.e. any special physical/ personal care needs based on ethnic, cultural, or other considerations). Any special considerations in regards to religious or cultural affiliations preferred by the biological parents will be reviewed with the foster parent.

- The foster parents are asked to participate in the development of the service plan for the child(ren) in their care, as they often have the best information about the child's daily needs and requirements. The caseworker talks with the foster parents prior to the creation of an initial service plan and any subsequent plans in order to discuss specific service needs, areas to be addressed in the service plan or at the case review, and suggestions for changes or improvements to the existing plan. The foster parent is apprised of the plans for parent/child visitation, and may offer input into the best interest of that child with regard to the visitation schedule. The foster parents receive a copy of the children's tasks, visitation plan, and child summary sections of the service plan after the plan is finalized.

- In cases where a permanency goal or service plan is changed or revised, the caseworker for that child discusses this change with the foster parent in a timely manner and provides the foster parent with written documentation of that change (e.g., a revised service plan face sheet).

- Family Service Center employs case aides to supervise visits and provide transportation for the visits. Should a foster parent have concerns regarding the scheduling and activities during the visits, the caseworker will look into the situation to determine if changes should be made. The caseworker will talk with the foster parents once a month prior to the creation of the next service plan.

6. The right to be provided a fair, timely and impartial investigation of complaints concerning the foster parents' licensure, to be provided the opportunity to have a person of the foster parent's choosing present during the investigation, and to be provided due process during the investigation; the right to be provided the opportunity to request and receive mediation and an administrative review; and the right to have decisions concerning a licensing corrective action plan specifically explained and tied to the licensing standards violated.

- When a licensing complaint is received, we will discuss it with our DCFS Licensing Representative. The agency's caseworker and licensing worker will, within two business days of the complaint, begin a licensing investigation with an unannounced visit to the foster home. The nature of the complaint will be told to the caregiver. They will be informed of their right to have a person of their choice present during the investigation and that person shall have up to four hours to arrive at the home. If they do not know of anyone, they will be referred to the "Master" Foster Parent at the local DCFS Field Office.

- If the allegation involves a hotline report, a concurrent investigation will take place. The CPSW (Child Protection Service Worker) investigator and the Family Service Center Licensing worker will work together to complete both investigations. It is Family Service Center's policy to remove children from the foster parent home while the investigation is taking place. Foster children can have no contact with the alleged perpetrator. If this is not feasible, the foster children will be placed in respite until the investigations are completed. The Family Service Center Executive Director and Foster Care Supervisor will determine if the children can return to the foster home after the investigation. Written notification will be given to the foster parents concerning the move of the children and the decision to place the children back in the home or the reason why they cannot return. This information will be provided in a Notice of Decision

Form and Change of Placement form if necessary (CFS-151 and CFS 151-B).

- Foster Parents have a right to appeal by making a written request for an informal supervisory review of the decision within ten days of the post marked date of the letter. An appeal meeting will be scheduled upon the foster parent's written request. The licensing worker, the foster care supervisor, and the foster parents are required to attend this meeting. The foster parents may bring an attorney or representative to this meeting. Foster parents may share additional information at the meeting, which they believe to be relevant. After the informal supervisory review, if the licensing decision is overturned, the process stops. If the decision is not overturned, there are several possible outcomes and enforcement actions will proceed.

- If licensing violations are found and are correctable, and the foster parent(s) is willing and able to correct them in a short period of time, a written corrective action plan will be developed with the foster parent(s). The written corrective action plan always contains: 1.) What exact licensing violations were found; 2.) A clear statement of what is expected in correcting them; and 3.) A specified time frame for completion of tasks is given at the time the plan is written.

- If the licensing investigation decision is not overturned, the licensing worker will send notification as to when compliance will need to be reached. When the compliance date is reached, the licensing worker makes an unannounced visit to the foster family home to determine whether the licensing violations have been corrected.

- During the investigation, the foster parent may decide to voluntarily surrender their license. If a foster parent makes this decision they need to put their request in writing and mail to the licensing worker. Prior to closing a file DCFS must have a copy of the letter signed by

the foster parent or foster parents.

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

- The right of foster parents to receive additional information about the children in placement with them is provided based on the information which is essential to meet the child's needs. This is done to protect the parents' rights as well as keep the confidential nature of the information requested private. Foster parents are given information regarding the child's health, behaviors, education, visitation schedule, and any other pertinent information needed to properly care for the child at the time of placement. Caseworkers complete a Sharing Information with the Caregiver Form (CFS 600-4), to ensure that all proper information was shared with the foster parent within 10 days of placement. It is the foster care supervisor's responsibility to discuss and reinforce with the case workers, confidentiality of information shared regarding children in placement. The foster parent and caseworker also sign the Sharing Information with the Caregiver Form (CFS 600-4), and a copy of the signed form is placed in the child's case file. No information is given to anyone without signed consents.

- Foster parents and biological parents meet, talk, and share information about the child at the child and family team meetings held quarterly. Foster parents will be notified of court hearings, administrative case reviews, school meetings and counseling appointments.

- Caseworkers are required to complete a case note which documents the information shared with the foster parents. This document becomes part of the case file. Additionally, the foster care supervisor may choose to inquire if the information was shared with the foster

parent during supervision.

- Caseworkers are trained how to use the Sharing Information with the Caregiver Form (CFS 600-4) during their initial caseworker training which is called Foundations. In addition caseworkers are retrained throughout their employment on the importance of the form.

8. The right to be provided, prior to or at the time of placement, available information in writing about the child necessary for the proper care of the child, including medical history, educational history, the child's portion of the client service plan and other relevant background information.

- To ensure that the appropriate information is provided to foster parents, caseworkers utilize the Sharing Information with the Caregiver Form (CFS 600-4). The form is a tool for caseworkers to use to ensure that information regarding the child's medical background, educational history, service plan, case history, visitation arrangements, and other relevant information including behavior and emotional information is shared with the foster parents at the time the child is placed in the home. Prior to sharing the information with foster parents, the foster care supervisor reviews the information with the caseworker to ensure all necessary information is being shared with the foster parents. At the time of placement, the caseworker will review the form with the foster parents and the foster parents will sign the form to verify the information was reviewed. The foster parents will keep a copy of the form with the child's "Expandable File" and another copy will be kept in the case file. In cases when a child is placed on an emergency basis, the caseworker will verbally share the information with the foster parents and will, within 10 days, complete the form and review the form with the foster parents.

- The Foster Care Staff participates in weekly staff meetings. Forms

and procedures are introduced and reviewed with the caseworkers at staff meetings. The foster care supervisors are available to provide guidance on information to be shared and to ensure the Sharing Information with the Caregiver Form (CFS 600-4) is completed.

- Family Service Center has established and discussed the rules and procedures for sharing with the foster parents which are in compliance with HIPPA regulations and DCFS Rule 340, Section 340.40.

- Appropriate release of information is covered during staff meetings or during supervision. Caseworkers are required to include in their case notes any information discussed with the foster parents as a matter of record.

9. The right to be notified of scheduled meetings and staffing concerning the foster child in order to actively participate in the case planning and decision making process regarding the child in their care, including individual service planning meetings, administrative case reviews, interdisciplinary staffings and individual educational planning meetings; the right to be informed of decisions made by the courts or the agency concerning the child; the right to have their input on the plan of services for a child given full consideration in the same manner as information presented by any other professional on the team; and the right to communicate with other professionals who work with the foster child within the context of the team, including therapists, physicians and teachers.

- The Family Service Center caseworker notifies and encourages foster parents to attend and participate in all Family Meetings, Court Hearings, ACR's (Administrative Case Reviews), IEP's (Individual Education Plan), or other relevant staffings. The date, time, and location of the above will be given to foster parents as soon as the

worker is notified. The names of therapists, teachers, and physicians are shared with the caregivers upon assignment, and the foster parents are provided the opportunity to meet with these service providers in order to voice concerns or suggestions for service.

- If the foster parents are unable to attend the above meetings, they are invited to share any concerns, suggestions, or other input with their worker, which the worker will then share at the meeting on the foster parent's behalf.

- Foster parents are immediately notified by their caseworker of any decisions made during one of these meetings. Foster parents have the right to be involved in any case planning for the child in care, as a member of the child welfare team. Foster parents are informed of decisions made by the agency and the courts.

10. The right to be provided, in a timely and consistent manner, with any information a caseworker has regarding the child and the child's family which is pertinent to the care and needs of the child and to making 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.

- When looking for a placement, the caseworker provides foster parents with information regarding the reason for needing placement, visitation schedules, school information, health, behavior, and extracurricular activities of the child in care. Information regarding the visitation plan with siblings and/or biological parents is reviewed with the foster parent and any guidelines that are established for the visits are shared with them.

- At the time of placement, all pertinent information such as family doctor, dentist, other medical information involving treatment or medication, immunizations, and the health passport is discussed with the foster parent and noted in the case notes. The Child Information Placement form is used to ensure all necessary information is reviewed with the foster parents. As the case progresses and more information become available, the caseworker will share such pertinent information with the foster parents. The caseworker will document the additional information shared with the foster parents in a case note.

- Foster parents are encouraged to communicate with biological parent. Foster parents are encouraged to supervise visits and reunification reimbursement is discussed for doing visits and spending time with the biological parents and child.

- Foster parents receive formalized training regarding information disclosure through PRIDE (Parent's Resource for Information, Development and Education). Relative foster parents may have considerably more information about family background than unrelated foster caregivers. Caseworkers disclose information relevant to the care of the child and any additional information that does not violate the confidentiality of the biological family.

ii. The right to reasonable written notice of (I) any change in a child's case plan; (II) the reasons for the change or termination in placement. The notice shall be waived only in case of a court order or when the child is determined to be at imminent risk of harm.

- Prior to termination of a foster placement for reasons of disruption or hotline complaint, all efforts to stabilize the family will be made by utilizing supportive services as necessary. When a change in placement is determined to be necessary, foster parents shall be

provided a fourteen day notification by the Notice of Decision form (CFS 151). This shall include the reasons, attempted remediation, and final determination of placement status including anticipated movement date. Staff also provides the foster parent with the (CFS 151-B) which gives the caregiver, parent and guardian ad-litem information on how to request a Clinical Placement Review if they wish to do so.

- Termination of a placement shall be waived only in cases of a court order or when a child is determined to be at imminent risk of harm. Foster parents have the right to appeal decisions regarding termination of placement. They must do so within forty-five days of the notice of decision.

- Foster parents are allowed to give a fourteen day written notice to the agency, if they are unable to maintain a foster child in their home. The agency will then seek alternate placement for the child. The child's belongings and all property of the child should move with the child to each placement.

12. The right to be notified in a timely and complete manner of all court hearings, including the date and time of the court hearing, the name of the judge, or the hearing officer hearing the case, the location of the court proceedings, 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.

- Caseworkers notify foster parents about upcoming court hearings, including the date, time, name of the judge, location, and court docket number of the case verbally. The notification is documented in a case note and retained in the case record. This notice shall be given two weeks prior to the hearing. The caseworker reviews with the foster parents that Sangamon County allows foster parents in the court room. The caseworker reaffirms with the foster parents their right to

attend court hearings and reminds them of their right to be heard. They are also apprized of their right to appeal decisions and to be heard through a writ of mandamus, which if granted, will allow them to be heard in court. The time and date for subsequent hearings are announced at each hearing, and if foster parents are present, this provides their first notification.

13. The right to be considered as a placement option when a foster child who was formerly placed with the foster parents is to be reentered into foster care when such placement would be consistent with the best interest of the child and other children in the home.

- Case assignments are processed by CAPU (Case Assignment Placement Unit). The investigator that is assigned to the case will review previous placement history.

- Caseworkers consult with children at age twelve about placement. Family Service Center makes every effort to reunite children with foster families with whom they were previously placed, in the event that they are re-entering the foster care system. The caseworker contacts the former caregivers when a child re-enters the system, or makes an attempt to locate other relatives with whom the child is acquainted in the event that the original placement option is not a possibility.

- In cases when the caseworker is uncertain about a child's placement history, DCFS licensing may be contacted, as well as a search of the DCFS database requested.

14. The right to have timely access to the existing appeals process with the child placement agency. The assertion of the right to appeal will be free from acts of harassment and retaliation.

- All Foster parents are provided with a copy of the agency's written

Foster Parent Grievance Procedure. This grievance process is to be used by foster parents only for grieving alleged violations of the Foster Parent Law that are not covered by an already-existing grievance or appeal process. For example, it cannot be used to address issues that are covered by the service appeal process, the appeal process for indicated cases of child abuse/neglect, the process for appealing licensing investigation findings or license revocations, etc. Any perceived retaliation should be immediately reported to the Executive Director *or* call the DCFS Advocacy Office at 1-800-232-3798.

- When a foster parent indicates a desire to grieve a service decision, the caseworker refers them to the written procedure, the immediate foster care supervisor, and the DCFS Service Appeals process.
- No foster parent will be treated with lack of respect, harassed, or retaliated against by any other party when exercising their right to appeal. Any such action by Family Service Center agency staff will result in severe disciplinary action including possible termination.
- If the issue cannot be resolved internally then FSC staff provides information to allow the foster parent to access the DCFS appeal system. The foster parent is provided information in a formal meeting and provided a copy of the service appeals pamphlet.

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

- Foster parents are informed about the Foster Parent Hotline (800-

572-2390) through the Inspector General's office during the PRIDE (Parent's Resource for Information, Development and Education) training as well as during the review of Foster Parent Rights and Responsibilities conducted by the caseworker at the time of initial placement. The brochure for the Office of the Inspector General is provided to the foster parents in the expandable file given to them at the time of placement.

- The DCFS Office of the Inspector General (OIG) can be reached at 800-722-9124. The OIG was created to strengthen and reform the child welfare system. The mandate of the OIG is to investigate misconduct, misfeasance, malfeasance and violations of rules, procedures or laws by DCFS employees, foster parents, service providers, and contractors with the Department (See 20 ILCS 505/35.5 and 35.6).

Family Service Center Foster Parent Law Implementation Plan 2013

Foster Parent Responsibilities:

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

- The foster parent and caseworker responsibility for open communication is clearly stated in the Foster Parent's Rights and Responsibilities document given and explained to all foster parents. It is addressed in the PRIDE training and is specifically identified as

a task in the client service plan. Annual trainings are also provided by the licensing worker at monthly foster parent meetings. Caseworkers include foster parents as integral members of the child welfare team by encouraging their participation in the family meetings, ACRs, court hearings, and other special staffings which may occur. Ongoing communication with the caseworker during visits is needed and is also encouraged.

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

- Confidentiality is covered in PRIDE training, at 6 month monitoring visits and in the licensing process. The importance of confidentiality is stressed to the foster parents during the initial meeting, and is reinforced on an ongoing basis. Specific areas that may or may not be discussed about the case are emphasized. This discussion with the foster parent is documented in a case note, which becomes a part of the permanent record for that family.

Confidentiality is further discussed with the foster parents during at least one of the foster parent meetings that are held nine times a year. Foster parents are asked to sign an agreement of confidentiality to adhere to laws and regulations concerning confidentiality regarding the foster child they have in placement.

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

- Foster parents receive notice regarding Educational Advocacy training while in PRIDE training, and are also notified of such trainings by their licensing worker during the initial licensing visit and every month in the FSC Family Link newsletter. Foster parents are informed that they must take the educational advocacy training

and are informed of the benefits of advocating for the educational rights of the children in their homes. DCFS has an experienced Educational Liaison who works with private agencies. Foster parents are asked to contact their caseworker if they have educational issues to discuss.

- Foster parents are encouraged to attend all family meetings, ACR's (Administrative Case Review), CAYIT (Child and Youth Investment Team) meetings, court hearings and other case conferences regarding their foster child, as they have important and valuable input on the child's needs and behaviors. Foster parents are reminded that, as members of the child welfare team, advocating for their foster child is extremely important.

- If a foster parent does not feel the caseworker has taken proper action or listened to the foster parent's requests or concerns regarding a foster child, the foster parent is encouraged to contact the caseworker's foster care supervisor. It is the caseworker's responsibility to follow-up with foster parents regarding their concerns or requests.

- The Service Appeal Process brochure (CFS 1050-32) will be given to the foster parent at the time of placement and will be kept in the child's expandable file. If the foster parent decides an appeal is necessary, foster parents can refer to the brochure on how to begin the procedure.

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

- During the licensing process, foster parents are informed about this role. The licensing worker discusses with the foster parents how much involvement the foster parents would be willing to have with the biological parents and the responsibility to support reunification.

Foster parents also sign an agreement not to use derogatory statements about the child or the child's family. During regular home visits with the case worker, foster parents will be asked for their observations about any problems or other impressions resulting from children's visits with birth parents and/or siblings. Concerns will be noted in the case notes and will be monitored from visit to visit.

- Quarterly Child and Family Team Meetings provide a chance for the foster parents and birth parents to work together as a team to ensure that the child's needs are met. The caseworker, foster care supervisor, and other appropriate professionals attend the Child and Family Team Meetings. The caseworker and foster care supervisor ensures that both parties treat each other with dignity and respect. Feedback and impressions of foster parents are considered to be a valuable source of information. Foster families are instructed in the importance of their observations through the PRIDE (Parent's Resource for Information, Development and Education) training and it is reinforced through regular contact with their caseworker.

5. The responsibility to recognize the foster parents' 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.

- In cases where Family Service Center is responsible for placing a child in foster care, every effort will be made to assure a good fit, including completion of the Sharing Information with the Caregiver Form (CFS 600-4) and the Matching Tool (CFS 2017). When additional support or training is needed, foster parents will be referred to the appropriate workshops, training, materials, or counseling to provide the needed assistance. Continued interaction with their caseworker during monthly or more frequent visits provides the opportunity to more fully discuss problems or concerns which may

indicate the need for additional supportive services for the family or the child. Referrals for added services are part of the ongoing work with foster families and it is our goal to maintain a stable family situation for children within their foster family home.

- During the licensing process, the licensing worker also discusses strengths and weaknesses with the potential foster parents. The licensing worker discusses what gender, race, behaviors, health issues, and age the foster parents would feel comfortable parenting. The PRIDE training also helps foster parents become aware of what characteristics they would feel comfortable parenting. These strengths and weaknesses are documented in the licensing file and are considered when determining placements.

- Foster parents provide input on training topics they would like to learn more about during foster parent meetings.

6. The responsibility to 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.

- Relative foster parents are encouraged to participate in the Relatives as Parents Network (RAPN). The Springfield area group is hosted by The Parent Place. The group meets every 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of month from 6 pm to 8 pm. Meeting are held at the 1st Baptist Church located at 301 West South Grand Avenue. The Parent Place can be reached at 753-8730 to R.S.V.P to the meetings.

- Internally, we will offer a minimum of *nine* foster parent meetings and one recognition event (to be decided annually) to provide an opportunity for foster parents to meet as a group and have input into services they feel are needed. Training is provided at foster parent meetings on areas identified as needs by foster parents.

- The agency has also established a phone tree with foster parents who come to meetings regularly so they can stay in contact and help one another with any questions or concerns that another foster parent might have experience dealing with already.

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

- Surveys are sent out twice during the year to assess training needs. Foster parents receive notices through the monthly newsletter, regarding ongoing training through the DCFS Statewide Foster and Adoptive Parent Training Program and any additional community trainings that are available. They may register directly by calling the Office of Training at 1-877-800-3393 or at www.dcfstraining.org or contact their licensing worker for assistance in registering for these training opportunities.

- Foster parents are reminded of their responsibility to communicate openly with their licensing worker regarding any training needs, concerns, or other issues which would enhance their ability to provide foster care. Caseworkers link foster parents with other resources for assistance and/or training, and provide one-to-one assistance to foster parents in their home. Foster parents have access to materials on hand at Family Service Center for additional training as well. Foster parents are also given the opportunity to notify our agency of trainings they would like to receive at our foster parent meetings.

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 family if preventative strategies fail and placement disruptions occur.

- The agency uses the Matching Tool (CFS 2017) which matches children to the foster parents identified age, race and abilities to lessen a chance of disruption. The Agency uses de-escalation procedures and crisis prevention, however, if this fails, we provide families with an on-call crisis intervention service available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Foster parents have the responsibility to notify their caseworker of issues with their foster children that may lead to disruption of the placement. We stress the value of communication between the workers and the foster parents.
- Caseworkers make referrals to the SOC (System of Care) program which is operated by the Rutledge Youth Foundation. The program assists families with placement stabilization services or counseling to facilitate maintaining a foster placement.
- In some cases, a family team meeting is convened to develop a plan to enhance support to the foster family in order to stabilize the child's placement. If stabilization attempts fail, we work with the family to maintain the placement until an alternative can be found. Weekly staff meetings are held with the caseworkers and the foster care supervisor during which caseworkers discuss concerns of disruption and seek the advice of the foster care supervisor and other caseworkers on preventing the disruption of a placement.
- Foster parents are asked to identify signs of a child disrupting in placement. Foster parents are trained in PRIDE regarding possible disruption and should utilize training given or notify worker immediately if additional training or resources are needed to help facilitate a placement.
- All foster parents are provided with the CARES (Crisis and Referral Entry Service) telephone number (1-800-345-9049) to access emergency services for wards on a 24 hour basis. To date, feedback from foster parents and staff who have used the CARES line has been

very positive.

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

- Foster parents are given pointers for recognizing signs of their own stress during PRIDE Training, and this is also discussed between the foster parent and caseworker during the initial visit. The caseworker assesses the stress level of the foster parent during their ongoing relationship, and may refer the foster parent for additional services, or work with the foster parent in stress reduction techniques as indicated. Counseling for foster parents is available at any time when it is deemed that the foster child/foster care situation is the stressor, or cause for needed service.

- Respite care is available to all levels of foster care including relative, traditional and specialized care. Foster parents are asked to give at least two weeks' notice when respite is sought to let their caseworker find a respite placement. Respite is provided on a case by case basis.

- Licensed foster parents may access the DCFS Voluntary Hold system if they decide not to accept additional foster children for placement for a period of time. If a foster parent feels they need a break and want to temporarily place their foster home on hold for placements, call and notify your licensing worker.

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

- On-going recognition of the valuable service provided by foster parents is shared by the caseworker, supervisor and licensing worker

with the family. Family Service Center likes to think of our foster parents as members of our family. The agency mails birthday cards to each foster parent and child and tries to celebrate with them the milestones in their families' life. Public recognition of our foster parent's year of service is given each May at our annual foster parent picnic. The agency hosts holiday parties and events for the children and foster parents. All foster parents will be encouraged to attend.

- Foster parents may also be asked to participate in Foster Parent Recruitment events held at our agency. Foster parents may be asked to provide a positive outlook on foster care by sharing their experiences with potential foster parents attending the event. Foster parents are utilized in a recruitment capability and are offered incentives if they refer someone to become a foster parent and if the foster parent continues on to become licensed and are licensed with our agency for six months.

ii. 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.

- Foster Parents receive a very thorough overview of their rights and responsibilities, the role of foster families and other professionals, and their relationship with the child and their own family through the PRIDE training. As mentioned previously, the worker reviews this pertinent section with the foster parents. Foster parents also receive a copy of the approved Foster Parent Implementation Plan so that they are informed of how our agency ensures their rights and responsibilities. Participation by the foster parent in quarterly family meetings and ACR's is highly encouraged. Caseworkers and foster parents jointly attend all meetings, ACR's, etc. Foster parents with experience are encouraged to assist in the training and recruitment of other foster parents.

- Foster parents are also encouraged to participate in foster parent meetings and trainings which are held nine times a year. During these meetings, foster parents are informed of policy changes, staff changes, and are kept informed of agency information. Family Service Center will provide childcare and a light meal at each meeting.

- Foster parents are surveyed twice annually by the client satisfaction survey committee. The results of the survey are written into a report and presented to the board of directors. Management is notified of any concerns or feedback. Foster parents are also made aware of the agencies chain of command to contact regarding concerns.

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 these allegations.

- Foster parents are reminded about their status as a mandated reporter during the initial meeting with the caseworker. The foster parent is also informed about the caseworker's status as mandated reporter. All licensed foster homes are provided with copies of the foster home licensing standards, which also address procedures governing investigations and allegations. These families receive additional training through PRIDE training. Before a license is issued, the foster parents sign a statement that states that they understand what it means to be a mandated reporter, recognize they are mandated reporters, and agree to report child abuse or neglect.

- Foster parents receive annual refresher trainings on their role as

mandated reporters.

- Foster parents are informed that they are to notify the caseworker immediately of any concerns that they may have regarding sexualized behavior. Caseworkers, foster care supervisors and foster parents work together to determine if the child meets criteria for sexually problematic behavior. The caseworker meets with the foster parent to discuss available services and options for the child and family, and to gather information from the foster parent for the completion of the SACY Protection Plan. If the child is determined to meet the SACY (Sexually Aggressive, Children and Youth) criteria, the caseworker meets with the foster parent in order to determine service needs, and to help the foster family make the necessary changes in their home (i.e. bedroom composition, alarms, etc.). These criteria are outlined in the foster home licensing standards (402.9). The Licensing Standards are given to foster parents at the time of application. If you do not have a current copy, please call the Licensing Representative (Brianna Bailey-Hill @ 528-8406) and ask for an updated copy for your expandable file.

- Foster parents are trained regarding any allegations against the foster parent. A foster parent who is under an investigation receives a thorough explanation of the investigation process from DCFS and the licensing worker.

13. The responsibility to know and receive training regarding the purpose of the 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

- As members of the Child Welfare Team, foster parents are encouraged to take an active role in permanency planning through court hearings, Integrated Assessments (IA's) and ACR's. The

importance of this involvement is first explained during PRIDE training and is later encouraged in annual refresher trainings provided by licensing staff.

- The caseworker notifies foster parents of the time, date, and location of upcoming court hearings and ACR's as well as to help them understand what will be happening during the proceedings. Notification of ACR's is provided in writing by DCFS. The child's caseworker will also inform the foster parent of the ACR verbally and possibly also through written correspondence.

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

- All Foster Parents receive a copy of the Family Service Center Foster Parent Grievance Procedure along with a copy of the current Foster Parent Implementation Plan.

- Appeal procedures related to DCFS rules and regulations are reviewed with foster parents during PRIDE training and annually at the foster parent meetings. A copy of the Foster Parent Grievance Procedure brochure is provided by the worker. These brochures are also available through the local DCFS office.

- FSC makes sure that during licensure, during an investigation or during any decision made regarding licensure that their rights are fully explained.

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.

- At the time of placement, the caseworker reviews with the foster parent the documentation to be kept and the importance of documentation to providing good care. Foster parents are to maintain copies of medical records, any physical conditions, telephone numbers of the physician, Medication Logs (CFS 534) for physician prescribed and taken medications, a Behavior Log (CFS 534-1), and a current Health Passport (CFS 650). The names and telephone numbers of persons to be contacted in the case of emergency are also maintained. If the foster parent supervises family visits, they must complete in full a DCFS Visiting Record (CFS 502).

- The caseworker reviews these requirements with the foster parent and provides them with an expandable file in which to organize and maintain their records in an orderly manner. Foster home licensing rule (402.26) in the licensing standards lists what records must be maintained.

- Maintaining records will be a topic at one of the foster parent trainings in order to remind and train the foster parents on this matter.

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

- Foster parents, in cooperation with the caseworker, will complete a Sharing Information with the Caregiver Form (CFS 600-4). This includes information about the child, such as allergies, behaviors, service providers, and special areas of importance to the child. This form is then given to the subsequent caregiver at the time of the child's placement in the home. In addition, the child's expandable file is passed along to the subsequent caregiver, which contains notes from the previous caregiver regarding the child. The subsequent

caregiver is encouraged to contact the caseworker for any unclear or missing information on the child, or may contact the prior caregiver, with their permission.

- If a child returns home to a parent, a child and family team meeting is convened to discuss all pertinent information that the parent might need to know to have their child return home.

- The responsibility of the foster parent to provide information to the child welfare team will be covered in annual trainings held during foster parent meetings.

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.

- Foster parents have the responsibility to inform their caseworker of weaknesses or barriers that may impede their ability to provide appropriate care and consideration of a foster child's cultural differences. These issues are covered in PRIDE training, and specific information such as religious service or affiliation, holidays, celebrations, or personal care issues will be addressed individually with the foster parent by the caseworker.

- Families also receive support, assistance, and information regarding cultural sensitivity through the Relatives as Parents Network. Caseworkers are also invited to attend this workshop. Family Service Center will offer training on cultural diversity and sensitivity as well. DCFS offers a trans-cultural parenting training and Family Service Center has acquired several multicultural books to help explain

heritage and culture. Family Service Center also encourages foster parents to train other foster parents and staff on skin care, hair, foods and traditions that are important to each culture.

