

## LCCS POLICY 730 Foster Home Reimbursement

<b>Original Issue Date:</b>	7/24/1989
<b>Revision Dates:</b>	2/11/1999, 2/19/2002
<b>Revision Number:</b>	2
<b>Current Effective Date:</b>	2/11/1999, 2/19/2002
<b>Obsolete/Combined Date:</b>	2/11/1999
<b>Reason for Obsoleting/Combining:</b>	Combined policies 731 and 730 and part of 750.
<b>See new Policy #:</b>	

<b>Scope:</b>	All Service Delivery Personnel, Clerical Supervisor, Foster Parents, Board and Care Payable Clerk.
<b>Responsibility:</b>	Manager of Placement Department
<b>Purpose:</b>	To define when Lucas County Children Services (LCCS) will reimburse foster parents.
<b>Legal Cite:</b>	O.R.C. §§ 5103.03, 5153.16; O.A.C. 5101:2-5-13(A)(6) and (A) (12a &b).

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### **POLICY STATEMENT**

Foster parents will receive a daily stipend for the care of children in their home.

In addition, foster parents will be reimbursed under certain situations when the foster child is temporarily away from the foster home. The situations may include, but not be limited to, children in the hospital or those who have run away. In addition, foster care payment may continue if a foster family is on vacation and the foster family has negotiated an appropriate substitute care arrangement.

Foster parents can receive reimbursement for travel expenses.

LCCS will not reimburse for normal wear and tear on property or for damages and/or loss as a result of action by a foster child.

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### **PROCEDURE - including required timeframes and documentation**

#### **Reimbursement for Daily Care of Foster Children**

- Foster parents receive a per diem payment for the children placed in the foster home. Payment begins the first day of placement.
- The Out-of-Home Care Caseworker notifies the Board and Care Payable Clerk of the daily stipend completing the Notification of Placement Change form.

- Approval for higher per diems is evaluated by the foster family's Caseworker after reviewing documentation of the child's special needs and the expertise and training of the caregiver.
- The Foster Care Supervisor and Placement Coordinator must approve any recommendation for a higher rate because of special needs.
- Once approved, the Clerical Supervisor in the Placement Department will notify the Board and Care Payable Clerk, in writing, of the increase.
- All approved increases for special needs will be reviewed every six months (at a minimum).
- Rate increases can be backdated a maximum of three months, allowing the Foster Care Caseworker to gather the necessary documentation and the foster parent to complete the required training.

Information regarding per diem rates is available through the Placement Department.

### **Payment for Children Temporarily Away From the Foster Home**

- When a child is placed in the hospital, the foster family will be reimbursed for up to five days.
- The Family Caseworker needs to update the family profile to show the hospitalization and a placement interruption.
- There are occasions where a child may be frequently hospitalized and/or for a longer period than five days and it is appropriate to continue the foster care payment.
- Under such circumstances, the appropriate Foster Care Supervisor will notify the Board and Care Payable Clerk in writing that the foster care payment is to continue and for what period of time.
- When a child is a runaway from a foster home, the foster care payment will continue for up to five days.
- The Family Caseworker needs to update the family profile to show the runaway status and a placement interruption.
- There are occasions where it may be necessary to continue the payment for longer than five days in order to hold the placement for the child.
- Under such circumstances, the appropriate Supervisor of Foster Care will notify the Board and Care Payable Clerk in writing that the foster care payment is to continue and specify the period of time.

Additional circumstances which might warrant continuing the foster care payment beyond five days include a child who is hospitalized, incarcerated or in drug treatment. In these situations, the foster parent must agree to accept the child back into their home, visit with the child while out of the home and participate in treatment.

- When foster parents are away on vacation and the foster child does not accompany the foster parents, the foster family is encouraged to make their own substitute care arrangements with relatives and/or friends who are known to the child. Such arrangements are best for the foster child, as he/she will be cared for by a familiar person. When this occurs, the foster care payment will continue in order for the foster family to pay for the substitute care arrangement.

- The Foster Care Caseworker must notify the Family Caseworker of the substitute care arrangement by completing the Change of Placement Notification form.
- The family profile should be changed to indicate the name and address of the person caring for the child.
- This will be shown as a placement interruption, and the length of time the person will be caring for the child will be indicated on the family profile.
- When foster parents are away on vacation and the foster child is temporarily moved to another foster home, the family profile should be changed and the foster family providing temporary care should be reimbursed.
- This type of placement change should reflect a placement interruption, not a change of placement.
- The Placement Caseworker must notify the Family Caseworker of these substitute care arrangements by completing the Notification of Placement Change form and submitting this form to the Supervisor of the Placement Unit.
- It is important to note on the family profile that this is a placement interruption and not a change of placement for the child.

### **LCCS does not Reimbursement for Damages and/or Loss in the Foster Home**

All foster parents are strongly encouraged to carry homeowners'/renters' insurance and discuss with their insurance agent that they will have foster children living with them. The foster parents are encouraged to review the potential need for higher liability in case of accidents, injury, and intentional or unintentional damage by foster children.

### **Legal Issues**

The agency does not provide legal representation, legal fees, counseling or legal advocacy for foster caregivers for matters directly related to the proper performance of their roles.

Foster parents are responsible to obtain their own legal counsel as it would be a conflict of interest for LCCS to provide them with legal counsel.

### **Mileage/Travel Reimbursement for Foster Parents**

All requests for mileage and other travel related expenses must be submitted for approval to the appropriate Foster Care Worker on monthly basis.

The Foster Care Supervisor will co-sign the approval. In no case will reimbursement be approved for periods in excess of two months.

Reimbursement will be made for:

- All travel related to medical, dental and psychological needs of the children.
- Transportation to child's school will be reimbursed unless there is a more economical system available (e.g., school bus or TARTA).
- School related/social activities that will help maintain child's culture.
- Mileage for training that is counted toward recertification but not reimbursed through ODJFS.
- All trips over 50 miles one-way must have prior approval.

Foster homes are eligible to receive vouchers for children (e.g., clothing, and holiday gifts). The amount of the voucher is governed by LCCS Policy #111.

Children placed in adoptive homes may be eligible for an adoptive subsidy (see LCCS Policy #240).

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## **CASE PRACTICE GUIDES**

Foster Care Continuum

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## **RELATED POLICIES and FORMS**

LCCS Policy 111	(Issuance of Vouchers or Checks for Caregivers Needs)
LCCS Policy 240	(Adoption Assistance and Adoptive Subsidy Program)
LCCS Policy 750	(Foster and Adoptive Home Recruitment)
LCCS Policy 803	(Legal Risk Placement)
LCCS Form #8766	(Notification of Placement Change)