

More Information on the Steps and Process of Foster Home Licensing?

Who are the children in foster care?

In North Carolina, thousands of children enter foster care every year. Children of all ages, races and ethnicities needing families. We especially need families for teens and sibling groups.

What is Foster Care?

Foster care is a temporary living arrangement for children who've been abused or neglected or for children whose parents have died, are sick, or can't take care of them for other reasons. The families of these children often face issues like illness, alcohol or drug addiction, or homelessness.

* Therapeutic foster care –additional training/supervision (Not offered at DSS)

Some children in foster care have more behavioral or mental health needs. They receive a higher level of care, called therapeutic foster care. These children frequently require therapy and other mental health supports.

We recruit, train and support foster families to care for children while their parents work with social workers and other professionals to resolve their family issues. Foster parents get modest financial support every month to help them meet the children's needs:

0-5 year	\$475.00
6-12 years	\$581.00
13-Over	\$634.00

Relatives of children in foster care can be foster parents.

The Goals:

For most children in foster care the goal is to reunify them with their birth families. One of the most important jobs for foster families is to help children stay connected to their families. They work with social workers

and the birth family so that children can go home as quickly as possible. In North Carolina we call this shared parenting.

If children aren't able to return home and do become eligible for adoption, foster parents are sometimes considered as adoptive parents.

How to Foster and Adopt a Child

Eligibility

Children in foster care need a safe, stable family that meets their needs. Because of this, foster parents have to meet certain requirements. You might be surprised what some of those requirements are.

Agency Requirements

Age: Applicants must be at least 21 years of age to be considered for licensure

Marital Status: Applicant may be single, married, widowed or divorced

Education: Applicant must have a high school diploma or show the ability to read and write

Income: Applicant must have adequate income to financially support their own family without relying on the foster child's monthly board payment (which is designed to cover the essentials of room and board for the foster child). *You cannot include **Unemployment** or **Financial Aid** as monthly income *you will be asked to verify income*

Background Checks: A criminal records check and Department of Corrections check is completed on each household member over the age of 17 years of age and biannually thereafter. Anyone over the age of seventeen years old must be fingerprinted.

Housing for Child/Children: Each foster child must have their own bed and storage space for clothing. The room cannot be a dual purpose room. A foster home cannot have more than five children in residence which includes a foster parent's own children, and daycare children and the foster children.

Transportation and Feasible work Schedule: Foster Parent must have and maintain reliable transportation as attendance to and from various appointments is an essential task to meet the needs of a foster child. An applicant's work schedule needs to have some flexibility in order to allow the foster parent to effectively meet the foster child's needs.

Working Home Phone: Must have one phone *Other than a cell phone – that stays in the home at all times.

Responsible Individual Check (RIL): Must not have abused/neglected a child

Reference: References are required who can attest to moral character and parenting skills of each applicant. Must provide excellent references

Medical Clearance: Must be certified by Dr. to be physically and mentally able to provide foster care.

Steps towards becoming a licensed foster parent

Everyone who becomes a foster parent in North Carolina has a series of steps they need to take.

- Inquire about becoming a foster parent
- Orientation
- Background Check
- Training (30 Hour MAPP Training)
- Fingerprints
- At least 3 references (Names including employers)
- Fire Inspection of the home
- Environmental Inspection of the home, looking at safety issues
- Family interviews w/several home and office visits Mutual Home Assessment (MHA)
- Licensing Application
- Licensing Decision
- CPR, First Aid, Universal Precautions Training

*License must be renewed every two years
Each Applicant Must have 20 hours of training every two years.*

Training

All foster parents must have at least 30 hours of training before they are licensed. Applicants who live in other counties are welcome to attend our class, with approval from our licensing worker and the county of their residence. The applicant must complete the licensing process through the county in which they reside. If space becomes limited, Beaufort county residence will have first opportunity for seating. In two-parent families, both parents must go through training

Pre-Service training challenges you to grow and develop so that you can parent children who have been neglected and abused. While you may be a parent already, parenting in foster care is very different. Pre-Service helps you and the agency decide whether foster parenting is right for you and your family. If you and your agency agree fostering is right for you, the agency will submit the information it's collected to the state licensing authority. The state licensing authority makes the final decision about whether to license families for foster care. Time frames for completing the entire licensing process differ.