

## **AGREEMENT BETWEEN FOSTER PARENTS AND PLACEMENT AGENCY**

Foster parents and the agency supervising a child in foster care share responsibility for the care of that child and for meeting the standards and carrying out the policies set forth by the Ohio Department of Human Services. In order to do this; both foster parents and the agency must clearly understand not only what is expected of them, but also what they may expect of one another.

### **THE FOSTER PARENTS MAY EXPECT THE AGENCY TO:**

1. Provide a clear explanation of the respective roles of the agency, the foster parents, and birth parents.
2. Provide a clear explanation of the role of the licensing worker as contrasted with the Family Caseworker and Foster Caseworker.
3. Provide any guidelines and policy materials utilized by the agency for its staff that may help foster parents better understand the foster care program.
4. Help the foster parents make an informed decision before placement as to the suitability of their home for the particular child by:
  - Providing all available information about the child and his/her family that is pertinent to the foster parents' effectiveness in carrying out their role.
  - Describing the behavior patterns, problems, and needs of the child.
  - Describing the plan for the child, including the length of time he/she is likely to need placement and goals to be accomplished.
  - Describing what may be expected of the foster parents regarding the child's visiting program with his/her family.
  - Assuring the foster parents that their refusal to take a particular child will not jeopardize either the continuance of their license or the consideration of their home for other children.
5. Assure that every child has a physical examination prior to placement. Assist the foster parent with making arrangements for all medical, dental, and psychological appointments.
6. Provide any documentation on child's medical and dental needs with clear instructions as to what is expected of the foster parents, including what to do in an emergency and how billings are to be handled. Provide a copy of the child's medical passport, which includes such information as birth history, childhood diseases, inoculations and immunizations, significant illnesses, surgery, allergic reactions.

7. Arrange for foster care payment for children. This reimbursement may include:
  - Reimbursement for any special, exceptional and intensive needs of the child, as approved by Lucas County Children Services.
  - Arrange for the provision of payment for all medical, dental and optical expenses.
  - Provide initial and supplemental clothing vouchers based upon the needs of the child.
8. Arrange for the child to have pre-placement visits in the foster home prior to the initial placement and prior to any change of placement except when the placement is an emergency placement.
9. Review case plan for the child at regular intervals with the foster parents. The family caseworker and the foster care caseworker will keep the foster family informed of the progress and/or change in the case plan.
10. Meet face to face with the foster parent on a regularly scheduled basis. The foster care caseworker will meet with the foster parent not less than monthly and more often as deemed necessary.
11. The family caseworker will visit the child in the foster home during the first week of placement and a second time during the first month of placement. Thereafter, the family caseworker will visit the foster child in the foster home at least once every three months. Family caseworker will meet with the child at least monthly.
12. Inform the foster parent of significant changes in the child's family that would affect the child, as well as the case plan for the child.
13. Consult with the foster parent prior to setting up the plan for the child to visit with his/her birth family or other appointments. Provide support to the foster parent to ensure that the goals of placement are achieved. Foster worker will be supportive of foster family and act as an advocate for the foster family when appropriate.
14. Assist the foster parent in enrolling the child in school by providing the foster family with the necessary documentation including a letter from the agency notifying the school district of custody and placement of the child.
15. Assist the foster parent in ensuring that the rights of children in foster care are protected.
16. Invite the foster parent to each administrative review and appropriate resource staffing.
17. Provide foster parent with up-to-date State training rules and Foster Care Manual. Inform foster parents of on-going educational opportunities through quarterly training.
18. Provide binders and materials to foster parents for use in preparing life-books.
19. Provide the child's special needs through utilization of community resources, such as physiological, psychiatric, special education, day care and vocational training services.

20. Accept the right of the foster parents to refuse to continue to care for a child whose needs they cannot meet and remove the child from the home within the minimum 14-day termination period.
21. Provide for an on-going evaluation of the foster home, with input from the foster parents, both during the placement period as well as after a child leaves.
22. Provide opportunities, written or verbal, for evaluation of agency practices based upon foster parents' own experiences.

### **THE AGENCY CAN EXPECT OF FOSTER PARENTS:**

1. Be responsible to the Lucas County Children Services for the child's care, health, mental and emotional well being, education and training during the time that the child remains in the foster parent's home.
2. Provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter for the child. Treat foster child as a member of the family.
3. Notify Lucas County Children Services immediately whenever there is a medical/dental emergency, serious illness, or accident. It is understood that the foster parent should use good judgement in calling a doctor first in case of emergency. Agency representatives are available to the foster parent twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week to be of assistance **(419-213-3200 after hours)**.
4. Schedule a physical examination within thirty (30) days of the initial placement and an annual re-examination by a licensed physician, unless a licensed physician recommends more frequent examinations.
5. Schedule dental and optical examinations. Dental exams must be within thirty (30) days of initial placement and as prescribed by the dentist thereafter.
6. Comply with physician's instructions and document this in the child's life-book. In addition, the foster parent will mail back to the agency the completed forms for Emergency Medical/Dental Care and Routine Medical/Dental Care.
7. Assume the responsibility for arranging transportation for the child to medical, dental and other needed routine appointments.
8. Support the pre-placement visit plan for the child. Pre-placement visits will occur prior to the initial placement and during any changes of placement, except when the placement is an emergency placement.
9. Respect the confidentiality of information that has been given concerning the child.
10. Report to the foster care caseworker any change in address, telephone number, and members of household or any other significant change in the foster family.

11. Obtain agreement of the family caseworker before permitting the child to stay overnight in another home if more than two days (i.e. camp, hospitalization.)
12. Obtain permission from the family caseworker when taking the child out of state. In addition, the foster parent will notify the foster care caseworker regarding vacation plans and, if necessary, the foster care caseworker will arrange substitute care arrangements. Obtain prior approval of the foster care caseworker when intending to use substitute care for more than eight hours a week.
13. Abide by the Lucas County Children Services policy and state rules regarding discipline as specified. **NO corporal punishment.**
14. Inform the foster care caseworker and family caseworker about any significant changes in the child's behavior or any events or situations that might affect the child.
15. Work with the child and foster care caseworker if requesting removal of the child. Foster parents agree to give at least fourteen days notice if requesting removal of the child and to continue to work constructively with the child and caseworkers until other placement plans can be made.
16. Send all clothing that the child can still wear, personal articles belonging to the child, medical card and life-book materials upon removal from the foster home.
17. Not accept any other child for any type of care into the foster home or conduct any business out of the foster home without the knowledge or consent of the agency.
18. Cooperate with family caseworker in making plans that best serve the needs of the child using Family Centered Neighborhood Based concepts including acceptance of the child's primary relationship with birth parents and the arrangement made for parental visiting.
19. Gather and collect pictures, mementos, etc. for the child's life-book.
20. Enroll the child in a school that is chartered by the Department of Education.
21. Follow any special dietary instruction for a child as recommended by a physician.
22. Ensure that the rights of children in foster care are protected. This includes the child's right to mail without censorship, private conversations, reasonable access to the telephone, and the ability to participate or not participate in religious activities.
23. Recognize the need for representatives of the licensing agency to visit their home for the purpose of foster care planning, placement and supervision.
24. Accept children only through the licensing agency or by a plan approved by the supervising agency.
25. Acknowledge the meaning of separation for a child and the difficult task of adjusting to a strange environment.
26. Make every effort to accept certain behaviors of the child as manifestations of separation and grieving.

27. Recognize that the supervising agency has the responsibility for making and carrying out the case plan for the child, which may include but not be restricted to adoption, transfer to another home, or return to parents or other relatives.
28. Maintain continuous contact, homevisits, phone calls, with the supervising agency regarding matters of significance to the adjustment and welfare of the child as well as to report behavior, problematic or otherwise, which would be helpful in understanding the child. Be available for home visits each month (or more if deemed necessary by foster worker).
29. Will obtain 20 hours of training per person per year.

We understand the policies and practices and our respective roles, and we agree to carry out our responsibilities.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervising Agency

\_\_\_\_\_  
Foster Applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Social Worker

\_\_\_\_\_  
Foster Applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Agency Administrator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date