

FOSTER PARENT LAW IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2015



Family Service Center

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Foster Parent Law Implementation Plan

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2015 Annual Report

1. Suggestions for improvement in your previous report and a description of way improvement was made in your current plan.

There were several suggestions made to improve upon last year's Foster Parent Law Implementation Plan. First, the formatting of the Plan was changed in order to provide more clear and concise information was provided. It was suggested that co-training be clearly addressed, which was done in narrative #2. The section concerning respite care in narrative # 4 was revised to clarify that respite care can be requested for any reason, not just in the case of an emergency. In narrative # 6, time frames for investigations were clarified and the process was described in a clearer manner. Narrative # 10 was revised to discuss the Quality Assurance committee that was added at the agency and how this assists with ensuring caseworker accountability. In addition, a section was added to narrative # 10 stating that caseworkers will discuss accountability in regularly scheduled supervision with the foster care supervisor. In narrative # 11, timeframes and procedures in the appeal process were clearly stated. Narrative # 19(4) was revised to include the importance of respect of foster children and their families. A section was added stating that foster parents are to sign agreements that they will not use derogatory language towards foster children or their families, and that foster parents are to support re-unification when that is the goal. In narrative # 20(5), the concept of mutual assessment is discussed, stating that foster parents and foster care staff are to work together to determine a caregiver's strengths and training needs. Foster care staff is to make every effort to assist the foster parent find resources to make strengthen their skills. Narrative #23(8) was changed to clarify that the entire child welfare team, not just the foster parent, is responsible for observing, monitoring, and identifying disruption risks.

2. Clear description of the sections of the 2014 plan that were successfully implemented.

Family Service Center makes every effort to implement all sections of the Foster Parent Law Implementation Plan. In 2014, foster care staff and foster parents made a concerted effort to work more closely as a team to advocate for the best interest of the foster child. As addressed in many areas of the plan, foster care staff has placed an emphasis on encouragement of foster parent participation. In turn, foster parents are becoming more actively involved in permanency planning for the child.

In addition, Family Service Center staff has emphasized foster parent training in 2014. Caseworkers and licensing staff have been vigilant about discussing training topics that foster parents need, and making sure that each foster parent has access to training material that will directly improve their skills as a caregiver. The licensing department is making special efforts to ensure that foster parents are made aware of all available training opportunities, both in person or electronically.

3. Clear descriptions of the sections of your 2014 plan that were the most challenging to implement and a description of how these challenges were addressed in your new plan.

Like many agencies, Family Service Center has high staff turnover at time. This lack of continuity sometimes leads to struggles in communicating effectively with foster families. Efforts are being made to improve this situation, including an increased effort to the foster family and the foster by the foster

care supervisor and licensing staff when a change of caseworker takes place. Caseworkers are trained on the difficulties that may be experienced when a caseworker is changed, and are monitored by the foster care supervisor to ensure that the change is successful.

4. Clear descriptions of the sections of your 2014 plan that were not implemented at all. Why not? When will these sections be implemented? If never, please state the reasons why and change the plan accordingly.

No section of the 2014 plan was not implemented at all.

5. A narrative describing the way foster parents and direct service staff are involved in plan development.

All foster parents licensed by Family Service Center are invited to three meetings every year for the purpose of developing the plan. This year, a meeting was held in February to review the newly approved plan. In August and September, meetings were held to give foster parents an opportunity to help make suggestions for changes to the plan. These meetings are announced in the monthly foster parent newsletter, which is distributed to all foster parents. If a foster parent is unable to attend these meetings, they can access the plan through FSC's website or requesting it from the licensing department. They can then make suggestions for improvements directly to the licensing staff.

Family Service Center views its staff members as valuable resources for information, as they work most directly with foster parents and children. When the plan is approved, it is distributed to Family Service Center staff for review. A training is held on the plan at a foster care staff meeting and the plan is discussed in detail. Staff is asked to provide licensing staff with any suggested improvements for the plan. The staff is again reminded in September to review the plan and to make suggestions.

6. A narrative that describes the way that your staff is trained on the Implementation Plan.

When the new plan is approved, it is distributed to staff to review. At a subsequent foster care staff meeting, the plan is discussed with staff with special emphasis on changes made to last year's plan. At this time, staff members can provide feedback or ask questions concerning the plan. Sections of the plan are discussed regularly at foster care staff meetings to provide training for caseworkers.

When a new staff member is hired by Family Service Center, he/she is required to read and have an understanding of the plan as part of their new hire orientation material. The staff member will then review the plan with the foster care supervisor and/or licensing coordinator before beginning service delivery.

7. A narrative that describes how the plan impacts your daily service delivery.

The Foster Parent Law Implementation Plan serves as a guide to Family Service Center staff and foster parents on successful service delivery and ensuring that all foster parents rights and responsibilities are clearly communicated and addressed. It also serves as a tool to hold Family Service Center staff accountable when providing for the well-being of all members of the child welfare team.

8. A description of the way(s) your plan is made available to foster parents. How and when are foster parents able to obtain copies of your implementation plan?

The Foster Parent Law Implementation Plan is made available to foster parents yearly upon its approval. There are several ways that foster parents can obtain copies of the plan. The plan is distributed to foster parents through the agency's foster parent e-mail list. If a foster parent does not have e-mail access, they can contact the licensing department to receive a copy of the plan in person or by mail. The implementation is always available for pick-up at monthly foster parent meetings. In addition, the plan is posted on the Family Service Center website at www.service2families.com.

9. Copies of all Foster Parent Law grievances filed during the calendar year, with all identifying information redacted.

There were no Foster Parent Law grievances filed during the 2014 calendar year.

10. A description of foster parent involvement in the initial development or annual review of your plan-related Grievance Procedure and how it has been distributed to the foster parents you supervise.

Foster parents receive a copy of the Grievance Procedure as an attachment to the implementation plan. The procedure is reviewed and developed during meetings at which the implementation plan are discussed.

Family Service Center

Foster Parent Law Implementation Plan 2015

Foster Parent Rights:

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

Foster parents are an important component of Family Service Center's child welfare team and are treated as such. Foster parents possess an intimate knowledge of the children in their care and provide insight on a child's strengths and needs that other may not identify. FSC staff places great importance on foster parents being involved in Child and Family Team Meetings (CFTM), Administrative Case Reviews (ACR), Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meetings, clinical staffing, court dates, and any other meetings that are critical to planning for the needs and best interests of the children in their care. In order to ensure that foster parents are able to attend, letters, phone calls, and/or notification at home visits will be utilized to inform foster parents about such meetings in a timely manner. Whenever possible, meetings will be scheduled to coordinate with the foster parents' schedule. If foster parents are unable to attend these meetings, FSC staff will make necessary accommodations for the foster parents to be present by phone, or provide documentation of the meeting's discussion and allow foster parents to offer input.

When a foster parent is struggling with a foster child in their home, FSC will implement any possible interventions to maintain the placement. FSC employs behavioral specialists who are available 24 hours per day for crisis situations. Along with the case worker, the behavioral specialist can provide crisis management to deflect hospitalization, or may simply provide the foster parents with a few hours of respite. The behavioral specialists are equipped with training to provide parenting suggestions and teach alternative parenting approaches that are geared towards a difficult child.

At bi-annual monitoring visits, licensing staff solicits feedback from foster parents concerning their experience as a member of the child and family team. This is also addressed monthly at foster parent meetings, which is led by licensing staff. Caseworkers, licensing staff, and the director of social services are available by phone, e-mail, or in person contact to schedule a meeting about any concerns that a foster parent might have. If the foster parent does not feel that their needs were addressed after this contact is made, they may request a meeting with the executive director to further address the situation.

FSC staff is available to the foster parent 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. During regular office hours, caseworkers, supervisors, and licensing staff can be reached at (217) 528-8406. If there is an emergency after hours, the on-call worker is available using the assigned on-call phone number at (217) 685-8119. This phone will always be answered and is staffed by casework staff on a rotating basis.

In order to show foster parents that FSC appreciates their commitment to the children in their care, FSC holds various appreciation events for foster parents, including a foster parent appreciation picnic, a Halloween party, and a Christmas party. Surveys are sent out to foster parents in May and October each year inquire about components of the program that have been successful, and changes the agency should implement to ensure that foster parents are being treated with dignity and respect as

professional members of the child welfare team. A monthly newsletter, "The Family Link", is sent out to foster parents electronically as a means of communication to inform foster parents of upcoming activities for foster children and training opportunities for foster parents. Foster parents are always welcome to make suggestions about items to include in the newsletter, or to make their own contributions to the newsletter in the form of an article or an announcement.

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

Foster parents licensed by the Family Service Center attend PRIDE (Parent's Resource for Information, Development, and Education) training, a 27-hour training for traditional foster parents, which is hosted by the Department of Children and Family Services. This curriculum must be completed before a traditional foster parent is licensed. Foster parents who provide relative care are to complete two training sessions. These can be completed either in the classroom or through videos provided by licensing staff that can be watched in their home. In addition, foster parents are encouraged to complete an educational advocacy training, which is a six-hour course to provide information concerning the educational rights of foster children. This training is a requirement for the renewal of a foster parent license.

For every four year term, foster parents are required to complete sixteen hours of approved training credits. A foster parent who accepts specialized foster children must complete an additional twelve hours of training yearly. Specialized training is individualized to the foster parent and completed with FSC's clinical team. Six of the twelve hours are to be general training on specialized care, while the remaining six hours will be specific to the specialized child in their care. There are several training options that foster parents can utilize to accumulate these required training hours, including training offered through the DCFS Office of Training, the DCFS Lending Library, monthly foster parent meetings/trainings held by FSC licensing staff, and other community-based trainings that are approved by DCFS.

Family Service Center holds monthly foster parent meetings, at which training are led by FSC licensing staff. These meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the month and the training topics are determined by foster parent requests and suggestions made by casework and clinical staff members. A training calendar is developed yearly at the July foster parent meeting with the input of foster parents. Foster parents typically receive two hours of training credit for attending these meetings. At any time, foster parents can request training in specific areas to meet their training needs and/or the needs of the children in their care. Licensing staff will assist foster parents with finding training material that will meet these needs. When appropriate, FSC utilizes co-training, in which, alongside agency staff, an experienced foster parent works with newly licensed foster parents in specific matters relating to the foster parents' needs.

Foster parents are also able to complete online modules for training credit and keep track of their training hours by utilizing the Virtual Training Center (VTC). This can be accessed on the internet at www.dcfstraining.org . For assistance in registering with the Virtual Training Center, contact licensing staff or the DCFS office of training at (877) 800-3393. Foster parents are also able to receive credit by borrowing books and videos from the DCFS Lending Library, which can be accessed at <http://www.state.il.us/DCFS/docs/lendinglibrary.pdf> or by contacting licensing staff. FSC also maintains an extensive library of books, workbooks, audio books, and video for use by foster parents. When using

either library for training credit, complete a Foster Parent Training Credit Approval Form (CFS 574), which are provided by licensing staff and sent to the DCFS Office of Training for processing.

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 care.

Family Service Center staff can be reached 24-hours per day, 365 days per year. Staff members are available in the office Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM at (217) 528-8406. In addition, every family that FSC serves has access to foster care staff after office hours through the on-call line at (217) 685-8119. This line is staffed 24-hours per day, 7 days per week by casework staff on a rotating basis. The on-call line is used for after-hours emergency calls only.

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 if the child is in need of SASS (Screening, Assessment, and Support Services) screening. SASS will come to the home and screen the child to determine if there is a need for psychiatric hospitalization. A child who is in specialized foster care may have a behavioral specialist assigned. The behavioral specialist may also be available to respond to 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.

Monthly board payments are mailed to licensed foster parents on the 25th day of each month. If a holiday falls on the 25th of the month, payment is then 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 care services is always a month behind. For example, if a child is placed in a home on September 15th, payment will not be received until October 25th. The payment received on October 25th would be for services provided from September 15th through September 30th. November's payment would be for the entire month of October. Foster parents have the option of receiving payment by direct deposit. This will ensure that foster parents receive payment in a timely and convenient manner.

If a licensed caregiver has not received their payment within a week after the 25th of the month, call the Family Service Center bookkeeper at (217) 528-8406. If the provider is unlicensed, contact the DCFS payment hotline Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM through 11:00 AM at (800) 525-0499. Unlicensed providers are also asked to notify the caseworker or supervisor if assistance is needed in resolving the delay of their board payment.

	AGE	MONTHLY PAYMENT
TRADITIONAL & LICENSED RELATIVE	0 to 11 months	\$418.00
	1 to 4 years	\$426.00
	5 to 8 years	\$445.00
	9 to 11 years	\$472.00
	12+ years	\$511.00

	AGE	MONTHLY PAYMENT
SPECIALIZED	All Ages	31 Days In the Month
		\$1,363.38
		30 Days In the Month
		1,319.38

CLOTHING ALLOWANCE- \$77.00 per month

ALLOWANCE- \$45.00 per month

Respite care is also provided by Family Service Center on a case-by-case basis. When respite is needed, please notify the caseworker as soon as is possible. In non-emergency situations, caregivers are asked to request respite at least two weeks in advance. Respite care can be used for any reason, whether it be due to an emergency or to simply give caretakers a break. Foster parents who provide respite receive payment by completing a verification letter stating when the respite occurred. FSC pays foster parents \$15 per child per day for traditional foster children and \$30 per child per day for specialized foster children. The number of days a child was in respite care is determined by overnights spent in the respite home. For example, if a caregiver provides respite care for a specialized child starting on Friday at 4:00 PM and ending on Sunday at 4:00 PM, the respite provider would receive \$60, which is payment for the Friday and Saturday evenings that the child slept in the home.

5. The right to be provided clear, written understanding of a placement agency's plan concerning the placement of a child in the foster parent's home.

Foster parents are encouraged to participate in the development of the service plan for the children placed in their home, as they often have a unique perspective concerning the child's strengths and needs that is valuable in the plan's contents. The caseworker will meet with the foster parent prior to the creation of an initial service plan, and any subsequent plans, in order to discuss specific service needs, areas that need to be addressed in the service plan or at case review, and suggestions for changes and improvements to the existing plan. After a service plan is finalized, the foster parent will receive a copy of the child's tasks, visitation plan, and child summary sections to review. When service plans, visitation plans, or permanency goals change, the caseworker will inform the foster parent in a timely manner and will provide the foster parent with written documentation of that change. Foster parents are consulted concerning the parent/child visitation plan, and may offer input into the best interest of the child with in regards to the visitation schedule. FSC employs case aides to supervise visits

and provide transportation for these visits. If a foster parent has concerns regarding the scheduling and activities during the visits, the caseworker should be notified to determine if changes should be made.

As a member of the child and family team, foster parents are strongly encouraged to attend ACRs (Administrative Case Reviews), at which the child's service plan is reviewed with DCFS. The caseworker must inform the foster parent at least 14 days in advance of an ACR to give the foster parent time to plan to be in attendance. If unable to attend the ACR, the foster parent can participate in the ACR by phone. If the foster parent is unable to attend in person or by phone, the caseworker will provide information on what was discussed at the ACR.

- 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 parents' 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 plan specifically explained and tied to the licensing standards violated.**

When a licensing complaint is received, the licensing worker will immediately begin a licensing investigation. An unannounced visit will be made within two business days of the complaint to discuss the complaint with the caregiver. At this time, the foster parent will be informed of their right to have a person of their choosing present during the investigation. That person will be allowed four hours to arrive at the home. The licensing worker will complete the licensing investigation within thirty days of receipt of the complaint, unless extenuating circumstances prevent its timely completion. If an extension of this timeline is necessary, the foster parent will be informed of this by licensing staff.

If the allegation involves a hotline report, a concurrent investigation completed by DCFS will take place. A DCFS Children Protection Service Investigator and Family Service Center licensing staff will investigate the allegations together and prepare separate reports. It is Family Service Center's policy to remove children from the foster parents' home while the investigation is taking place and foster children cannot have contact with the alleged perpetrator. The Family Service Center Executive Director and Foster Care Supervisor will determine if the children can return to the home when the investigation is completed. Written notification will be provided to the foster parent concerning the move of the children, as well as the decision to place the children back into the home or the reason why they cannot return. This information will be provided in a Notice of Decision form (CFS-151) and a Change of Placement form (CFS-151B).

If licensing violations are found and the foster parent is willing and able to make corrections in a short period of time, a written corrective action plan will be developed with the foster parents. The corrective action plan will contain three parts; the exact licensing violations that were found, a clear statement of what is expected in correcting the violations, and a specified time frame for completion of tasks to remedy the violation.

After the licensing investigation is completed, it will be submitted to DCFS. Within five business days of approval by DCFS, licensing staff will send a letter to the foster parent summarizing the findings of the investigation. Foster parents have a right to appeal the findings of an investigation by requesting an informal supervisory review of the decision. This request must be made within ten business days of

the post-marked date of the letter. An informal appeal meeting will be scheduled upon receipt of the foster parents' written request.

The licensing worker, foster care supervisor, and foster parents are required to attend this meeting. The foster parent may bring an attorney or representative to this meeting. Foster parents may share relevant additional information at the meeting. After an informal supervisory review, the licensing decision will either be upheld or overturned. The process stops if the decision is overturned at informal supervisory review. If the decision is upheld, the licensing enforcement process begins and an administrative hearing may be held. During the investigation process, the foster parent may decide to voluntarily surrender their license. If this decision is made, the request to close the license should be put in writing with a signature and mailed to the licensing worker.

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

At the time of placement, foster parents should receive information concerning the child's health, behaviors, education, visitation schedule, and any other pertinent information needed to properly care for the child. Caseworkers are to complete a Sharing Information with Caregiver form (CFS 600-4) to ensure that all proper information is shared with the caregiver when the child is placed. Foster parents and caseworkers are to sign the CFS 600-4 form to ensure that this information is provided to the foster parent. At any time after placement occurs, a foster parent has the right to request additional information concerning the child. In order to protect birth parents' rights and confidentiality of information, this information will be provided to the foster parent whenever it is essential to meet the child's needs. It is the foster care supervisor's responsibility to ensure that caseworkers are aware of the information is appropriate to share with foster parents. Foster parents will also receive training on confidentiality and what is and is not appropriate information to share. No information is to be shared without signed consent to release information.

Foster parents and biological parents meet with foster care staff quarterly to discuss the child's progress and to share important information concerning the child. These Child and Family Team Meetings are important in order to address any current issues and ensure the child's well-being. The caseworker is also required to notify the foster parents of upcoming court hearing, administrative case reviews, school meetings, and counseling appointments and foster parents are encouraged to attend these events whenever is possible.

Caseworkers are required to complete a case note that documents any information shared with the foster parents. These case note documents become part of the child's case file. Additionally, the foster care caseworker and supervisor are to meet monthly for supervision and discuss any relevant issues occurring in the foster home. Supervisors will keep in contact with the foster parent and attend home visits to ensure that the foster parent is being treated fairly and as a critical member of the child welfare team.

- 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 appropriate information is shared with the caregiver at the time of placement, the caseworker will complete a Sharing Information with Caregivers form (CFS 600-4), discuss the information with the foster parent, and sign the CFS 600-4 form together. The foster parent will then receive a packet of information that includes the child portion of the service plan, medical history, educational history, and any other relevant background information. In cases when a child is placed on an emergency basis, the caseworker will share the information with the caregiver verbally and will provide the foster parent with the 600-4 and other information within ten days. The 600-4 form will be reviewed by the foster care supervisor at the time of placement to ensure that all important information is relayed to the foster parent.

Family Service Center has established rules and procedures for sharing information with foster parents to ensure compliance with HIPPA regulations and DCFS rule 340, section 340.40. The foster care staff participates in weekly staff meetings where guidance and training is provided to staff on these rules and procedure, as well as proper completion of the CFS 600-4 form. As a matter of record, caseworkers are required to include any information discussed with caregivers in their case notes.

- 9. The right to be notified of scheduled meetings and staffings 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 within the context of the team, including therapists, physicians, and teachers.**

The Family Service Center caseworker will notify the foster parents about the time, date, and location of all child and family team meetings, court hearings, administrative case reviews (ACRs), individualized education plans (IEPs), or any other relevant staffings as soon as they are scheduled. All foster parents are encouraged to attend these meetings whenever it is possible. The caseworker will provide foster parents with the names of therapists, teachers, physicians, and other service providers upon assignment. The foster parents will be provided the opportunity to meet with these service providers in order to voice concerns or suggestions for service.

If foster parents are unable to attend the meetings listed above, they are invited to participate by phone when possible or to share any concerns, suggestions, or other input with their caseworker. The caseworker will share this information at the meeting on the foster parents' behalf. Foster parents are immediately notified by their caseworker of any decisions made by the agency or courts during any of these meetings. As a member of the child and family team, foster parent have the right to be informed and involved in any case planning for the child in care.

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 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 placement, the caseworker provides the foster family with information regarding the reason for needing placement, visitation schedules, school information, health, behavior, and extra-curricular activities of the child in care. Information regarding the visitation plan with siblings and/or biological parents, and any guidelines that are established for the visits, is reviewed with the foster parents prior to placement.

At the time of placement, all pertinent information such as family background, medical information, and the health passport will be discussed with the foster parent and noted in the caseworker's case notes. The Child Information Placement form is used to ensure all necessary information is reviewed by foster parents. As the case progresses and more information becomes 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. In order to ensure caseworker accountability in providing this essential information, caseworkers have regularly-scheduled supervision with the foster care supervisor in which each case is discussed. When it is possible, the foster care supervisor will accompany caseworkers to home visits at foster homes. In addition, Family Service Center has a Quality Assurance team, which audits foster care files to ensure compliance with home visits, paperwork, etc.

Foster parents receive formalized training regarding information disclosure through PRIDE training and the information will be reviewed at bi-annual monitoring visits. Due to the nature of the relationship, relative foster parents may have considerably more information about the family background of the child than unrelated foster parents do. If appropriate, foster parents are encouraged to communicate with biological parents. Foster parents are encouraged to supervise parent/child visits. A reunification reimbursement is available if a foster parent supervises visits and spends extra time with the biological parents and the child.

11. 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, all efforts are made 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 document shall include the reason for change in placement, attempts at remediation, and a final determination of placement status, including the anticipated movement date.

The caseworker will also provide the foster parent, biological parent, and the guardian ad-litem with the Notice of Change of Placement form (CFS-151B) , which explains how to request a Clinical Placement Review if they wish to do so. Notice of Change of Placement form shall not be given in cases of a court order or when the child is determined to be at imminent risk of harm. Foster parents have the

right to appeal decisions regarding change of placement. In order to appeal, the foster parent must call in or fax their request for appeal within three days of receipt of the notice to change placement. The agency will then schedule a review with FSC's executive director, foster care supervisor, and licensing coordinator. This meeting will take place within ten days of the appeal being requested.

If they are unable to maintain a child in their home, foster parents are encouraged to give 14-day written notice to the agency. The agency will then work quickly to seek an 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.

The child's caseworker should verbally notify the foster parents of upcoming court hearings two weeks prior to the scheduled date. The information provided should include the date, time, judge's name and court docket number. This is to be documented in a case note and retained in the case record. The caseworker will remind the foster parents of their right to attend court hearings and of their right to be heard. They are also apprized of their right to appeal decisions and to request a writ of mandamus. If granted, the writ of mandamus will allow the foster parent to be heard in court. The time and date of subsequent court dates are to be announced at each hearing. If the foster parents are present, this announcement provides their first notification. Foster parents will receive a reminder about an upcoming court date whether or not they were present at the previous hearing.

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.

After investigation, case assignments are processed by the Department of Children and Family Services through CAPU (Case Assignment Placement Unit). The DCFS investigator assigned the case will review previous placement history and explore these for placement. In cases when a child's previous placement history is unclear, DCFS licensing will be contacted and a search of the DCFS database will be requested.

Caseworkers will consult with children aged twelve and older concerning their placement. In the event that they are re-entering the foster care system, Family Service Center will make every effort to reunite children with foster families with whom they were previously placed. In such an occurrence, the caseworker will contact former caregivers to locate placement. In the event that the original placement is no longer an option, the caseworker will make attempts to locate relatives with whom the child is acquainted with.

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 agencies 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 appeals process. Because there is a written procedure for such an occurrence, the appeals process for indicated cases of child abuse/neglect, licensing investigation findings and license revocations take precedence to the Foster Parent Grievance procedure. When a foster parent indicates a desire to grieve a service decision, the caseworker refers them to the written Foster Parent Grievance Procedure, the immediate foster care supervisor and the DCFS Service Appeals Process. If the issue cannot be resolve internally, the foster care staff will provide information to allow the foster parent to access the DCFS appeal system. The foster parent will be provided this information and a copy of the service appeals pamphlet at a formal meeting.

No foster parent should be treated with a lack of respect, harassed, or retaliated against by any other party when exercising their right to appeal. Any such action by Family Service Center staff will result in severe disciplinary action, including possible termination. Any perceived retaliation or harassment should be report immediately to Family Service Center's executive director and the DCFS Advocacy Office at (800) 232-3798.

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 of the Foster Parent Hotline, which can be reached at (800) 572-2390, by the Inspector General's office during the PRIDE foster parent training. After a foster parent becomes licensed, the hotline will be discussed with foster parents at bi-annual monitoring visits and at yearly trainings provided by Family Service Center licensing staff. The brochure for the Office of the Inspector General will be provided to foster parents in the expandable file given to them at the time of initial placement.

The DCFS Office of the Inspector General (OIG) was created to strengthen and reform the child welfare system. The mandate of the OIG is to investigate misconduct, transgression, wrongdoing, 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). The DCFS Office of the Inspector General can be reached at (800) 722-9124.

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 are responsible for openly communicating concerning the service needs and pertinent issues concerning the child in placement. Foster parents are to serve as integral members of the child welfare team. Caseworkers are to include the foster parent in the child welfare team by encouraging participation in child and family team meetings, ACRs, court hearings, and other staffing that may occur. To ensure that the child's service needs are met, it is also important for foster parents to provide ongoing communication with the caseworker during regularly scheduled visits to the foster home.

The importance of openly communicating information with the child welfare team is covered at pre-licensure PRIDE training, as well as at bi-annual monitoring visits by the licensing staff. Additionally, it is specifically identified as a foster parent's task on the client service plan. Active participation will be the subject of an annual training provided by Family Service Center licensing staff.

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

At the time of placement, the importance of confidentiality is discussed with the foster parent, and is reinforced on an ongoing basis during visits to the foster home. Specific areas that may or may not be discussed about each case will be emphasized and will be documented by the caseworker in a case note which will become a permanent record in the child's case file. Additionally, foster parents are asked to sign an agreement of confidentiality to adhere to laws and regulations concerning confidential information regarding the foster child in placement. Confidentiality of information is defined and discussed with foster parents during pre-licensure PRIDE training, and its importance is continually discussed with the foster parents during bi-annual monitoring visits and at least one foster parent training held yearly at Family Service Center.

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

Foster parents have a responsibility to advocate for the children in their care by being an active member of the child welfare team, participating in important meetings concerning the child, and openly communicating any information about the child in care. Foster parents are encouraged to attend all family meetings, ACRs, CIPP (Clinical Intervention for Placement Preservation) meetings, court hearings, and other case conferences regarding the child, as they have important and valuable input on the child's service needs and goals.

Foster parents are to receive training on education advocacy within a year of licensure, and are reminded of this responsibility while in pre-licensure PRIDE training, as well as in the monthly FSC Family Link newsletter. Caseworker will continue to inform foster parents of the benefits of advocating for the educational rights of the children in their care through discussions at home visits. DCFS has an experienced Educational Liaison who assists foster parents and private agencies concerning educational rights issues.

It is the caseworker's responsibility to follow-up with foster parents regarding their concerns or requests. If a foster parent does not feel the child's caseworker has listened to or taken proper action regarding foster parent requests or concerns, the foster parent is encouraged to contact the foster care supervisor. If a resolution cannot be reached after meeting with a supervisor, the foster parent is to follow the Service Appeal Process (CFS 1050-32), which is outlined in a brochure given to the foster parent at the time of placement and kept in the child's expandable file.

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

Foster parents should always treat the children in care and those children's families in a respectful manner. At the time of licensure, Family Service Center licensing staff will discuss the level of involvement that the foster parent is comfortable having with biological parents, as well as the foster parent's responsibility to support re-unification. The foster parent is asked to sign an agreement stating that they are in agreement with both of these responsibilities, and this will be kept as part of their foster parent licensure file. In addition, foster parents sign an agreement stating that they will not discuss the foster child or the foster child's family in a derogatory manner. During regular visits with the caseworker, foster parents will be asked for observations about any problems or other impressions resulting from children's visits with birth parents and/or siblings. Concerns will be recorded in the caseworker's case notes and will be monitored and discussed as visits take place.

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 and ensure that both parties participate fully and treat each other with dignity and respect. Feedback and impressions of the foster parents are considered to be a unique and value source of information. Foster parents are instructed of the importance of their observations during pre-licensure PRIDE training, and its importance is reinforced through regular contact with the child's 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 supports in providing care for foster children.

In cases when Family Service Center is responsible for placing a child in foster care, every effort will be made to assure a good fit for both the family and the child. This process will include completion of the Sharing Information with the Caregiver form (CFS 600-4) and the Matching Tool (CFS 2017). The mutual assessment process is used during continued interaction with the caseworker during regular home visits, and with licensing staff at bi-annual monitoring visits, and provides an opportunity for foster parents and foster care staff members to discuss problems or concerns which may indicate the need for additional supportive services for the family or the child. Referrals for added services are a part of the ongoing work with foster families and are important in maintaining stable placements for children in the foster family home. When additional support or training is needed, foster parents will be referred to appropriate workshops, trainings, materials, counseling, and extra support by FSC staff.

During the licensing process, licensing staff and PRIDE trainers will discuss and address the strengths and weaknesses of potential foster parents. The licensing worker will discuss the gender, age, race, behaviors and health issues the foster parents feel comfortable caring for and take these preferences, along with foster parents' strengths and weaknesses, into account during the placement process.

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.

Family Service Center will offer a minimum of nine foster parent meetings and one recognition event every year to provide foster parents to meet as a group and develop connections with one another. As well as the training provided at the foster parent meetings, caregivers will have the opportunity to share ideas with each other and discuss services or practices they feel should be implemented. The agency has also established a phone tree and e-mail list for foster parents, which helps them stay in contact and support one another both one-on-one and as a group.

In addition to the FSC foster parent group, relative foster parents are encouraged to participate in the Relatives as Parents Network (RAPN). The Springfield area group is hosted by The Parent Place at First Baptist Church, which is located at 301 West Grand Avenue in Springfield. The Parent Place can be reached at (217) 753-8730 with any questions or to RSVP to a meeting.

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

Foster parents have many opportunities to receive training related to their identified needs, including FSC's monthly foster parent meetings, the DCFS lending library, DCFS online in-service digital training, the FSC library, community training events, etc. Foster parent meetings are held at FSC on the second Tuesday of each month and include training on subjects requested by the caregivers. Foster parents are encouraged to communicate openly with the case work and licensing staff about any training needs or concerns. FSC staff will assist foster parents in locating a training resource to address this need, and provide one-on-one training with FSC staff or an experienced foster parent.

Foster parents have the ability to make requests for training that would be beneficial at all foster parent meetings and on a bi-annual licensing survey. In FSC's monthly newsletter, The Family Link, foster parents will receive notices of upcoming training opportunities, though DCFS, FSC, or other local social service agencies. Foster parents may register for DCFS trainings directly through the Office of Training at (877) 800-3393, at www.dcfstraining.org, or with the assistance of licensing staff.

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 preventable strategies fail and placement disruptions occur.

At the time of placement, FSC staff uses the Matching Tool (CFS-2017), which is used to match foster children with foster parents, using placement preferences and abilities held by foster that would lessen the chance of placement disruption. After the child is placed, the foster parent and foster care team will work together to prevent disruption using de-escalation and crisis prevention procedures. The foster parents, caseworkers, and other child welfare staff have the responsibility to identify and report the any previously unidentified issues that may disrupt the child's placement. FSC provides foster parents with a 24-hour on-call crisis line, at (217) 685-8119, that is staffed by foster care caseworkers on a rotating basis. Foster Parents are also provided with the CARES (Crisis and Referral Entry Service) hotline, at (800) 345-9049, which provides access to emergency services for wards on a 24-hour basis.

If a placement is identified as being in danger of placement disruption, a family meeting will be convened to develop a plan to enhance support to the foster family in order to stabilize the child's placement. FSC employs behavioral specialists who assist and train foster parents in the home with behavioral modification technique. For traditional and home-of-relative children at risk of placement disruption, the caseworker will make a referral to the SOC (System of Care) program operated by the Rutledge Youth Foundation. The program is designed to assist families with placement stabilization and/or counseling to maintain a foster placement. If the stabilization efforts put into place at this meeting prove to be unsuccessful, FSC staff will work with foster parents to maintain the placement while an alternative placement is located. Whenever it is possible, foster parent are asked to give 14-day notice when placement disrupts.

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.

During pre-service PRIDE training, foster parents are trained to recognize signs of stress in themselves and their families. Caseworkers will regularly discuss stress and burnout with foster families at home visits, and will continually assess the foster family's stress level during the ongoing relationship. In an effort to ensure that stress is being effectively managed, caseworker may refer foster parents and/or children for additional services, and provide assistance in developing individual stress reduction techniques with the foster parent. Family Service Center provides in-house counseling to foster parents when the stressor is deemed to be related to a foster care placement.

Family Service Center provides respite care for all levels of foster care, including relative, traditional, and specialized care. Whenever it is possible, foster parents are asked to give the caseworker two weeks notice in order for the caseworker to find a respite placement. Respite care is provided on a case-by-case basis and is approved by the licensing department.

Licensed foster parents may access the DCFS Voluntary Hold system if they decide for a period of time not to accept additional foster children for placement. Holds can be requested for any purpose, including life changes and simply needs a break from taking placements. Contact the FSC licensing department to request a hold on placements to the foster home.

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

Foster parents are encouraged to speak positively about their experiences in the community and to assist in recruiting of new foster parents when possible. Caregivers may be asked to share their experiences in foster care with potential foster parents at recruitment events held by Family Service Center. Foster parents are offered financial incentives for recruiting a family who completes the licensing process and continues to be licensed for six months.

Family Service Center provides on-going recognition of the valuable service foster parents provide during the agency's regular contact with the families. The agency mails notes of congratulations and/or thanks to for specific milestones and achievements achieved by the foster families. Foster parents also receive public recognition for years of service each May at FSC's annual foster parent appreciation picnic. The agency also hosts holiday parties for the foster families several times every year.

11. 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.

During pre-licensure PRIDE training, foster parents receive a thorough overview of their rights and responsibilities, the role of foster families and other professionals, and appropriate relationships between foster families and birth families. Yearly, foster parents are given the opportunity to work with the licensing department on updating the Foster Parent Law Implementation Plan. The approved copy of this plan is provided to foster parents each January and appraises foster parents of the efforts made by FSC to ensure their rights and responsibilities. Foster parents are continually made aware of their membership on the child welfare team and are encouraged to attend all child and family team meetings, ACRs, and any other relevant meetings.

Foster parents are encouraged to participate in foster parent meetings and training, which are held at least nine times every year. In addition to training, attending these meetings allows foster parents to be kept informed of policy changes, staff changes, and other important announcements made by the agency. Foster parents are also surveyed twice annually by FSC's client satisfaction survey committee and the information is compiled and presented to the agency's Board of Directors. FSC management is made aware of any concerns or other feedback obtained from these surveys and will take steps to address any issues.

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 initially trained concerning their status as mandated reporters at pre-licensure PRIDE training. During the licensure process, foster parents are asked to review and sign a statement affirming their responsibilities as a mandated reporter. At this time, foster parents are also made aware of the procedures governing allegations and investigations of abuse or neglect, and are also given copies of the Licensing Standards for Foster Family Homes (Rule 402), which outlines the requirements for foster parent licensure and the investigation process. After licensure, foster parents will receive annual refreshers on their responsibility as mandated reporters during monthly foster parent meetings and bi-annual monitoring visits.

Foster parents are given information about the investigation process at the time of licensure. If a violation in a foster home is being investigated, the licensing department is responsible for again explaining the licensing investigation process, and informing the foster parent of the rights afforded to foster caregivers during this process. Depending on the situation, a licensing investigation can either be completed concurrently with DCFS investigators or be a stand-alone investigation by Family Service Center.

Foster parents are informed of the importance of notifying the caseworker immediately of any concerns that they may have regarding sexualized behavior among children placed in their home. Caseworkers, foster care supervisors, and foster parents work together to determine if the child meets the 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 (Sexually Aggressive Children and Youth) protection plan. If the child is determined to meet the SACY 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 Licensing Standards for Foster Family Homes (Rule 402.9).

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 by attending court hearings, Integrated Assessments (IAs), ACRs, and other important meetings pertaining to the child. Foster parents are continually reminded of the importance of their participation during PRIDE training, at bi-annual monitoring visits, and at regular visits from the child's caseworker.

The child's caseworker will notify foster parents of the time, date, and location of upcoming court hearings, ACRs, and other important meetings, and will assist them in understanding what is to occur at these meetings. There will also be a yearly foster parent training on the purposes of such meetings. The child's caseworker is responsible for informing the foster parents of a scheduled meeting as soon as they are able to ensure that foster parents are able to make scheduling adjustments to attend these meetings.

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

The updated Foster Parent Law Implementation plan is distributed to foster parents every January which contains a current copy of the Foster Parent Grievance Procedure. Appeal procedures related to DCFS rules and regulations are reviewed with foster parents during PRIDE training and annual at a foster parent meeting. A copy of the Foster Parent Grievance Procedure is always available to foster parents by requesting it from the licensing department or from the local DCFS field office. The foster parents rights will be explained in full whenever an appeal is filed.

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 and foster parent review the documentation that is to be kept and the importance of keeping good documentation. The caseworker will provide the foster parents with an expandable file in which to organize and maintain the child's records in an orderly fashion. These requirements are also discussed during PRIDE training and at monthly foster parent meetings. Foster parents are to maintain copies of medical records, any physical conditions experienced by the child, telephone numbers for the child's physician, medication logs (CFS 534), behavior logs (CFS 534-1), and a current Health Passport (CFS 650). The names and contact information of persons to be contacted in an emergency are also to be maintained. If a foster parent supervises family visits, a DCFS Visiting Record (CFS 502) must be completed.

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 the 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 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 the child is returning to the home of a parent, a child and family team meeting is always convened to discuss the child's transition home, and to discuss all pertinent information that the parent might need to know when their child returns home.

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 pre-licensure PRIDE training, and specific information such as religious affiliation, holidays, celebrations, and 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 Relative as Parents Network. Caseworkers are also invited to attend this workshop. Family Service Center will offer training on cultural diversity and sensitivity as well. Family Service Center also encourages foster parents to train other foster parents and staff on skin care, hair care, foods, and traditions that are important to each culture.

Attachment A: 2015 Foster Parent Meeting/Training Schedule

<i>January 14th, 2015</i>	Foster Care 101- The basics of service plans, IAs, IEPs, the appeal process, and much more!
<i>February 11th, 2015</i>	2015 Foster Parent Law Implementation Plan- A review of the newly approved plan and a discussion of the changes that were made.
<i>March 11th, 2015</i>	Love and Logic- Love and Logic parenting teaches logical consequences and prepares children to be productive, responsible adults.
<i>April 8th, 2015</i>	Foster Parent Stress Education- Foster parenting comes with unique stressors. Learn how to identify your stressors and deal with stress in a healthy way.
<i>May 13th, 2015</i>	Foster Parent Appreciation Picnic
<i>June 2015</i>	No Meeting. Happy Summer!
<i>July 8th, 2015</i>	Educational Training- School is starting soon! Make sure you're prepared with a review of IEPs, school registration, educational advocacy, and tips for contact between foster parents and the child's school.
<i>August 12th, 2015</i>	Foster Parents' Rights- The rights provided to caregivers in the Foster Parent Law Implementation Plan is discussed. Foster parents have the opportunity to make suggestions for improvement to the plan.
<i>September 9th, 2015</i>	Foster Parents' Responsibilities- Responsibilities held by foster parents in the Foster Parent Law Implementation Plan are discussed. Foster parents have the opportunity to make suggestions for improvement to the plan.
<i>October 2015</i>	No Meeting. Foster Care Halloween Party!
<i>November 11th, 2015</i>	Preparing for a Successful Holiday Season- Holidays can be a difficult time for children in care. Learn strategies to make the holidays happy!
<i>December 2015</i>	No Meeting. Happy Holidays!

Meetings begin at 6:00 PM unless otherwise announced.

Dinner will be provided. Please bring cookies or other dessert items to share.

Meeting dates and training topics are subject to change.

Attachment B: Narrative describing foster parent and staff input into the development of the implementation plan.

Foster parents and staff are given the opportunity to review, revise, and comment on the Foster Parent Law Implementation Plan throughout the year. In February, the plan is to be presented in its entirety at the monthly foster parent meeting. At foster parent meetings in August and September, the plan is reviewed and revised with foster parents and staff. Comments during these meetings are recorded and used to improve upon the plan's contents. The plan is dispersed to FSC staff and foster parents in February, and comments can be made to licensing staff at any time. The plan is made available by e-mail, by mail, personal pick-up, and on www.service2families.com.

Attachment C: A list of names or actual signatures of foster parents involved in reviewing and/or revising the plan.

Please see attached sign-in signature sheets.

Attachment D: Actual signatures of foster parents who attest that they've reviewed and approved your final 2015 plan.

Please see attached signature sheets.

Attachment E: Summary of foster parent comments.

- The plan needs to be more clear and concise. A narrative description of each right and responsibility would be more valuable than bullet points.
- Accountability of staff needs to be addressed to ensure that foster parents are receiving all relevant information.
- A Foster Parent Support Group would help foster parents support each other.
- How do we request respite care, and does a request have to be granted?

Attachment F: Summary of agency response to foster parent comments.

- The plan was revised to make it more clear and concise. A narrative tone was used, making the plan easier to read and understand.
- Staff accountability is addressed in Narrative # 10, which provides a description of FSC's Quality Assurance committee and staff supervision procedure.
- A plan to develop a foster parent support group is being developed, and there are several foster parents who are taking the lead on this. It is a goal to start such a group in 2015.
- Narrative #4 was revised to provide a clearer description of the respite care procedure.

Attachment G: Summary of agency response to public comments.

Family Service Center received no public comments regarding the 2015 Foster Parent Law Implementation Plan.

Attachment H: Copy of agency's/region's Foster Parent Law Grievance Procedure.

Family Service Center of Sangamon County

Policy Statement

Foster Parent Law Grievance Procedure

Year 2015

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 appeals process. E.g. It cannot be used to address issues that are covered by the service appeal process, the appeal process for indicated case 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 the Family Service Center or an employee of the Family Service Center involving the interpretation of any actions or course of actions 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 exact date or dates of the act of commission or omission
- c. The identity of the party or parties who claim to be aggrieved
- d. The identity of the party or parties alleged to have committed the act of commission or omission
- e. The specific action or course of actions that alleged to have taken place
- f. 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 within five (5) working days after the expiration time set forth in Step 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 a satisfactory settlement is not reached under step two; the grievance shall be presented by the employee for the foster parent to the Executive Director in writing in the form described in Section 2 within five (5) working days after the expiration of the time limit set forth in Step three. The Executive Director shall issue a written opinion to the foster parent within ten (10) working days after the receipt of the written grievance.

Step 4: If a satisfactory settlement is not reached under step three; the foster parent shall resubmit the written grievance after receipt of the response from the Executive Director as outlined in step three above, to the Family Service Center's Board of Directors for review. The foster parents may request a meeting, with legal counsel if desired, to present the grievance to the Family Service Center's Board of Directors. The findings and opinions of the Family Service Center's 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 which may be warranted.

Attachment I: Copies of any Foster Parent Law grievances filed during the past year, with all identifying information redacted

Family Service Center received no grievances during the year of 2014.