



Resource Family Guide

Resource Family Approval Program

Prepared by
Family and Children's Services
San Francisco Human Services Agency



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SAN FRANCISCO
HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY



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Foreword

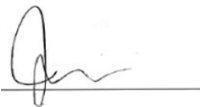
Dear San Francisco Resource Families,

As a Resource Family, you provide a valuable service to San Francisco families and children. Providing a loving and safe home can be rewarding, fulfilling, and sometimes overwhelming. This guide provides information that will assist you in providing the highest quality of care to the children in your care.

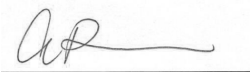
This guide is a quick and easy reference that explains the various roles of resource families and the roles of the agency staff to assist and support you and your family. It also includes resource links and an appendix with additional information and sample documents. Please become familiar with this guide and use it as a reference for information on the approval process.

We are excited to have you as a Family and Children's Services team member to help support the lives and well-being of children and young adults in need. As a valuable team member, contact the RFA Social Worker, Protective Services Worker, or Resource Family Caregiver Liaison with questions and concerns; we look forward to working with you.

Thank you,



Joan Miller
FCS Deputy Director



Angela Ramos
Program Director



José L. Cañaveral
Program Manager

Introduction

This Resource Family Guide outlines practice guidelines and procedures for Resource Families as specified in the California Department of Social Services ([CDSS Written Directives](#) and [FCS Policy](#)).

The Resource Family Approval (RFA) Program is a unified home approval process that replaced multiple procedures for licensing foster family homes and approving relatives and adoptive families as foster care providers. The RFA Program is a component of California's efforts to reform the foster care system and provide better outcomes for children and youth. The RFA Program aims to raise the standards for finding, training, and retaining quality families while reducing the reliance on institutional care settings such as residential treatment facilities. Our RFA program follows the [California Core Practice Model](#), which guides all of our services at FCS.

Most children and youth in care are in the process of reunification with their families. Even a day without a loving family can feel like an eternity. The challenges are even more significant for San Francisco's children and youth in care due to the city's shortage of resource families; many children and youth have to be placed in other counties.

Resource families are respected team members in the Child Welfare System and play an invaluable role in the lives of children and youth separated from their biological parents. Resource families care for children and youth 24/7, committing to their safety and well-being. They also support the reunification of these children and youth with their parents, if possible.

Some of the responsibilities of Resource Families are:

-
- Love and nurture the children as part of the family
 - Respect the children's individual needs and preferences
 - Understand how trauma affects the children's behavior and emotions
 - Provide appropriate supervision and guidance
 - Involve the children in community activities and opportunities
 - Help the children achieve their potential and happiness
 - Encourage the children's strengths and interests
 - Teach the children life skills and prepare them for adulthood
-

Resource Families work in partnership with social workers, service providers, and biological families to create a team of caring individuals who collectively work in the best interest of the children in care to meet their needs.



Working with Agency Staff

Several social workers and support staff will be involved while you are caring for a child in foster care. Some of these include the following:

Protective Services Worker (PSW)

- Supervise, coordinate, and manage the cases for dependent children/youth of the Unified Family Court.
- Interact regularly with all involved and is the “go-to person” for questions related to the child.
- Conduct monthly home visits, arrange visitation, complete court reports, and monitor the child's well-being.

Resource Family Social Worker (RFA SW)

- Responsible for assessments for home approval
- Assist resource parents in understanding their roles and responsibilities
- Ensures resource parents are complying with the Written Directives
- Conduct investigations when there is a complaint against a resource parent

Resource Family Liaison/Recruiter (RFA Liaison/Recruiter)

- Provide information and requirements for being a Resource Family
- Support Resource Families as a liaison between the family and various HSA Staff
- Provide support and connect resource parents to additional support services
- Conduct RFA orientations and community presentations
- Connect families with a Resource Family Mentor (if requested)
- Collaborate with community and service providers
- Represent the Agency at community activities and events

Eligibility Worker (EW)

- Ensures foster care funding, Medi-Cal, and other financial support is provided to the resource parent caring for the child.



HOW TO RESOLVE AN ISSUE WITH AGENCY STAFF:

You may occasionally have disagreements with agency staff. To address issues as quickly as possible:

1. Begin by calling the worker to discuss the issue. Talk to the worker and let them know your feelings; this may be enough to resolve the matter.
2. Anytime you are dissatisfied or have concerns during the RFA process, you may call the RFA Liaison/Recruiter at 415-558-2200 and leave a voice mail to receive a return call.
3. If you cannot resolve the issue with the worker, you may contact the worker's supervisor. ([FCS Directory](#) for Protective Services Staff & RFA Social Workers and Supervisors)
4. You may also contact the program manager if you are still unsatisfied with the resolution. (Refer to [FCS Directory](#))
5. If you cannot resolve the problem by speaking with the individuals you contacted, call the Office of the Ombudsperson for Child Welfare Services at (415) 558-2828.

RFA approval is required for placement but does not guarantee it. Placement decisions depend on various factors and the best interest of the child. If you have any questions or issues regarding placement, please call the assigned PSW or their supervisor.

The [State of California Fair Hearing Process](#) (is available if the other avenues do not resolve the issue.

THE FOLLOWING ARE SAMPLES/SITUATIONS AND WHOM TO CALL.

SITUATION	PSW	RFA SW	EW	OTHER
Extra crisis assistance/support with behaviors, tantrums, routines	X			
Issues with biological parents and visits between child and birth family	X			
Traveling out of state or country with a child in foster care	X			
Out of County services & placement support	X			
One of the resource parents is absent due to: vacation, divorce or separation, serious illness, or death.	X	X		RFA Duty Line 415-401-4340

SITUATION	PSW	RFA SW	EW	OTHER
New family members or adults moving in or out of your home/ any physical change in the house structure	X	X		RFA Duty Line 415-401-4340
Moving or planning to move	X	X		
Check issues due to late payments, lost or incorrect amounts, and direct deposit requests.			X	
Critical incidents such as hospitalizations, serious illness, death, suicide attempt, runaway, or arrests of the child in foster care	X	X		
Academic problems with a child in foster care	X			
Suspected child abuse of a child in foster care	X			SF Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline: 415-558-2650
Pre-approval/annual training		X		
Ready for another placement?				Placement Unit at hsa.fcs.placement@sfgov.org or call 415-401-4300
Respite Care	X			Respite Coordinator at 415-861-4284 ext. 3035
Child Care	X			
Health-related questions (CHDP exams)	X			Contact the Nurse of the Day at 415-558-2656 or email NOD.Line@sfgov.org .
Support Groups for Caregivers		X		Contact Diana Venegas at 415-713-1703 or diana.venegas@sfdph.org
A friend or family interested in becoming a resource family		X		Recruitment email: Fosterinfo@sfgov.org Recruitment line: 415-558-2200
Who should I call?	X	X		Resource Family Liaison See FCS Directory

Call the duty line listed in the FCS Directory (fcsdirectory.sfhhsa.org) if the PSW is unavailable. If you are still waiting for a response, contact the supervisor.

Application Process

(CDSS RFA - Written Directives § 5)

GENERAL RESOURCE FAMILY QUALIFICATIONS

(CDSS RFA - Written Directives § 5-03A)

- Ability to provide care and supervision for all children, youth, or young adults served.
- Ability to communicate with the child, youth, or young adult (non-minor dependents) in their care.
- Knowledge of the laws and regulations and ability to comply with them.
- Ability to maintain health, education, financial and other records.
- Completion of an orientation, pre-approval and ongoing training, and compliance with specific visitation orders between the child and their parent(s) and siblings.

RFA APPLICATION FORMS AND SUPPORTIVE DOCUMENTS

- **RFA01A Application** - Complete and Submit the RFA01A to begin the RFA Process; you will be assigned an RFA ID and an RFA Social Worker at this time, who will guide you through the process.
- **RFA01B Criminal Record Statement** – This form requires that you disclose any past convictions or if you lived outside of the State of California. All adults in the home or adults regularly present must complete this form.
- **RFA07 Health Questionnaire** - This form is required instead of providing proof of a physical exam.
- **Two References** for each applicant, of your good character and ability to provide a safe environment; it can be from a co-worker, neighbor, or close friend but cannot be someone in the same household.

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION:

- Provide current proof of car insurance and valid Registration for the vehicle the applicants use to transport dependent children or young adults.
- Rental/Lease Agreement, Deed, or Mortgage Statement: with the applicant's name or a signed letter from the residence owner.
- Other supporting documentation will also be required.

RESOURCE FAMILY APPROVAL (RFA) SATISFACTION SURVEY:

- The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) provides a satisfaction survey for Resource Families and seeks your feedback to improve the RFA process. All information will remain confidential, and individual responses will not be shared with the county. Refer to the [Resource Family Approval Satisfaction Survey](#) in the appendix for more information.

The Indian Child Welfare Act

(CDSS RFA - Written Directives § 11-20)

AB 686 (Chapter 434; Statutes of 2019) effective January 1, 2020. In the case of an Indian child whose Tribe is not exercising its right to approve a home, AB 686 requires counties to incorporate the prevailing social and cultural standards of the Indian Community when approving a caregiver for an Indian child.

AB 686 requires the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to engage in the formal Tribal Consultation process to determine, with direction from Tribal Leaders, the best approach for working with tribes to integrate the standards of the Indian Community into the RFA process.

TRIBALLY APPROVED & SPECIFIED HOMES EXCEPTION

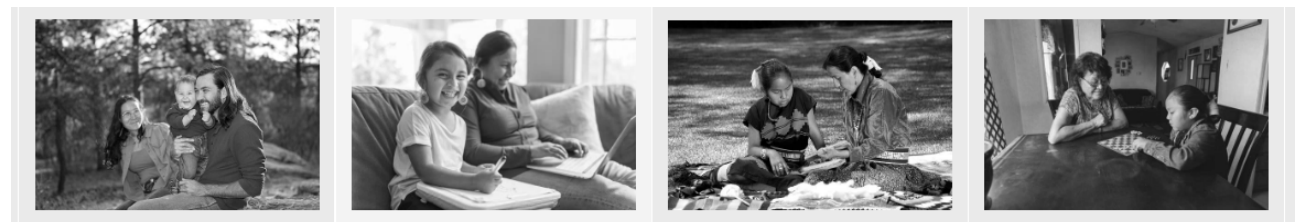
Tribes have the independent authority to establish socially and culturally appropriate standards and approve foster homes.

- **Tribally Approved Homes** are not required to adhere to **RFA standards**.
 - Tribally Approved Homes shall continue to adhere to the licensing or approval standards established by the Tribe.
- **Tribally Specified Homes** are not approved or licensed by the Tribe but are specified by the Tribe as a home for possible placement and **must complete the RFA process**.

In the case of an Indian child, a County shall apply the prevailing social and cultural standards of the child's Indian community when conducting the Home Environment Assessment.

- The prevailing social and cultural standards of the Indian community can only be determined by the child's Tribe and applied in collaboration with the Tribe.
- Collaboration shall include but is not limited to, the invitation of a representative of the Indian child's Tribe to participate in all aspects of the home environment assessment process.
- When a representative cannot attend an interview or meeting, the County shall inform the tribal representative of the outcomes, verbally or in writing.

Refer to the [Indian Child Welfare Act](#) in the appendix for more information.



Home Approval Assessment Process

(CDSS RFA - Written Directives § 6)

RESOURCE FAMILY HOME AND ENVIRONMENT

(CDSS RFA - Written Directives § 6-02)

An RFA Social Worker will assess a potential Resource Family's home environment before placing a child in the home and conduct biennial reassessments to maintain approval. If an approved Resource Family moves to a different house, the RFA Social Worker will do an approval update within 30 calendar days as required by the Written Directives.)

- A Resource Family home should be clean, safe, sanitary, and in good repair.
- Smoke/carbon monoxide detectors (commercially manufactured) must be installed and function in hallways in each sleeping area. (The only exceptions are homes with fire sprinklers)
- All outdoor and indoor passageways, stairways, inclines, ramps, and open porches in and on the home grounds must be free from obstruction.
- The home must have at least one operating toilet, sink, and shower or tub, which is safe and clean and not in a common area shared with others outside the home.
- Hot water is delivered by faucets at a safe temperature.
- Individual privacy must be available in all areas, toilet, bath, or shower areas.
- To ensure safety, the applicant must maintain fireplaces, open-faced heaters, or wood stoves in good repair.
- The applicant should maintain the home at a safe and comfortable temperature.
- All rooms, other areas of the home, and grounds shall have appropriate lighting.
- If the Resource Family home has a yard or outdoor space, the area shall be free from hazards that endanger the health and safety of a child, youth, or young adult.

BEDROOMS

(CDSS RFA - Written Directives § 11-01)

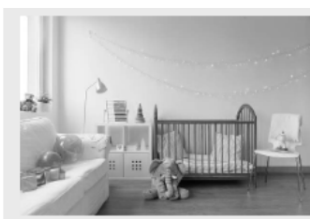
The bedrooms in a Resource Family home shall meet, at a minimum, the following requirements:

- No more than four (4) children or young adults, or one child and one young adult, may share a room.
- Up to two infants shall share the room in bedrooms shared by a resource parent(s) and infant.
- Children of the opposite sex shall not share a bedroom unless:
 - Each child is under eight years of age.
 - The children are siblings.
 - A minor parent may share a bedroom with their child.

- A Resource Family may permit a child to share a bedroom consistent with their gender identity regardless of the gender or sex listed on their court or child welfare documents.

A Resource Family shall evaluate the compatibility, health and safety, and best interest of each child, youth, or young adult in determining whether to permit children to share a bedroom.

- A child and a non-minor dependent may share a bedroom under the following situations:
 - The child and non-minor dependent are siblings.
 - The child and non-minor dependent have been sharing a bedroom before the non-minor dependent turns 18 and remain compatible to share the bedroom.
 - The child is 16 years of age or older.
 - A non-minor-dependent parent may share a bedroom with their child, including a child of the opposite sex.
- No room commonly used for other purposes shall be used as a bedroom. Such spaces include but are not limited to hallways, stairways, unfinished attics or basements, garages, storage areas, sheds, or similar detached buildings.
- A child/youth may use a room commonly used for other purposes converted into a bedroom if the restored area does not pose a hazard to health and safety. If the County suspects the converted area poses a threat to health and safety, the Resource Family may not be able to approve using the room as a bedroom.
- No bedroom will be used as a public passageway to another room.
- Each bedroom must have at least one operable window or door, allowing a safe, direct emergency exit to the outside.
- If there are window security bars, the window is considered operable only if the window bars have a safety release device that meets all state and local requirements.
- If the Resource Family home is in a high-rise building, the family is subject to the State Fire Marshall's rules and regulations.
- Each bedroom shall have a portable or permanent closet or drawer space to accommodate the child's or young adult's clothing or personal belongings.



BEDS

(CDSS RFA - Written Directives § 11-01)

- The applicant shall provide each child, youth, or young adult with an individual bed equipped with a clean and comfortable mattress, clean linens, blankets, and pillows, all in good condition.
- Linen shall be changed at least once per week or more often when necessary to ensure that clean linen is used at all times.
- Beds shall be arranged to allow easy passage between beds and bedroom entrances.
- The applicant shall not use bunk beds of more than two tiers.
- Bunk beds shall have railings on the upper tier to prevent falling.
- Children under six (6) years of age or those unable to climb in and out of the upper tier without assistance shall not be permitted to use the upper tier.
- Each infant or child requiring a crib shall be provided with a safe and sturdy bassinet or crib as appropriate for the age and size of the infant or child.
- The following applies to cribs:
 - Tiered or stacked cribs, or cribs with drop sides, may not be used.
 - Crib slats may be dangerous to an infant or child being trapped.
 - Crib mattresses shall be clean, comfortable, and fit properly in the crib.
 - Linen shall be changed at least once per week or more often when necessary to ensure that cleaned linen is used at all times.
- An infant who can climb out of a crib shall be provided with an age-appropriate bed.

POOLS AND BODIES OF WATER

(CDSS RFA - Written Directives § 11-02)

The following rules apply to Resource Family homes with swimming pools or other "bodies of water," such as hot tubs, fishponds, water fountains, etc. Particularly those families who have children under ten years old or a child, youth, or young adult that has a developmental or mental disability or needs special care and supervision, including the child of a minor or non-minor dependent parent who is in the home:

- When not in use, the applicant must make the water inaccessible with a cover or fencing.
- A pool shall have an approved safety pool cover; when not used, the cover must be locked and on the pool.
 - The cover must meet the American Society for Testing and Material specifications F1346, which include but are not limited to supporting the weight of two adults and one child.
 - A pool net that meets ASTM F1346 standards is considered an approved safety cover.
 - Flotation devices must support a pool cover or net.

- Fences shall be at least five feet high and must not obscure the pool from the view.
- If a removable mesh fence is used as an enclosure, the mesh fence must meet the American Society for Testing and Material Specifications F 2286 and have a self-closing and self-latching gate that can accommodate a key lockable device. ([HS§ 115922 \(a\)\(2\)](#))
- An above-ground pool structure over 60 inches in height may be made inaccessible by removing or making the ladder unavailable when the pool is not in use.
- Above-ground pool structures under 60 inches in height must have approved pool safety covers that meet ASTM F1346 standards (see above) or empty after each use.
- All in-ground and above-ground pools that cannot be emptied after each use shall have a working pump and filtering system.
- An adult must always provide supervision when children use a pool or a body of water; the adult must be able to swim if swimming would be necessary to rescue a child, youth, or young adult.
- Please consult an RFA Social Worker with any questions about these requirements.

A Resource Family shall ensure an adult can swim and always provide supervision.

STORAGE REQUIREMENTS

(CDSS RFA - Written Directives § 11-03)

- All medicines, disinfectants, and cleaning solutions shall be stored where the items are inaccessible to a child.
- Poisons, firearms, and other dangerous items or weapons must be in a locked storage area.
 - Alternatively, use trigger locks or remove the firing pin from the firearm.
 - Firing pins shall be stored and locked separately from firearms.
- Ammunition shall be stored and locked separately from firearms.
- A Resource Family must apply the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard to determine if it is age and developmentally appropriate for a child or youth to access and use household kitchen knives and appliances, medications, disinfectants, and cleaning solutions.
- A young adult can access and use household kitchen knives and appliances, medications, disinfectants, and cleaning solutions; however, a Resource Family shall ensure the safety of any child, young adult, or others in the home.
- A Resource Family is to locate, store and dispose of waste in a manner that will not permit the transmission of infectious diseases or odors, create a nuisance, or provide a breeding place or food source for insects or rodents.

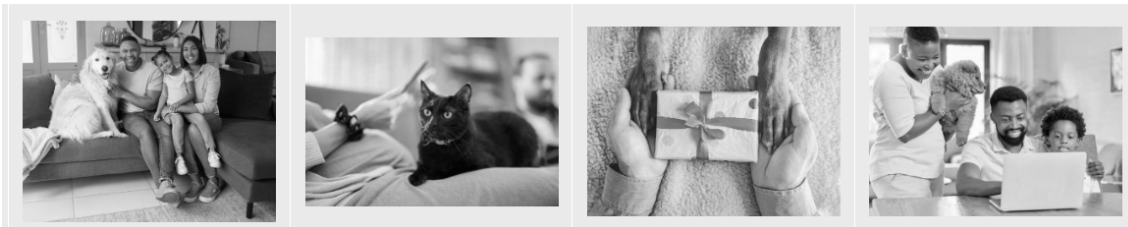


FIRE CLEARANCE

Fire Clearance may be required if a Resource Family home intends to provide care for a non-ambulatory child, youth, young adult, or more than six (6) children at a time. If a fire clearance is necessary, a Resource Family shall obtain a fire clearance from the city or county fire department, the fire district providing fire protection services, or State Fire Marshall's Office having jurisdiction in the area where the home is located. The applicant must provide a copy of the fire clearance to the RFA Social Worker.

PETS AND ANIMALS IN THE HOME

The health and safety assessment of the home and grounds includes a review of any pets/animals in the house to identify any concerns about the animal that may pose a health or safety risk to a child or non-minor dependent (NMD). Applicants and approved resource families will be asked questions about animals in the home. Factors to consider include, but are not limited to, the history of the animal, the animal's behavior towards adults and children, the hygiene and care of the animal, the relationship between the child and the animal, the age of the child(ren) being placed, and the ability of the caregiver to supervise children around the animal.



CRIMINAL AND CHILD ABUSE RECORD CLEARANCES

(CDSS RFA - Written Directives § 6-03A)

- All adults (18 years and older) residing or regularly present in the home must complete a background check. The RFA Social Worker will refer all adults for live scan fingerprinting.
- After receiving the fingerprint results, the RFA Social Worker will review each adult's state and federal criminal record information.
- All adults residing or regularly present in the home that have lived in another state within the last five years will be required to complete the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety clearance.
- Megan's Law registered sex offender clearance
- Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)
- Clearance of prior licensing history and criminal record exemption denial or rescission maintained by other agencies.
- Criminal Exemptions are subject to review and are granted or denied. In case of a denial, the RFA Social Worker will send a notice of a criminal record exemption denial with information regarding the right to a state hearing or other due process as outlined in the RFA Written Directives Article 12.

FAMILY EVALUATION

(CDSS RFA - Written Directives § 6-06)

- The family evaluation will include at least two face-to-face interviews with the applicant(s).
- If more than one applicant is present, an individual interview with each applicant and a joint interview with all applicants must occur (most often in the home).
- At least one face-to-face interview with all children and adults living in the applicant's home must occur individually.
- For the other adults in the home, an interview via video conference may be conducted if they cannot participate. If an adult is not able to be interviewed at all, the RFA Worker shall determine if the interview is necessary to assess the applicant's ability to be approved as a Resource Family.
- Interviews and assessment of the applicant(s) shall include but are not limited to the following:
 - **Motivation to become a Resource Family**, including the relationship to a specific youth being considered for placement with the applicant.
 - **Childhood upbringing**, adult experiences, and personal characteristics.
 - **A risk assessment** includes past and current substance use or abuse history, history of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, and domestic violence.
 - **Ability to parent a child from different backgrounds**, including race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, or a child who is gender non-conforming.
 - **Role and capacity to work cooperatively** with the County, birth parents, extended family, Tribe, and other service providers in implementing the child or young adult's case plan.
 - **Ability and willingness to use the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard** when making parenting decisions.
 - **In the case of an Indian child:**
 - **Willingness to collaborate with the child's Tribe** to maintain the child's connection to the Tribe.
 - **Willingness to provide opportunities for the Indian child to attend cultural events** that align with the prevailing social and cultural standards of the child's Tribe (s).



PRE-SERVICE TRAINING

(CDSS RFA - Written Directives § 6-06)

All potential Resource Families shall complete 14-Hour Pre-Service Training. All applicants will be required to attend. Classes will be held at various times, including weekdays, evenings, and Saturday mornings, in person or online. (Post-approval, at least 8 hours of training is required yearly to maintain current knowledge and encourage growth as a Caregiver.)

Certificate of Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and First Aid Training:

- Completing 6 Hours of CPR and First Aid is also required within 90 days of initial approval and renewed every two years.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

(CDSS RFA - Written Directives § 6-03A)

Each resource parent must post emergency telephone numbers, discuss an emergency plan with children, youth, and young adults, and practice emergency procedures at the time of placement and every six (6) months after that. A resource parent must review and provide the emergency plan and contact information with any alternate caregiver, including occasional short-term babysitters.



The San Francisco Human Services Agency encourages all San Francisco caregivers and Resource Families to sign up for **AlertSF** (alerts.org). As San Francisco caregivers, staying informed of impending natural disasters is important. **AlertSF** is San Francisco's emergency text message system. This system will send text messages to mobile phones with instructions following a natural disaster, major police, fire, health emergency, or any significant transportation disruption. If you live or work in another county in California, you can go to **CalAlert** (calalerts.org) to sign-up to receive emergency alerts for that County.



Reporting Requirements and Responsibilities

MANDATORY REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

(CDSS RFA - Written Directives § 11-06)

Resource Families must immediately report any actual incident of child abuse or neglect, as well as any suspected child abuse or neglect. California mandated reporter information and resources, including free online training, are available on the mandated reporter website at mandatedreporterca.com.

As a resource parent, you must report any suspected or actual child abuse or neglect by phone without delay. If you live in San Francisco County, you can call the San Francisco Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline at any time of the day or night and any day of the week.

San Francisco Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-856-5553 or (415) 558-2650. If you need to report child abuse in a different county in California, please visit: cdss.ca.gov/reporting/report-abuse/child-protective-services/report-child-abuse. You will find the phone numbers for each County's emergency response team there.

The "Suspected Child Abuse Report" form [SS8572](#) is available online. Alternatively, you can request a copy of the document from the Hotline Worker, and they will send it to your address. Once you have the form, complete it as soon as possible and mail it to your County's Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Center. For San Francisco County, use the following address:

**San Francisco Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline – H110
Family and Children's Services
P.O. Box 7988
San Francisco, CA 94120**

As soon as possible after calling the Hotline, contact the assigned Protective Services Worker (fcsdirectory.sfhsa.org) to inform them of the report. If the PSW is not available, notify the PSW's supervisor.

OTHER REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

FAMILY DAYCARE HOMES OPERATED BY A RESOURCE FAMILY

- The resource parent must report to the RFA Social Worker if they operate a family day care home as defined in Health and Safety Code § 1596.78.

UNUSUAL INCIDENTS/INJURIES

The resource parent must report the following to the assigned PSW and the RFA Social Worker: Death of any child, youth, or young adult in the car from any cause:

- Any injury to any child, youth, or young adult which requires medical treatment.
- Any unusual incident or absence of a child, youth, or young adult which threatens their physical or emotional health or safety.
- Any suspected physical or psychological abuse of any child, youth, or young adult.

- Infectious diseases as reported to the resource parent by a health professional.
- Poisoning shall be reported immediately to the local fire authority (if a Resource Family is located in an area that does not have organized fire services, the Resource Family shall make a report to the State Fire Marshall within 24 hours after the event.
- Catastrophes
- Fires or explosions which occur in or on the premises
- A report must be made by telephone or email within 24 hours of the incident. The resource parent must complete a written report within seven days of the incident, with copies provided to the assigned PSW and the RFA Social Worker. (Complete the [1711 - Unusual Incident Report](#) and send it the assigned PSW or RFA SW).

CHANGE IN THE HOUSEHOLD LOCATION AND COMPOSITION

- All changes in household composition must be reported within **24 hours**, including any additions to the family.
- **Immediate** notification to the RFA Social Worker is required if any new adult moves in or out of the home. Any new adult in the household will be required to complete a criminal records check, including Live Scan (fingerprinting) and child abuse clearance. This requirement also includes when a child turns 18, except children or non-minor dependents under the jurisdiction of the Juvenile Dependency Court.
- When planning to relocate or move, the Resource Family must notify the RFA Social Worker and the assigned PSW by telephone, email, or fax **30 calendar days** before the move or as soon as the information is available. [RFA Written Directives 11-06b2 (c & d)]

ABSENCES

When a resource parent intends to be absent from the home for 48 hours or longer, the assigned PSW or (in their absence) their supervisor must be notified by telephone or in writing. The information that the PSW will need is:

1. Dates of intended absence
2. Whether the child or youth will accompany the resource parent or remain in the home
3. Telephone number where the resource parent can be contacted
4. Name, address, and telephone number of the approved substitute caregiver

ABSENT WITHOUT LEAVE/RUNAWAY (AWOL)

(FCS Policy – [AWOL Children and Youth Policy](#))

Resource Families must promptly report (no later than 24 hours from knowledge of the AWOL) any missing or runaway youth to:

- Law enforcement (to file a Missing Person's Report)
- The assigned PSW (during regular working hours)
- The FCS Hotline at 1-800-856-5553 (if after business hours or weekend)



OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES

PARTICIPATION IN CHILD AND FAMILY TEAM (CFT)

(FCS Policy [Placement Policy](#) and [CFT Policy](#))

A Child and Family Team (CFT) is a group of individuals that engage the children and the family in assessing, planning, and providing needed services. CFTs guide many vital decisions for the safety and well-being of children in the care of FCS. Teams may meet in person or communicate by various methods throughout the life of a case.

Resource Families and involved family members, service providers, extended family, coaches, and faith-based community-based organizations participate in the team. They may be asked to participate in team meetings in person or by phone throughout their care for a child, youth, or young adult.

MAINTAINING RECORDS FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND YOUNG ADULTS

(CDSS RFA - Written Directives § 11-07)

- The resource parent must maintain a separate, complete, and current record or file in the home for each child, youth, or young adult placed with them, including a current placement agreement, medical/dental, and educational records, with the name of the school attended, and case plan information.
- A record of all medical, dental, and mental health appointments must be maintained, including the doctor's and other medical providers' names and the dates of appointments.
- The RFA Social Worker will provide you with a binder that you can use to record and maintain forms and any other information.
- The binder/record should include a copy of the services plan or transitional independent living plan in the information maintained.

All information and records regarding children, youth, and young adults shall be confidential.

OTHER RECORD-KEEPING

In addition to maintaining medical and educational records, Resource Families are encouraged to document a child's time in their care for several important reasons:

- **Documenting special events or milestones in the life of a child**

Since you are the person who has daily interaction with the child, you will be there for many of their "firsts," when they roll over for the first time, first steps, first day of school, a first date, graduation, and many of other significant events in their life. Your documentation of these notable events will often be their only childhood record. Refer to [Form 1731 Record of Child's Events](#).

- **Record the child's life with your family.**

An excellent way to do this is by creating a scrapbook with photographs of the child, youth, or young adult at different ages, family trips, special days, school events, and birth parent visits; the kinds of things that, as adults, we reflect on to remind us of our history. Making a scrapbook can be a valuable and satisfying way to help a child, youth, or young adult understand their history and personal uniqueness. Resource parents should keep a record of schools attended, teachers, and pictures of school friends. These records may only be a way of passing on history that parents and their biological children share. Social workers can share ideas about making a special “Life Book” for a child.

For a list of information and forms to keep in the file, refer to [Form 1709 Resource Family – Child Record Keeping](#)

- **Foster Care Non-Discrimination Act**
(CDSS RFA - Written Directives § 06-06)

On September 6, 2003, the Foster Care Non-Discrimination Act was signed into Law. This Law prohibits discrimination in the California foster care system based on actual or perceived race, ethnic group identification, ancestry, national origin, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, mental or physical disability, or HIV status. Refer to the [\(AB458\) Fact Sheet of the California Foster Care Non-Discrimination Act](#) in the appendix.

- **Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity and Expression (SOGIE)**
(CDSS RFA - Written Directives § 6-05 & 11-01)

San Francisco Human Services Agency-Family & Children's Services actively works to educate care providers on the importance of protecting the rights of all children, youth, and young adults in care as they experience their individual growth and development.

Resource parents must understand that sexual orientation and expression are a continuum, often changing with little notice. Having this understanding will assist you in providing care to a child, youth, or young adult in a nurturing, respectful, and supportive way. As part of the Pre-Service Training required for all RFA care providers, you will attend training to help you better understand how to support SOGIE. The Agency expects all homes to welcome LGBTQ children, youth, and young adults, as with all others with varying life experiences and needs.

A Resource Family should respect the privacy and autonomy of a transgender child in their care. The child has the right to decide what information they want to share and with whom regarding their gender identity. The Resource Family should not disclose this information without the child's consent unless there is a legal or Court order.

For more information and support on this subject refer to the [Family Acceptance Project](#) at San Francisco State University.

- **Personal Rights**
(CDSS RFA - Written Directives § 11-08)

Children, youth, and young adults have personal rights accorded to them by state law. Refer to the Written Directives § 11-08 for a complete list of these rights.

Children and young adults are verbally informed and provided with a written copy of their rights by a social worker when they are initially placed in a home. Resource families are expected to have knowledge and understanding of these rights and their responsibility to safeguard them. If the child, youth, or young adult is absent when the resource family is provided with the personal rights [form 1820](#), the resource parent is expected to present the child, youth, or young adult with their rights. Youth in foster care may contact the Office of the California Foster Care Ombudsperson to file a complaint or obtain more information about their rights.

Foster Care Ombudsperson

(fosteryouthhelp.ca.gov)

Phone: 877-846-1602

Email: fosteryouthhelp@dss.ca.gov

- **Discipline**
(CDSS RFA - Written Directives § 6-06)

Any form of discipline which violates a child, youth, or young adult personal rights is prohibited. Raising and disciplining children today takes a willingness to utilize positive parenting skills. Talk to your RFA Social Worker about the Quality Parenting Initiative; and how the Agency can support and provide you with tools to manage the challenging behaviors of children and youth. Refer to the [San Francisco Human Services Agency Trauma Informed Discipline Statement & Philosophy](#) in the appendix

- **Telephones**
(CDSS RFA - Written Directives § 11-09)

- All Resource Family homes shall have telephone service, which is either cellular, internet, or landline, at all times.
- All children in out-of-home care have the right to make and receive confidential telephone calls. Resource parents cannot impose blanket restrictions on telephone access and usage.

- **Transportation**
(CDSS RFA - Written Directives § 11-10)

- A Resource Family shall ensure that transportation is provided for:
 - Medical, dental, or mental health appointments
 - Services detailed in the service plan, including visits with parents and siblings
 - School (Refer to Education Travel Reimbursement [PUB 463](#))
 - Extracurricular, enrichment, and social activities, provided the transportation to these activities is reasonable.

- When determining if the transportation to an activity is reasonable, the Resource Family may consider the location, frequency, cost, and time necessary to provide transportation.
- A Resource Family will ensure that all individuals who transport a child, youth, or young adult have a valid California or other state driver's license and use vehicles that are in safe operating condition.
- A Resource Family will use and ensure all individuals transported use the proper child safety passenger restraints (seat belts and car seats).
- If regularly providing transportation to school for a child in their care, including giving a bus or transit pass, Resource parents may qualify for Education Travel Reimbursement. Refer to FCS Travel Policy - [Caregivers Transporting Dependent Youth](#) for more information.

- **Smoke Free-Environments**

(CDSS RFA - Written Directives § 11-01(g))

The physical effects of exposure to smoke can be hazardous to infants and children whose bodies are still developing. According to the Centers for Disease Control, exposing children to secondhand smoke causes the following:

- Ear infections
- More frequent and severe asthma attacks
- Respiratory symptoms and infections (e.g., coughing, sneezing, shortness of breath, bronchitis, pneumonia, etc.)
- A greater risk for sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)
- Cancer

Resource Families shall maintain a smoke-free environment. Resource parents shall not smoke or permit any other person to smoke inside or outside on the grounds of the house when the child, youth, or young adult is present. Additionally, a resource parent must refrain from smoking in any motor vehicle used to transport a child. ([Health & Safety Code § 1530.7](#)). This also includes the use of vaping equipment.

- **Safe Sleep Practices**

(CDSS RFA - Written Directives § 10-04 and 11-01)

San Francisco County is committed to educating the public regarding safe sleep practices to prevent accidental infant and childhood deaths and to ensure safe sleep practices are used for children under the care and supervision of FCS.

Unsafe sleeping practices, which are **not permitted** in Resource Family homes, include:

- Adults, other children, or large pets cannot share a bed or sleep with an infant
- Placing an infant to sleep on an adult bed, couch, sofa bed, or soft surface
- Placing an infant to sleep with pillows, blankets, or other soft items

Refer to [Safe Sleep for Your Baby](#) Resource for more information in the appendix.

- **Food and Nutrition**

(CDSS RFA - Written Directives § 11-11)

- A Resource Family shall provide or ensure nutritious meals (at least three per day), age-appropriate food, snacks, and beverages, or any special dietary needs.
- The quantity and quality of food available to other household members shall be equally available to a child in care.
- A Resource Family shall invite a child, youth, or young adult to participate in all family meals.
- Infants shall be held during bottle-feeding using unbreakable bottles.
- A Resource Family may encourage a child, youth, or young adult to learn meal preparation as age and developmentally appropriate but shall not require a child to prepare meals. Furthermore, a youth or young adult may, but shall not be required to, prepare meals for others.

- **Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard**

(CDSS RFA - Written Directives § 11-12)

The goal of the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard is to help normalize the lives of children by allowing them to participate in activities, such as sleepovers at a friend's house, social events, school-sponsored field trips, and scouting. Participation in these activities is essential to a child's well-being and assists with developing valuable life skills.

Resource Families are expected to use the prudent parent standard when making decisions such as:

- Allowing the child to participate in age-appropriate extracurricular, enrichment, and social activities
- Use of occasional short-term babysitters and alternative caregivers
- Leaving a child alone without adult supervision or in a parked vehicle consistent with the requirements of [Vehicle Code § 15620](#)
- Access to fish ponds, fountains, creeks, and other bodies of water
- Access to household kitchen knives and appliances, disinfectants, and cleaning solutions
- Self-administration of medication.

When applying the standard, Resource Families are expected to consider the following factors when making decisions:

- The best interests of the child, youth, or young adult based on the information and history known
- The child's, youth's, or young adult's age, mental and physical health, behavioral history, maturity, and developmental level
- Any inherent risks of harm involved in the activity

For more information, refer to the Written Directives § 11-12, the [CDSS Reasonable and Prudent Parent](#) webpage, and [Frequently-Asked Questions](#) in the appendix.

Care and Supervision – Child Care

(CDSS RFA - Written Directives § 11-13 and [FCS Policy Alternative Care and Supervision](#))

A Resource Family may arrange for alternative care and supervision of a child, youth, or young adult placed in their care. The resource family is expected to use the prudent parent standard in selecting an alternate caregiver. Refer to the summary below and the Written Directives § 11-13 for details.

FOR MINOR DEPENDENTS (UNDER AGE 18)

(Written Directives § 11-13 (d))

LEAVING CHILDREN ALONE

Resource parents may leave a child (age ten or older) without adult supervision alone on an occasional basis. A Resource Family shall apply the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard as outlined in Written Directives § 11-12 when deciding to leave a child over age 10 in the home unsupervised, such as considering if the child has the maturity to be left alone without an adult supervision.

- A child **may not be left alone overnight**.
- Before leaving a child alone, a resource parent will ensure the child knows the following:
 1. emergency procedures
 2. where emergency numbers are posted
 3. where and how to contact the resource parent

OCCASIONAL SHORT-TERM BABYSITTER - UNDER 24 HOURS

(Written Directives § 11-13 (c)(1)(A)-(B))

Resource parents may use short-term babysitters for care for less than 24 hours. The Resource Family must apply reasonable and prudent parent standards. An occasional babysitter may be under 18 if the Resource Family finds youth to provide adequate care. A dependent child or non-minor dependent shall never babysit.

If the care is provided in the babysitter's home, in that case, the Resource Family shall use reasonable and prudent parental standards to determine that the babysitter's house is safe and appropriate and that the child's personal rights will be respected.

ALTERNATIVE CAREGIVER - 24 TO 72 HOURS

(Written Directives § 11-13 (c)(2)(A)-(E))

If a Resource Family anticipates being absent from the home for longer than 24 hours but less than 72 hours, the following is required:

- The alternative caregiver must be 18 years or older.
- The Resource Family must notify the assigned PSW of their absence and the alternative caregiver's name, telephone number, and address.

- If the care will take place in the alternative caregiver's home, then the Resource Family is expected to use the reasonable prudent parent standard to assess the home's safety and ensure that the child's personal rights will be respected.

ALTERNATIVE CAREGIVER – OVER 72 HOURS

(Written Directives § 11-13 (c)(2)(A)-(G))

- These absences/arrangements must have *prior approval* from the assigned PSW.
- The exact requirements apply regarding the alternative caregiver as described above.
- The Resource Family shall provide the alternative caregiver with the following:
 1. Information about the child's emotional, behavioral, medical, or physical conditions.
 2. Any medication the alternative caregiver must assist the child, youth, or young adult with taking, consistent with instructions from the prescribing physician.
 3. The name and telephone number of the assigned PSW and the Resource Family's emergency contact information while they are away.

FOR NON-MINOR DEPENDENT (YOUNG ADULTS)

([FCS Policy Alternative Care and Supervision](#))

- **Young Adults home alone for up to 72 hours**

A Resource Family may leave a non-minor dependent home alone for **up to 72 hours** as long as the following requirements are met:

1. The resource parent must consider the non-minor dependent's maturity, experience, and ability when leaving them home alone without adult supervision.
2. The young adult dependent must know the location of emergency telephone numbers and how to contact the resource parent in an emergency.
3. The young adult must know the emergency procedures in place for the home.

- **Young Adults home alone for more than 72 hours**

To leave a non-minor dependent home alone for **more than 72 hours**, the following must occur:

1. The resource parent must obtain prior approval from the assigned PSW before leaving the non-minor dependent home alone.
2. The resource parent must provide the dates of absence and emergency telephone numbers where they can be reached during their absence.
3. The resource parent must ensure that the child of the non-minor dependent, if any, is provided with care and supervision during their absence.

- **Subsidized Child Care**

(FCS Policy Manual – [Subsidized Child Care](#))

- **Eligibility Requirements for Children and Non-Minor Dependents**

The County will make subsidized childcare payments for children in foster care, which are:

- Under age 13 and residing with Resource Families, living within or outside of San Francisco County

- Age 13-16 who require overnight child care because the Resource Family is working graveyard or swing shifts (requires Program Director approval) or
- Age 13-21 who require child care or supervision due to a physical, mental, or developmental disability or other similar condition verified yearly by an IEP, IFSP, Regional Center Report, or proof of SSI. It requires approval by a Program Director.

Subsidized child care will also be available for non-dependents if they meet the age and special needs criteria listed above and are:

- Non-dependent children of a minor or non-minor dependent parent who both reside in the same Resource Family Home
- Non-dependent children living in the same home with a dependent sibling, and the need is documented in the child's case plan or
- KinGAP or Non-Related Legal Guardianship (NRLG) children.

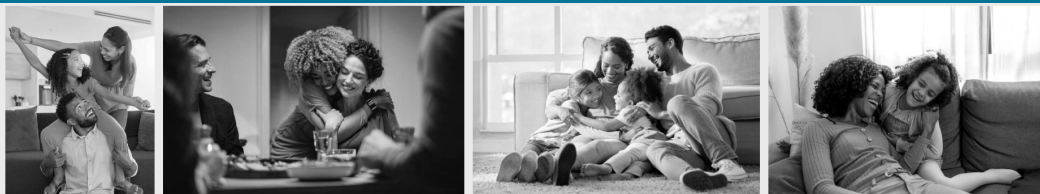
○ **Eligibility Requirements for the Caregiver**

In addition to the eligibility criteria for children, caregivers must meet one of the following conditions: the resource parent must be working, seeking work, participating in school, foster parent training, or Child and Family Team meetings (CFTs).

○ **Eligible Child Care Types:**

- **Licensed Child Care:** resource parents may arrange for care provided by a licensed child day care facility, as defined in [Health and Safety Code section 1596.750](#), or a licensed family day care home, as described in [Health and Safety Code section 1596.78](#).
- **License-Exempt Individual Care Providers:** individuals who care for children from only one family other than their own (typically grandparents, aunts, uncles, and friends). This type of provider is approved on a case-by-case basis.
- **License-Exempt Programs:** these programs are operated on public school sites by the school or school district, with their employees, for school-age children and primarily for children from that school or district or located at a private elementary school, operated by the school with its employees and more than 95 percent of children in care are from their school.

For all subsidized childcare, the resource parent will contact the assigned PSW to initiate the request.



Respite Services

(Written Directives § 11-13 (c)(3))

FCS contracts with [Family Support Services](#) (FSS) to provide short-term respite for Resource Families. The assigned PSW will refer resource parents for respite if requested.

Respite care provides resource parents with short-term child care and temporary relief.

Respite may be planned or offered during times of crisis.

To schedule respite care, contact the **PSW** assigned to the child/youth case or the **Respite Coordinator** at **415-861-4284 ext. 3035** during business hours. Resource parents can call directly to complete intake. Family Support Services will verify eligibility. For **Emergency After-Hours**, contact: **415-279-3215**.

Please note that respite differs from childcare. Respite services provide care for short periods when resource parents plan to be away from home. Respite services are separate from routine or ongoing childcare.



Before leaving a child, youth, or young adult in the care of another caregiver, the Resource Family should provide the following information to the alternate caregiver:

1. Provide information about the child's emotional, behavioral, medical, or physical conditions.
2. Any medication must be given to a child when the alternate caregiver supervises the child, youth, or young adult.
3. Provide the name and telephone number of the assigned PSW.
4. Provide the resource parent's emergency contact information.



Care and Supervision of Young Adults (Non-Minor Dependents)

(CDSS RFA - Written Directives § 11-13[j])

- A Resource Family will provide care and supervision according to the young adult's needs, service plan, and Transitional Independent Living Plan (TILP).
- A Resource Family is expected to assist the young adult with developing the skills necessary for self-sufficiency, including but not limited to the following:
 - Financial literacy
 - Nutrition & healthy food choices
 - Child care
 - Automotive maintenance
 - Access to community resources
 - Self-care, including laundry
 - Developing and reaching goals
 - Identifying a suitable home, grocery shopping, meal preparation, and home maintenance
 - Educational and career development
 - Obtaining medical, dental, vision, and mental health care
 - Safe sex and reproductive health information
 - Drug and alcohol abuse awareness and prevention



Extracurricular, Enrichment, Cultural and Social Activities

(CDSS RFA - Written Directives § 11-14)

A Resource Family will encourage participation in extracurricular, enrichment, and social activities. These activities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Sports
- Youth development activities
- Use of computer equipment
- School activities (e.g., band, dances, field trips)
- Leisure activities (bike riding, socializing with friends)
- Sleepover with friends
- Having visitors in the home
- Use of a cell phone

The Resource Family will apply the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard when determining whether to allow a child, youth, or young adult to participate in an appropriate extracurricular, enrichment, or social activity. Refer to the [FAQs for Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard](#).

For youth 16 years or older or young adults, a Resource Family will provide access to information regarding available vocational and post-secondary educational options. The information may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Admission criteria for universities, colleges, trade and vocational schools
- Informational brochures, internet research, campus tours on post-secondary education or vocational schools, independent living skills programs, employment-related programs, and other local resources to assist the youth.
- Community or school-sponsored events promote post-secondary or vocational schools, programs, internships, volunteerism, or employment.
- Financial aid information includes scholarships, grants, loans, and aid for current or former foster youth.
- Career options, requirements, and salary information for trade, vocational or professional careers.

Refer to the appendix for a list of internet resources for [Post-Secondary Education Programs](#).



Confidentiality

(CDSS RFA - Written Directives § 11-08)

As resource parents of a child, youth, or young adult in care, resource families are required by law to protect information about children in their care. This information is confidential and should only be shared by Resource Families when necessary to obtain social and health services, enroll children or youth in school and extracurricular activities, and update social workers and the Court about essential developments affecting children, youth, or young adults in care. Sharing, publishing, disclosing, or permitting/causing information to be published regarding a child, youth, or young adult in care and their family may not only damage your relationship with the child, youth, young adult, or family but is also against the Law.

Social media posting (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, etc.) of children or youth is not permitted and is considered a breach of confidentiality.

The State of California Welfare and Institutions Code Section 827 states: “... ***An intentional violation of the confidentiality provisions of this paragraph is a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed five hundred dollars (\$500).***”

If you have questions about what may be appropriate information to share, please consult with the assigned PSW for guidance or suggest that the person requesting the information contact the PSW.

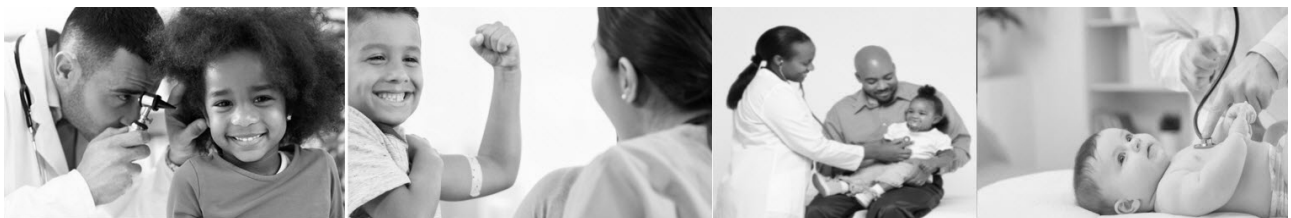
Medical Care

(FCS Policy [Consent for Ordinary Care by Resource Families](#))

Resource Families are legally authorized to consent to standard medical and dental treatment for the child or youth, including but not limited to immunizations, physical examinations, and X-rays. Resource Families **may not** authorize mental health treatment or non-routine medical care such as surgery, blood transfusions, or any procedure that requires general anesthesia. Minors can consent to some medical treatment; refer to the FCS policy on [Minor Consent Laws](#) for medical care.

Resource Families should have the following documents when seeking medical care.

1. Child's or youth's Medi-Cal ID card.
2. Copy of the medical consent signed by the parents or the Court, if applicable.



ROUTINE MEDICAL CARE

Resource parents are expected to schedule and take the child(ren) and youth for routine preventative health care, such as physical examinations, immunizations, dental check-ups, eye examinations, and any other care considered regular medical care, including follow-up appointments.

The assigned PSW is responsible for assisting you in obtaining past medical records and informing you of any ongoing or chronic medical conditions.

- The assigned PSW must provide you with medical information within the first 30 days of placement.
- FCS encourages resource parents to take the child or youth to a medical exam within the first 30 days of placement.
- If the child or youth has immediate medical needs, you should also discuss these needs with the assigned PSW.
- The assigned PSW may need to help you make special arrangements to meet any special needs, such as seeing a specialist or monitoring medications the child or youth may need.

A Resource Family should regularly arrange routine immunizations, medical examinations, dental check-ups, and eye examinations. A resource parent is expected to ensure regular health screenings under the [Child Health and Disability Program \(CHDP\)](#). If the resource parent has further questions about the general guidelines for regular check-ups, additional medical questions, or needs information on the assigned Public Health Nurse, they may contact the Nurse of the Day Monday-Friday, 8:00 am-5:00 pm at 415-558-2656 or by email at NOD.Line@sfgov.org.

The assigned PSW and Public Health Nurse should be informed of the results of any examinations. Resource parents must keep an updated record of the Health and Education Passport (HEP) and copies of the 1132C Health and Dental form completed by a medical professional in the HEP folder to document medical history and treatment. The 1132 form should be completed for all medical visits. A copy of the completed 1132C form should be sent to the assigned PSW and the FCS Nursing Unit using the self-addressed CHDP envelope provided. The PSW and assigned Public Health Nurse should also be informed of appointments, ongoing needs, and medical health progress. To access the electronic version of the 1132C form, refer to the [List of Resource Family Forms](#) in the appendix. Forms can be copied or scanned and emailed to NOD.Line@sfgov.org or faxed to 415-355-2357

If a child has a non-routine medical problem and needs surgery or major treatment or is ill for an extended period, the resource parent must immediately inform the assigned PSW. The PSW will need to involve parents, and in some cases, the Court to consent to treatment or surgery. Young adults can legally consent to medical treatment or surgery; however, the assigned PSW should be notified.

ADMINISTERING OVER-THE-COUNTER AND PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS

([Health and Safety Code 1507.25](#))

When a child, youth, or young adult has a health condition that requires medication, the resource parent shall comply with the following:

- Prescription medication must be administered as directed on the label or in writing by the medical professional.
- Non-prescription medication must be administered as directed on the label or by the appropriate medical professional.
- When administering medication "as needed" or "when necessary," the resource parent must document the date, time, and dose of the drug administered on the medication log, form 1721 Current Medication Record.
- If determined as appropriate by a medical professional, a child or youth can self-administer medication, and the resource parent is expected to assist or monitor the child or youth during the self-administration of medication.
- Medication shall be stored in the original container with the original unaltered label.

Psychotropic medications can only be given when the Unified Family Court

approves the medication based on a physician's recommendation. The physician must complete a "Prescribing Physician's Statement" JV-220a form and provide the completed form to the assigned PSW, who will submit the request to the Court for review and authorization. The JV-220 form is submitted to the Court every six months or when there is a change in psychotropic medications.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL ASSISTANCE, INJECTIONS, AND SELF-ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATIONS

- Prescription injections must be administered as directed on the label or in writing by a medical professional.
- If determined as appropriate by a medical professional, a child or youth trained by a medical professional can self-administer injected medication. However, the resource parent is expected to assist or monitor the self-administration of drugs, including documentation of the date, time, and dose of all injections and proper storage of medication so that it is not accessible to other children.
- A resource parent, trained by a medical professional, may administer insulin injections, emergency medical assistance, and injections for severe hypoglycemia and anaphylactic shock to a child or youth in care. The date, time, and dose of injection must be documented.
- The resource parent shall ensure the date, time, and results of glucose testing and monitoring are documented by the person assisting with the testing.
- The resource parent shall ensure that any persons, who provide emergency medical assistance and injections, are trained by a medical professional.

YOUNG ADULTS AND MEDICATIONS

- Young adults are responsible for their health decisions, including using and controlling over-the-counter and prescribed medication.
- Resource parents should encourage taking medication responsibly and as prescribed.
- Resource parents are expected to educate them about storing medication so that it is not accessible to other children in the home.

MAJOR TREATMENT OR SURGERY

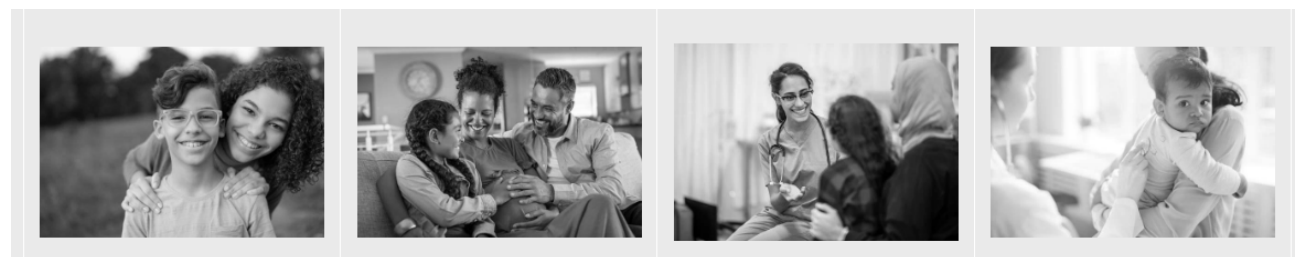
Except in an emergency, if a child or youth needs a surgical procedure, the assigned PSW will contact their parents to request they sign the necessary medical consent. If the parents object to a medically necessary treatment or their whereabouts are unknown, FCS will get Court authorization for the treatment. To request Court approval, the assigned PSW will obtain the physician's statement, which includes the need for the treatment/surgery and possible risks.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

In a medical emergency for a child, youth, or young adult, **call 911 immediately.**

After the emergency is under control, the resource parent must contact the assigned PSW immediately. If a resource parent cannot reach the assigned PSW, they should contact their supervisor or the Duty Worker during business hours (Monday through Friday, 8 am-5 pm).

If the emergency occurs after business hours, on weekends or holidays, the resource parent must report emergencies to the FCS 24-hour Hotline, (800) 856-5553 or (415) 558-2650.



Court Orders

The Unified Family Court will make specific orders for visitation with the parent(s), siblings, or grandparents, participation in therapy, etc. Resource Families must follow these orders exactly. The assigned PSW will explain the Court Orders to Resource Families. **Be sure that you understand each order as it pertains to your responsibilities.**

QUICK GUIDE FOR INFORMATION THAT AGENCY STAFF SHOULD DISCLOSE TO RESOURCE FAMILIES

The California Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) requires that social workers provide resource parents with information about children placed in their homes, which includes medical and education information, dependency court status, needs of the children, and required services. The information is to provide to resource parents within a time specified by the WIC.

TYPE OF INFORMATION	DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS	LEGAL AUTHORITY
Child's current medication and medical treatments.	All prescribed medications for the child that the Agency has and that are in effect at the time of the placement, AND information regarding any treatments that are known to the Agency and that are in effect at the time of the placement (within 48 hours of placement).	WIC §16010(a), 16010.4(e), 16010.5
Any known or suspected dangerous behavior of the child.	Upon arranging the child's placement	MPP 31-405(t)
Child's Medical (Medi-Cal) Identification Number or Group Health Insurance Plan Number	As soon as possible	WIC §16010.4(e) 16503.5(d)
The child's known medical problems, immunization record, past health problems, and hospitalizations.	Within 30 days from the initial placement Can be included in the Health and Education Passport	WIC §16010(a)

VISITATION AND RESOURCE PARENTS

(FCS [Family Visitation Policy](#))

Resource parents are critical in supporting reunification and permanency planning for families.

As the child's resource parent, you may have a role in facilitating visitation between children in foster care and their parents, siblings, and relatives.



TRAVELING WITH DEPENDENT CHILDREN

(FCS [Travel Policy](#))

The Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard allows Resource Families to provide consent for "day-to-day" travel, including allowing the child to travel outside the County but not including overnight stays. However, as FCS is responsible for children's safety under the Department's supervision, travel beyond "day to day" requires additional notification and authorization.

These rules apply per the San Francisco Superior Court Local Rule 12.23 - Authorization for Travel by Out-of-Home Placement Dependent Children within the United States and U.S. Territories.

- In cases when a caregiver requests travel for a dependent youth within the United States and its territories for less than 30 days, FCS may authorize such travel without parental consent or a court order:
 - Only notice to the parent and counsel is required.
 - The parent(s) may be notified verbally or in writing (letter, email, or text).
- In cases where the request for a dependent youth to travel is for over 30 days or outside the United States and its territories, FCS must obtain authorization from the Court with a minimum of 15 days' notice to parents and all attorneys of record.

Therefore, given these legally required timelines, resource parents must provide ample advance notice of travel to ensure the assigned PSW has sufficient time to request Court authorization.



Placement Notifications

PLAN TO REMOVE A CHILD FROM A RESOURCE HOME

[Assembly Bill \(AB\) 2247](#), effective January 1, 2019, and outlined in [All County Letter 19-26](#), changed the Law regarding placement change procedures. Per WIC §16010.7, whenever the County placing Agency finds that a placement change is necessary, the PSW must provide written notice to the following parties at least 14 days before the change: parent(s), resource parent(s), child's attorney, the child if age ten or older.

PSWs do not need to provide written notice under the following circumstances.

- When it is determined that a child remaining in the current placement or providing prior notice poses a risk to the health or safety of the child or other children in the home.
- When a court order initiates the placement change
- The Child and Family Team unanimously agree to waive the notice requirements.
- The placement change is planned with input from the Child and Family Team and is documented in the case plan or file.
- The child is being placed in an adoptive home.

RESOURCE FAMILY REQUESTING PLACEMENT CHANGE

The Agency understands that there are situations where a resource parent might see the need to request a change of placement for a child or youth in their care. The Agency is committed to preserving placements for children as much as possible to minimize trauma and therefore recommends that resource parents consider taking the following actions before changing a placement.

- Notify the assigned PSW as soon as possible to discuss concerns; the PSW will assist in accessing necessary services to address the concerns and support the child in care.
- Notify the child's therapist (if the child is in treatment).
- In crises, the resource parent can call the **Seneca Mobile Response Team** at **(877) 305-8989**. If you live beyond Seneca's service area, contact **FURS** for assistance at **1-833-939-FURS**.
- Talk with the assigned PSW about having a CFT meeting to develop strategies to support the child in your care.

If, after pursuing the above efforts to preserve the placement, the resource parent still wishes to request that the child's placement be changed, the resource parent will need to provide **at least 14-day written notice*** to the assigned PSW and Placement Unit at hsa.fcs.placement@sfgov.org or 415-401-4300.

*The notice is only effective once the PSW is notified. As soon as the resource parents notify the PSW, the PSW will begin the process with the Placement Unit and send the required 14-day notice to all parties: parent(s), resource parent(s), child's attorney, and the child if over 10 years.

Monitoring Resource Families

(CDSS RFA - Written Directives § 9-01)

BIENNIAL UPDATES

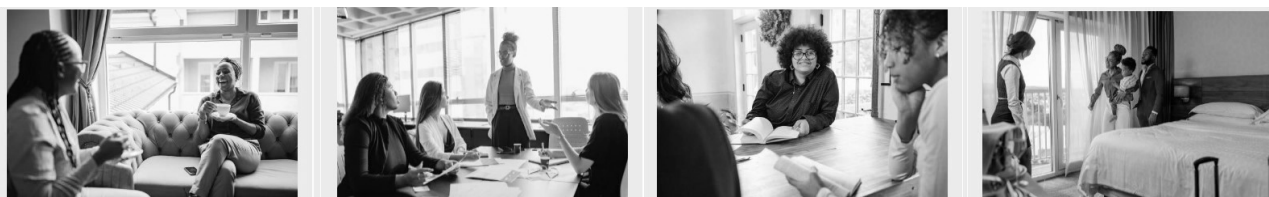
RFA Approval must be updated biennially (every two years). The update can occur up to 60 days before the approval anniversary date and no later than 30 days after the 24-month due date.

The following is required for Biennial approval of an RFA Home:

1. Annual eight hours of continuing education/training for each resource parent
2. Updated written report to any areas needed, including any changes to income, marital status, employment status, or physical/mental health of any resident in the home
3. Background checks of any **new adults** in the home
4. Interviews with any new or existing residents living in the home
5. Home environment assessment
6. Verification of current CPR/First Aid certification
7. A review of children's records (if any children were placed)

A Corrective Action Plan (CAP) is developed with the Resource Family if any deficiencies are identified; Per [Health and Safety Code § 1524.01](#), the approval shall be forfeited by operation of law if the Resource Family fails to cooperate with the biennial update within 30 days of the date of the written notice to the Resource Family.

In the case of an Indian child, the County shall contact and collaborate with the child's Tribe when completing an approval update to ensure Resource Family Approval continues to meet the prevailing social and cultural standards of the Indian community. If a Corrective Action Plan is necessary, the County shall invite the Indian Child's Tribe to collaborate and participate in developing a corrective action plan.



OTHER APPROVAL UPDATES

Approval updates are different from biennial updates in that they are triggered by a new event or significant change, such as the resource family moving to a new home, the addition or removal of a resource parent, or a new child being placed in a home that is approved only for a specific child. These updates are covered in the Written Directives §§ 9-03, 9-04, and 9-05. If any deficiencies are identified, a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) is developed with the Resource Family. Approval Updates are documented on the RFA-06 form, and a copy is provided to the Resource Family.

APPROVAL UPDATE DUE TO A SIGNIFICANT CHANGE

(WDs § 9-03)

All the exact requirements for the biennial update must be completed, except the Annual Training. A Corrective Action Plan (CAP) is developed with the Resource Family if any deficiencies are identified during the update.

APPROVAL UPDATE DUE TO RELOCATION OF A RESOURCE FAMILY

(WDs § 9-04)

The assigned RFA Social Worker must complete the update of the new residence any time a family moves to a new address. The Resource Family must notify the PSW or the assigned RFA Social Worker at least 30 days before the change of residence or within five (5) business days after the move if the move is an emergency. All the requirements for a biennial update must be completed except the Annual Training requirements.

When a Resource Family relocates outside San Francisco County, the assigned RFA Social Worker will complete the approval update. The RFA Social Worker and the resource family will decide if the Resource Family will continue to be monitored by San Francisco County or if the RFA Social Worker will transfer the approval to the RFA unit in the County of residence.

APPROVAL UPDATE DUE TO THE ADDITION OR REMOVAL OF A RESOURCE PARENT

(WDs § 9-05)

When a resource parent requests **to add a new resource parent** to the approval, all application requirements must be completed as described in the Written Directives. All the exact requirements for a biennial update must be met, except the Annual Training requirements. The new resource parent must complete Pre-Approval Training and CPR and First Aid certification. If a resource parent requests **to be removed from the approval**, they must submit their request to the RFA Social Worker in writing.

INACTIVE STATUS

The Resource Family is not eligible for inactive status if a child or young adult is currently placed in the home. Inactive status can be used as an alternative to approval being forfeited. A Resource Family may request to be placed on inactive status for a period not exceeding two years for reasons such as the birth of a child, adoption of a child, medical condition or surgery, job loss, relocation, or death of a family member.

To end inactive status, the Resource Family must give 30 day written notice so the County can perform an approval update. When the approval update is completed, the family may care for a child, youth, or young adult. (Refer to Written Directives § 10-02: Inactive Status)

Resource families will be notified within 60 calendar days before the two-year expiration date of inactive status. When a resource family fails to respond or cooperate with an approval update to return from inactive status, the County will provide the family with written notice and follow procedures described in Written Directives § 9-02 – Update of Resource Family Approval.

ANNUAL TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

(CDSS RFA - Written Directives § 8-01)

All Resource Families are required to complete a minimum of 8 hours of continuing education each year. The resource family can complete these hours in a variety of ways.

Throughout the year, San Francisco County Human Services Agency and the Parenting for Permanency College offer training and classes. Resource parents can complete annual training through various providers, including local city colleges, child welfare conferences, foster parent associations, and relevant online training.

CPR and First Aid are separate requirements and do not count towards the 8 hours of annual training.

Periodically, San Francisco County approves, and sponsors approved resource families to participate in training/conferences. The RFA Liaison/designee will send an announcement with a list of upcoming conferences to all approved resource families. Through a random selection process, resource families will be selected to participate in a conference sponsored by the Agency.

Eligibility requirements to attend agency-sponsored conferences:

- Have a current Resource Family approval through the City and County of San Francisco
- Be able to take placements and are not on hold by the Agency
- Be in good standing and active, and required annual training hours must be up to date
- Have had a child placed in their home in the last two years
- Reside in one of the nine Bay Area counties (Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, Sonoma or Sacramento)
- Be willing to report back about the conference in a FCS meeting, RFA support group, newsletter, or another forum requested by FCS.

Refer to [Training Resources for Resource Families](#) in the appendix.

COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN TRAINING

As of January 13, 2021, the state requires that resource families caring for a child age ten or older participate in training about best practices for providing care and supervision to children who have been or are at risk of being commercially sexually exploited. Resource parents must complete the training in the first 12 months of initial approval of a resource family.

Online training videos are available; the resource parent can obtain proof of completion. Refer to [Training Resources for Resource Families](#) in the appendix.

Complaint and Investigation Procedures

(CDSS RFA - Written Directives § 9-06A and ACL 05-09)

RFA COMPLAINTS

RFA Social Workers ensure that Resource Families meet the standards of care. They respond to complaints, identify areas of improvement, and enforce corrective actions for Resource Families.

The RFA Social Worker is responsible for evaluating and investigating any information presented by any person who asserts or indicates that a Resource Family may not have or may not be meeting the requirements of one or more of the Written Directives or applicable laws.

An RFA Social Worker will conduct a complaint investigation within ten (10) calendar days of receipt of the complaint. Visits to the Resource Family home to investigate a complaint will be unannounced, and the identity of every complainant is confidential and shall not be disclosed. The RFA Social Worker will provide the resource family with a brochure explaining the complaint investigation and appeal process.

When investigating a complaint, the County will take all reasonable steps to ascertain the validity of the complaint, including but not limited to inspecting the home environment, conducting interviews with any person who may know the circumstances, obtaining or reviewing relevant records, observing children in the home, making additional unannounced visits to the house, as needed. When visiting a Resource Family home, the investigating RFA Social Worker shall ensure that the Resource Family is aware of their rights and responsibilities during the investigation, including all appeal rights for any actions taken due to the investigation.

FCS will try to resolve a complaint within 60 days of the initial visit. Upon completion of the investigation, the County will notify the Resource Family of its finding: Substantiated, inconclusive, or unfounded. A complaint that is determined to be unfounded is confidential. A complaint, substantiated or inconclusive, is not confidential and is public record.

COMPLAINTS OR ALLEGATIONS OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT

When a report is made to the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline with an allegation of suspected child abuse or neglect in a resource home, an Emergency Response (ER) investigation is initiated will be completed to determine if it is safe for the child, youth, or young adult, who are under FCS supervision, to remain in the home or if they must be removed from the home.

An Investigating RFA Social Worker conducts a concurrent but separate investigation to determine if there has been a violation of the Written Directives. The RFA Social Worker and ER PSW will coordinate their investigations, whenever possible, to avoid multiple interviews.

PLACEMENT HOLD

When there are complaint investigations against a resource home, the resource parent can only receive new placements or provide respite care once the complaint investigation is complete. The RFA Social Worker will inform you that your home is under a complaint investigation and when the investigation is completed. Consult with your RFA Social Worker if you have further questions.

At the onset of an RFA complaint investigation, a determination is made if the resource family home will be on "Placement Hold" based on the allegations in the complaint and the outcome of the investigation.

If a resource home is on "Placement Hold," no child under the department's supervision may be placed in the home. When a resource home is on "Placement Hold," the resource family will receive a letter from the Placement Unit to inform the resource family of the placement hold.

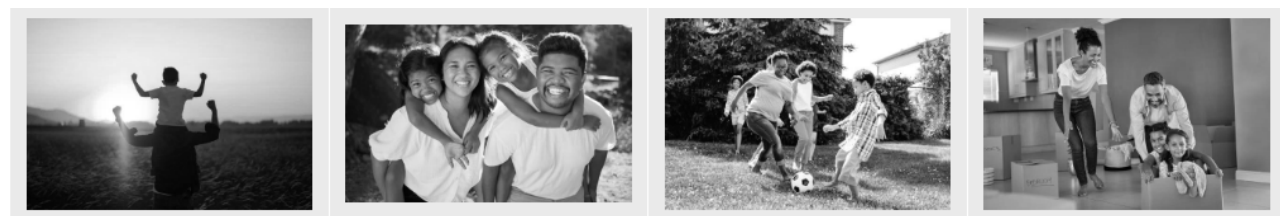
The length of a "Placement Hold" will depend on the nature of the allegation and whether there is a corrective action plan that the resource family needs to complete. The placement unit may lift the hold upon completing the investigation and any subsequent Corrective Action plans. The placement unit will send a letter notifying the resource family that the hold has been lifted, and placement in the home can resume.

CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN

(CDSS RFA - Written Directives § 9-07)

A Corrective Action Plan (CAP) is a plan developed by the County that describes how a Resource Family is not conforming to the requirements of an applicable statute, regulation, or Written Directives and the steps the Resource Family and the County will take to ensure that the Resource Family corrects identified deficiencies within a specified time. If a CAP is necessary, the RFA Social Worker will complete the CAP form with a deadline for correcting the deficiency.

A CAP differs from a Documented Alternative Plan (DAP) in that no alternative arrangement is allowed for the standard; the resource family must correct the deficiency. These deficiencies could affect a child's health and safety (for example, an uncovered pool, lack of a smoke detector, an unsecured firearm, or a broken window.) These deficiencies can be observed during any visit to the home or a complaint investigation.



Grievance Procedures

(CDSS RFA - Written Directives § 11-10)

APPEAL RIGHTS

When the Agency takes an adverse action due to a complaint investigation, the resource family can appeal any action they disagree with. The investigating RFA Social Worker will ensure that the Resource Family knows their rights and responsibilities during the complaint investigation process.

To dispute the findings of the complaint or a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) provided by the County, the Resource Family must provide a written request to the County first level RFA manager (listed on the CAP form [RFA809C](#) or Complaint Investigation Report Form [RFA9099](#)) within ten (10) calendar days from the date of receipt of the findings or CAP. Upon receipt, the County will review these forms at the Supervisor, Manager, and, if necessary, Program Director level.

DENIAL OF THE RESOURCE FAMILY APPROVAL

If the application is denied

- The Applicant will receive a notice of action and instructions for appealing the decision.
- The action will be final if the decision is not appealed on or before the due date.

Reasons to deny may include, but are not limited to:

- inability to cooperate or failure to meet requirements
- non-exemptible criminal record or child abuse allegations of a serious nature
- home did not meet Buildings & Grounds standards, per RFA Written Directives and Health & Safety Codes

RESCINDING A RESOURCE FAMILY APPROVAL

The Agency may rescind the approval for the following:

- false or misleading statements to maintain approval
- violation of any applicable law or the Written Directives
- conduct threatening the health and safety of the child/young adult
- using child/youth/NMD funds/property/services for personal benefit or in a way not consistent with the child's best interests

If your approval is rescinded

- You will receive a notice of action. The notification will include information on which the Agency rescinded the approval, an explanation of the resource parent's rights, and instructions on requesting a hearing through the California State Hearings Division.
- The action will be final if the decision is not appealed on or before the due date.

Concurrent Planning (Adoption/Guardianship)

The foster care system is a quick response while trying to achieve a safe and permanent home for children. A permanent family and stable home are vital to a young person's development. Children receive love, protection, stability, and a sense of belonging in a permanent home. A permanent home is essential and very personal. When a child or youth cannot return to live with their parent/guardian, it is crucial to have a concurrent plan for where they should live permanently. It may be an emotionally difficult decision for relatives, as the need for a permanent home may conflict with the loyalties family members have to one another.

FCS is committed to concurrent planning for every child, youth, or young adult in out-of-home care. Therefore, the Resource Family Approval process includes a permanency assessment to determine a resource parent's willingness to be a concurrent home through guardianship or adoption. Additionally, the assigned PSW will discuss with the Resource Family their desire to commit to being a permanent home for the children in their care.

When a child or youth cannot reunify with either one or both of their parents or guardians, the most preferred permanent plan for the child or youth is adoption to provide the highest legal level of stability and permanence, followed by guardianship. The following information is to assist you in understanding the difference between legal guardianship and adoption. PSWs will discuss your willingness to be a permanent home for children in care.

ADOPTION

(Written Directives Article 13)

Adoption means that the legal rights and responsibilities of the birth parent are terminated, and the adoptive parent is given all the authority and responsibility of a legal parent.

SOME IMPORTANT FACTS TO KNOW ABOUT ADOPTION

- Kinship adoption is viable for family and non-related extended family members.
- Adoption is an option for older youth and young adults, not just a plan for infants and younger children.
- Adoption does not have to mean losing contact with the birth family. Birth family contact is an option if all parties agree.
- Termination of parental rights does not have to mean severing relationships.
- Adoption by a relative does not need to mean changing familial relationships. For example, a grandparent who adopts a grandchild becomes the legal parent but can choose to remain, in fact, the child's grandparent.
- Voluntary mediation services are available to develop a Post-Adoption Agreement between adoptive and birth families for ongoing contact and visitation.
- The child's original birth certificate is amended after the adoption; however, the child's name does not have to be changed due to adoption.

- Financial support and post-adoption services are available after adopting a court-dependent child.
- Young adult adoption is an option.

GUARDIANSHIP

A guardian is appointed by the Court to care for a child or youth until they are 18.

A guardian is not a child's or youth's legal parent. Guardianship does not give all the parent's legal rights and responsibilities to a guardian the way adoption does to an adoptive parent.

When establishing guardianship, the Court grants the guardian the right to make most decisions regarding the child or youth.

ABOUT LEGAL GUARDIANSHIP

- When Legal Guardianship is ordered, juvenile court dependency is dismissed.
- Birth parents can stay involved, giving children two sets of parents. Guardianship can benefit some families depending on the relationship with the birth parent(s).
- Birth parents maintain the right to have reasonable visitation.
- Birth parents can petition the Court to regain custody if their circumstances change.
- A Guardian may petition the Court to have the guardianship overturned, or the guardian may return to Court and request the child be returned to the birth parent(s).
- Relative Legal Guardians in California may be eligible for financial assistance through the Kin-GAP Program. This funding is based on the basic foster care rate and may include a special rate, depending on the child's or youth's needs.
- Non-relative Legal Guardians may be eligible for foster care funding, and a special rate may be considered, depending on the child's needs. Legal guardianship ends at age 18.
- Funding for non-related Legal Guardians of former foster youth may be extended to age 21 if the young adult meets specific eligibility criteria.
- Funding may continue for relative Legal Guardians through the Kin-GAP Program to age 21 if the young adult meets specific criteria.

SOME QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHEN MAKING A COMMITMENT TO A CHILD OR YOUTH WITH A PLAN OF LEGAL GUARDIANSHIP.

- Has permanency been explored, and have the child's or youth's wishes and needs been considered?
- With Legal Guardianship, will the child or youth feel like a second-class family member?
- Will the child or youth fear being kicked out if they misbehave?
- Are you making a permanent commitment to raise and be a lifelong family to the child or youth?

Extended Foster Care

(FCS Policy [Extended Foster Care](#))

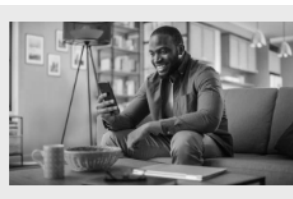
Beginning in January 2012, youth exiting the Foster Care System at 18 were allowed to remain in care until age 21. These young adults, between 18 and 21, are called non-minor dependents. Extended Foster Care (EFC) rules must be met to receive assistance after age of 18. Extended Foster Care (EFC) requirements:

To remain in care, a young adult must do the following:

1. Sign a mutual agreement to remain in care
2. Remain in an approved home/SILP
3. Meet at least one participation criteria:
 - Complete high school or equivalency program (does not have to be completed by the 19th birthday)
 - Enroll in college or vocational school
 - Participate in a program or activity that promotes or removes barriers to employment
 - Be employed at least 80 hours per month
 - Be incapable of participating in any activity described in the other four (4) requirements due to documented medical conditions.

SUPERVISED INDEPENDENT LIVING SITUATION (SILP)

A SILP is an option for a young adult upon agency approval. This option allows the young adult to live independently (e.g., dorm or with roommates) and receive a monthly payment directly. The young adult may manage their own money or have the assistance of someone they designate. A SILP can be with a resource family or the young adult's parent/non-custodial parent or guardians from which they were removed. A SILP can be a rented space, room, or apartment from family, friends, or others. Young adults are eligible for CalFresh/SNAP and continue to receive Medi-Cal at no cost.



Appendix

Resource Family Forms

Form #	Form Name and Purpose
1132C	Health and Dental – Bring this form to every medical, dental, and specialty visit for your health provider to complete.
1132P	Regulatory Requirements – This form lists requirements for medical and dental examinations, including immunization recommendations.
1709	Child Record-Keeping – Lists forms that resource parents should keep in each child's file.
1711	Unusual Incident/Injury Report - Use this form to submit a complete required written report within seven days of the incident.
1718	Personal Property – This handy personal property recording tool keeps track of the child's belongings.
1721	Current Medication Records - Use this form to track the medications the child is prescribed and/or taking.
1723	Emergency Plan for Resource Family Homes – Includes utility and emergency contacts' names and phone numbers.
1727	Court Orders and Cooperation – Summary of the Court Orders you need for every child under your care and supervision,
1730	Medical/Dental Records – Record the child's medical and dental issues, name of health provider, and treatment dates.
1731	Record of Child's Events – Record notable events and celebrations in a child's life.
1733	Filing a Complaint/Requesting a Hearing – Use to file a complaint or request a hearing.
1737	Health Exam Requirement for Children in Foster Care - Summary of health care requirements for children in foster care.
1803	Child Health and Disability Prevention Program (CHDP) Brochure on health care requirements, including the CHDP exam schedule
1820	Child/Young Adults Personal Rights – Information regarding personal rights. Sign this form every time a child is placed in your home and keep a copy in the child's records.

SFHSA - Trauma Informed Discipline Statement & Philosophy

San Francisco Human Services Agency is committed to making sure youth live in safe, caring, and respectful homes. Physical punishment is not allowed. Discipline is a way to teach and support youth. Caregivers should use positive, non-physical ways to help youth understand rules, make good choices, solve problems, and learn from mistakes. Youth do best with clear rules, regular routines, and adults who speak to them with respect. Consequences should be fair, related to what happened, and help the youth learn what to do differently next time.

Trauma-informed discipline means understanding that a youth's behavior may be connected to past hurt, fear, loss, or stress. Caregivers should stay calm, set clear limits, and help youth feel safe. The goal is to build trust, strong relationships, and skills that help youth make positive choices.

Physical Punishment is Prohibited by State Regulations and Agency Policy.

Caregivers must not use discipline that hurts, scares, shames, or takes away a youth's basic needs or important relationships. The following **are not** allowed:

1. **Physical punishment** — Do not slap, spank, hit, pull hair, or use any object to hurt a youth. Do not make a youth hold a painful or uncomfortable position.
2. **Shaming or making fun of a youth** — Do not embarrass, humiliate, or make fun of a youth.
3. **Hurtful language** — Do not use words that are mean, insulting, threatening, or meant to make a youth feel bad about themselves.
4. **Taking away basic needs** — Do not take away meals, sleep, bathroom use, medical care, or other basic needs as punishment.
5. **Taking away family contact** — Do not take away visits, calls, or other contact with family, relatives, extended family, or other important people in the youth's life as punishment.
6. **Threatening to remove a youth from the home** — Do not threaten to make a youth leave the home or say that they will be removed from the home.
7. **Calling the police as punishment** — Do not call the police or law enforcement to discipline a youth. Call emergency services only when there is an immediate danger of serious injury or death.
8. **Physical restraint** — Do not hold a youth down or use physical force to control them as punishment.
9. **Shaking a youth** — Never shake a youth of any age.

These rules help keep youth safe. Some youth have been hurt, abused, or treated badly by adults in the past. They need a home where they can feel safe, cared for, and respected. They need to learn that adults can be trusted and will not hurt them.

Physical punishment, such as spanking, slapping, pulling a youth's arm, or causing pain, may make a youth stop for a moment because they are afraid. However, it does not teach them how to make better choices. It can also teach youth that hurting others is an okay way to solve problems. For youth who have been hurt before, physical punishment can make them feel unsafe again.

Sometimes a youth may act in a way that is hard for adults to manage. They may be upset, scared, or trying to see if they can trust the adult caring for them. In these moments, caregivers should stay calm, set clear limits, and respond with respect. Youth need to know that adults will not hurt them, even when they make mistakes or have difficult behavior.

This does not mean that there should be no rules or consequences. Youth need clear rules, limits, and fair consequences. Discipline should be calm, consistent, respectful, and caring. Caregivers can help youth learn better ways to handle feelings, solve problems, and make choices. The way caregivers respond to youth teaches them how to treat others.

Every time caregivers spend with youth is a chance to show respect, stay calm, talk in a healthy way, and solve problems together. When caregivers use fair and caring discipline, they help youth build confidence, handle hard times, and learn skills they need to do well.

Trauma-informed discipline is grounded in the personal rights of children and nonminor dependents in foster care. California Welfare and Institutions Code section 16001.9 guarantees every youth the right to live in a safe, healthy, and respectful home; to be free from physical, emotional, and other forms of abuse or corporal punishment; and to receive care that uses trauma-informed and evidence-based de-escalation practices.

Resource families are expected to protect these rights every day by providing discipline that teaches, supports, and guides youth without using fear, pain, humiliation, or threats. By using trauma-informed, respectful discipline, caregivers help create a home where youth feel safe, develop trust, build resilience, and learn the skills they need to succeed.

AB 458: The California Foster Care Non-Discrimination Act

AB 458, the Foster Care Non-Discrimination Act, was signed into law on September 6, 2003, and went into effect on January 1, 2004.

AB 458 prohibits discrimination in the California foster care system **based on actual or perceived race, ethnic group identification, ancestry, national origin, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, mental or physical disability, or HIV status**. Because training is crucial to enable service providers to fulfill their responsibilities to provide safe and nondiscriminatory care, placement, and services to children in foster care, AB 458 also mandates initial and ongoing training for all group home administrators, foster parents, and department licensing personnel. This law is the first in the United States to include protections for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) youth and adults involved with the foster care system.

Specifically, the law provides.

1. All children in foster care¹ and all adults engaged in providing care and services to children in foster care² have a right to fair and equal access to all available services, placement, care, treatment, and benefits.
2. All children in foster care³ and all adults engaged in providing care and services to foster children⁴ have a right not to be subjected to discrimination or harassment based on actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.
3. Adds these rights and protections to the California Foster Child List of Rights.
4. All group home administrators⁵, foster parents⁶, and department licensing personnel⁷ must receive initial and ongoing training on the right of a child in foster care to have fair and equal access to all available services and to not be subjected to harassment or discrimination based on their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.
5. All community college districts provide orientation and training to relative and extended family caregivers, orientation, and training courses. The training must the right of a child in foster care to have fair and equal access to all available services, placement, care, treatment, and benefits and the right of foster youth not to be subjected to discrimination or harassment based on actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.⁸

1. Cal. Welfare & Inst. Code § 16001.9(a)(22).

2. Cal. Welfare & Inst. Code § 16013(a).

3. Cal. Welfare & Inst. Code § 16001.9(a)(22).

4. Cal. Welfare & Inst. Code § 16013(a).

5. Cal. Health & Safety Code § 1522.41(c)(1)(H). Failure to comply with this section shall constitute cause for revocation of the facility's license. Cal. Health & Safety Code § 1522.41(b)(3)

6. Cal. Health & Safety Code § 1529.2(b)(3)(F); § 1529.2(b)(4)(F).

7. Cal. Health & Safety Code § 1563(c)(5).

8. Cal. Welfare & Inst. Code § 16003(a) (1).

A Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standards (RPPS) FAQs

(Adapted from CDSS Reasonable & Prudent Parent Standard Frequently Asked Questions)

What is the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard?

The standard used by a resource parent is characterized by careful and sensible parental decisions that maintain the child's health, safety, and best interest - W&IC § 362.04(a)(2) and (c).

What is an Occasional Short-Term Babysitter?

"Occasional Short-Term Babysitter" means someone who cares for a child in foster care in or out of the resource parent's, licensed, certified, or approved home occasionally for less than 24 hours. (RFA-WD 10-13(c)(1)(A) through (E)) **Example:** The resource parent has a date night out and has the grandparents watch the child from 4 PM that evening to 10 AM the following day.

Does an occasional babysitter need to be fingerprinted by the County?

No. The Health and Safety (H&S) Code § 1522(b)(3)(C) exempts an occasional short-term babysitter from undergoing a criminal record background check.

Does the occasional sitter need Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) training under RPPS?

No. The occasional short-term babysitter is not required by any departmental regulation to have CPR training. Acting as a reasonable and prudent parent, a resource parent who feels there is a condition where CPR may be needed should use a sitter who has CPR certification

Is a teenage child in foster care allowed to babysit a younger child in the home?

Yes. The teenage child in foster care may be under 18 but shall have the maturity, experience, and ability necessary to provide adequate care and supervision of a child. **Under no circumstances shall a child in foster care be required to babysit.** RFA-WD 10-13(c)(4)

Can I leave my child in foster care alone?

Yes. The resource parent is occasionally permitted to leave a child in foster care (10 years or older) alone without adult supervision but shall not leave a child in foster care unsupervised overnight. The resource parent shall apply the RPPS to determine the appropriateness of leaving a child in foster care alone without adult supervision. The resource parent shall consider the following: the age, maturity, and developmental level of the child in foster care; the nature and inherent risk of harm; and have the best interest of the child in foster care based on the information known by the resource parent.

If the child in foster care is left alone, the resource parent should ensure the following: the child in foster care knows where the emergency numbers are posted, the child in foster care knows emergency procedures, and the child in foster care knows where and how to contact the resource parent. RFA-WD 10-12, and 10-13(c)(4)(A) thru (D)

Can a resource parent go on a getaway weekend and leave a child in foster care with a foster aunt, uncle, and their children?

If a resource parent anticipates being absent from the home for longer than 24 hours to go on a getaway weekend, the resource parent is permitted to arrange for the following:

1. An alternative caregiver who provides care and supervision of the child or youth in the resource family's home on an occasional basis under the conditions specified in regulations
2. An approved caregiver who provides care and supervision of the child in foster care in the respite home as a temporary respite of parental duties that does not exceed 72 hours under the conditions specified in regulations. RFA-WD 10-13(c)(3)

Is there a 24-hour limit on participating in out-of-home activities, like a weekend camping trip supervised by a church or a weekend school event where the care providers are absent?

The regulations guide that extracurricular, enrichment, and social activities may include, among other activities: sports, scouting, or 4-H activities, all of which could consist of activities that are out of the home or facility and exceed 24 hours in duration. There are no time restrictions in regulations that would preclude a child in foster care from participating in out-of-home or facility activities. The resource parent must apply RPPS by making careful and sensible parental decisions that maintain the child's health, safety, and best interest when deciding whether the activity is an age and developmentally-appropriate extracurricular, enrichment, or social activity. RFA-WD 10-12 and (10-13(d)

Can a resource parent bring a child in foster care to an event and leave the child in foster care with a supervising adult used by other parents in the community?

Yes, if it is the opinion of the resource parent that the supervising adult can provide care and supervision to the child. RFA-WD 10-13(a) and (c)(1)(A) thru (E)

If the resource parent hires a babysitter for the evening for two children in foster care, is it necessary to disclose that the children are in care?

No. The RPPS allows for normalizing the life of a child in foster care life. It allows the child in foster care to be treated as any other child. As for all children, the resource parent should ensure the babysitter knows how to contact them in an emergency. RFA-WD 10-13(c)(1)

Can a child in foster care spend the night in an unlicensed facility and independently attend community events or religious gatherings?

Yes. A child in foster care is entitled to participate in age and developmentally-appropriate extracurricular, enrichment, and social activities and may attend religious services and activities of their choice. RFA-WD 10-14(a) thru (c).

My child in foster care is a high school athlete who has been in trouble at home and school. Under RPPS, can I prevent them from attending?

While a resource parent may prevent a child in foster care from attending specific extracurricular activities as appropriate discipline for misbehavior, the frequency and scope of that discipline cannot deny the child's right to participate in extracurricular activities. Additionally, restrictions on extracurricular activities should not be the only disciplinary options to be considered or utilized by a resource parent. Other disciplinary actions should be considered as an alternative to exclusion from extracurricular activities. For example, a child under your care attended a school dance, returned home past curfew time, and didn't call to say they would be late. The resource parent could prohibit the child from going out with friends, television privileges, or social media participation for the next day because the child was grounded for coming in late the night before, so long as communication with the child's relatives, social workers, authorized representatives, attorneys, foster youth advocates and supporters, Court Appointed Special Advocates, and probation officers are not restricted.

Can children and youth in care use social media websites like Facebook and Twitter?

Yes, but the resource parent may impose reasonable restrictions as specified in regulations, such as age appropriate. These restrictions may include restricting internet usage when appropriate or prohibiting using entertainment devices. RFA-WD 10-14(b)(8) and (9)

Does RPPS allow a child or youth in care to have piercings, tattoos, or permanent cosmetic applications?

The RPPS does not apply to these activities. Although getting a tattoo, body piercing, or permanent cosmetic application could be considered typical teenage activities, H&S Code § 119302(a)-(e) pertains to the regulation of the body art industry. It clarifies who can receive a tattoo, body piercing, or permanent cosmetic application from a vendor according to sections 652 and 653 of the Penal Code. However, a resource parent is not authorized to give consent for a child in foster care under the age of 18 to obtain a tattoo, body piercing, or permanent cosmetics application - H&S Code § 119302(a) and (b).

My child in foster care has a cell phone purchased with their own money from a part-time job, but they don't follow the rules we set for cell phones in our house. Under RPPS, can I remove their cell phone?

No. However, the resource parent may apply reasonable restrictions to this activity. Rules may be imposed by the resource parent, social worker, or probation officer on calls and correspondence. No conditions shall be applied to telephone calls, mail, and electronic communication with a child's relatives, unless prohibited by court order, or with social workers, authorized representatives, attorneys, foster youth advocates and supporters, CASA, probation officers, the Community Care Licensing Division, or the State Foster Care Ombudsperson W & IC § 16001.9(a)(8); RFA-WD 10-08(b)(2), 10-09(b) and 10-14(b)(9)

Can a child in foster care use birth control?

Yes. Family Code § 6925(a) states that a minor may consent to medical care related to the prevention or treatment of pregnancy.

Can I utilize RPPS as many hours as I want per week or month?

The RPPS law guides a resource parent in deciding whether a child in foster care is age and developmentally-appropriate to participate in an activity. There is no restriction on how much time a resource parent spends using RPPS.

If the resource parent, social worker, or probation officer disagrees about an activity for a child in foster care, does the social worker or probation officer have the final say?

No. However, a decision based on RPPS shall not contradict court orders or the child's needs and services plan. The child welfare agency or probation department has care, custody, and control of the child in foster care as ordered by the Court. It assumes the ultimate responsibility for the health and safety of the child in foster care. The child's social worker or probation officer may cite a reason for denying participation in the activity. If there is disagreement, the social worker's or probation officer's supervisor or attorney for the child in foster care may intervene and discuss participation in the activity with the child's resource parent and a social worker or probation officer. (10-12(a)(2))

If my child in foster care gets hurt under my supervision or in an activity I have permitted them to participate in, will I be cited for incorrectly applying RPPS?

Every resource parent has to apply RPPS when deciding if an activity is safe and enriching to a child in foster care. When necessary, a resource parent must be prepared to demonstrate their determination in applying RPPS to the licensing agency. If RPPS is not used in compliance with the RFA-WD 10-12, the licensing agency may issue a citation.

Can I require my foster care child to perform household chores such as vacuuming, dusting, dishwashing, and scrubbing?

Yes, so long as the household chore is age and developmentally appropriate and does not pose unreasonable hazards to the child. The resource parent should not impose excessive or disproportionate amounts of chores on the child in foster care, as by doing so, the resource parent could violate the personal rights of child or youth in foster care.

Can children and youth in care travel out of the County or with teams as part of their participation in a sport without going to Court?

Yes. The ACIN No. I-78-01, dated September 18, 2001, encouraged counties to adopt flexible travel policies that enhanced the ability of a child in foster care to participate in extracurricular and social activities. However, judicial approval may be warranted for trips of great length or duration. The child in foster care may only travel out of the County with established jurisdiction. Please consult the child's protective services worker (PSW) for travel questions.



Training Resources for Resource Families

AFS/PPC - RESOURCE FAMILY TRAINING

Schedule through Alternative Family Services – Parenting for Permanency College

Registration is open to current Resource Families and those in the application process if you still need to begin your application to become a Resource Parent.

For all training registrations, please email ppc@afs4kids.org. If you are a current Resource Family, please also contact your RFA Social Worker so they can submit a training plan on your behalf.

FOSTER PARENT COLLEGE (FPC)

FPC provides interactive online courses for foster, adoptive, and kinship parents. The self-paced training is accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Parents can enroll, complete a course, and receive a certificate of completion in a single session.

fosterparentcollege.com

This training is free for all resource parents in California. Check with RFA Worker to register.

NATIONAL FOSTER PARENT ASSOCIATION TRAINING INSTITUTE

Centene Corporation and The National Foster Parent Association (NFPA) partner to provide online training to foster caregivers nationwide. Free, requires a login account.

nfpati.org

FOSTER-TRAINING

Foster parents created this resource for foster parents. It offers one monthly Free Training. Requires a Subscription (\$15 for Individuals and @25 for Shared Accounts) – submit the receipt to your RFA Social Worker for reimbursement.

foster-training.com

CITY COLLEGE OF SAN FRANCISCO TITLE IV-E

Title IV-E Program offers free training to foster parents in San Francisco. For a training list and to register, go to the website and click on the “Register Online” button to proceed. Training is free.

ccsf.edu/academics/contract-education-and-extension-programs/title-iv-e-trainings

A BETTER WAY, INC.

A Better Way’s Training Program provides hundreds of courses yearly for resource families. Courses are open to the community, with priority registration available to caregivers and professionals of children and youth in foster care.

abetterwayinc.net/training-program

Visit the [Course Calendar](#) for upcoming educational opportunities (NOTE: you may need to create an account to sign in.
Questions: Trainings@abetterwayinc.net.

CARDIOPULMONARY RESUSCITATION & FIRST AID CERTIFICATION:

If expired, you may email ppc@afs4kids.org to schedule a free class or check the following websites for online certification, but there is a fee for obtaining a physical certificate. Keep the original receipt for reimbursement.

- American Heart Association: cpr.heart.org/en
- Red Cross: redcross.org/take-a-class/cpr/cpr-training/cpr-renewal
- Accredited College CPR

WESTCOAST CHILDREN'S CLINIC

CSEC Advanced Training for Caregivers (Mandatory Training for all Resource Families caring for children ten years of age and older (CDSS Written Directives 8-01(b)).

Commercially sexually exploited children and youth present unique needs, requiring a comprehensive approach to engagement and support. The Advanced CSEC Caregiver training will provide an advanced and comprehensive curriculum on best practices for supporting and parenting youth that are commercially sexually exploited.

If you are interested in CSEC: Advanced Training for Caregivers, send an email to: csectraining@westcoastcc.org

INFANT TRAINING PROGRAM

This 40-hour training series educates care providers and parents in the reunification process in San Francisco County to care for children ages 0-5 years with medical concerns or diagnoses such as alcohol/drug exposure, HIV positive, asthma, failure to thrive, etc.

This series is mandatory for all care providers who care for children 0-3 years of age. Applicants from the general community must complete this training before having a child 0-3 years of age placed in their care. A relative or NREFM must complete this training within the first year of having a child 0-3 years of age placed in their care. For applicants in a couple, only ONE participant is required to complete the Infant Training Program.

Upon completing the series, care providers are better equipped to provide specialized care focusing on the unique medical needs of babies, toddlers, and young children. The goal of the Infant Training Program is to ensure that care providers and reunifying parents deeply understand the unique social, emotional, and medical needs of the child(ren) in their care. Infant-trained care providers benefit from monthly support groups and opportunities for advanced training.

ABCs OF BASIC BABY CARE

In addition to the state's training requirements, San Francisco County requires the following enhanced training for applicants from the general community interested in caring for a child aged birth to 12 months. In that case, they must complete an additional three hours of ABCs of Basic Baby Care before placing a child in their home. A relative or NREFM with a child under 12 months placed in their home must be registered to participate in this training within four months of the placement date. Resource parents can complete this additional training after approval as a Resource Family. BOTH applicants must complete ABCs of Basic Baby Care training for participants in a couple.

For all training registrations, please email ppc@afs4kids.org. If you are a current Resource Family, please also contact your RFA Social Worker so they can submit a training plan on your behalf.



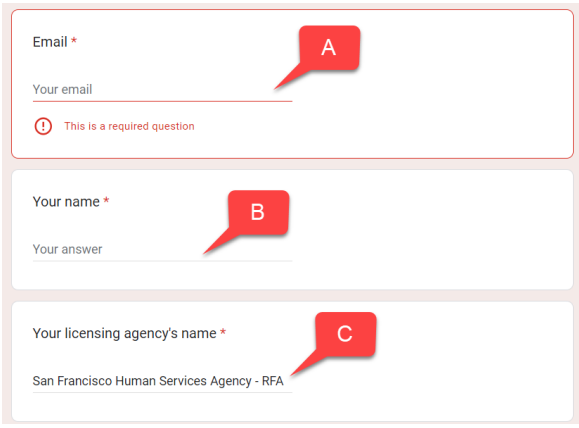
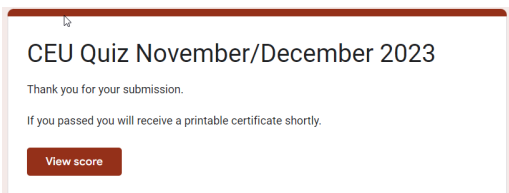
HOW TO RECEIVE CREDIT FOR THE ANNUAL TRAINING REQUIREMENT

Send proof of training completion to the assigned RFA Social Worker to get training credit for your annual training requirement. The certificate or other form of documentation of completed training must include the following:

1. The name or topic of the training
2. The name of the individual(s) who completed the training
3. The date the training was completed
4. The number of training hours completed

TRAINING CREDIT FOSTERING FAMILIES TODAY MAGAZINE (FFT)

All San Francisco Approved Resource Families received the FFT magazine by mail. Resource Families can complete the CEU Quiz in the last page of the magazine. The quiz is an “open book” exam and it can be completed as the resource parent reads the articles in the magazine. The quiz is online: fosteringfamilies.today.com/online-ceu-quiz.

To complete the online CEU quick, select the magazine issue for which you would like to take the quiz.	Online CEU Quiz Just click on the issue for which you'd like to take the quiz and you'll be taken to a new window. 2023 November/December 2023  September/October 2023
You will be taken to a new window: - Enter your email address - Name (If there are two resource parents, each parent must complete a separate quiz to get credit. - For the licensing Agency enter San Francisco Human Services Agency – RFA Proceed to complete the quiz. Once you complete the quiz, click the Submit button. Submit	 Callout A points to the Email field. Callout B points to the Your name field. Callout C points to the Your licensing agency's name field.
Once you complete the quiz, you can click on the View Score; you will an 80% score to pass and get a certificate of completion.	 CEU Quiz November/December 2023 Thank you for your submission. If you passed you will receive a printable certificate shortly. View score
You will received a certificate to the email address you provided. Once you get the certificate, email or provide a copy to the assigned RFA Social Worker. For each completed certificate, you will get 2 hours credit toward your annual training requirement. If you have any questions related to the quiz, you can email: edu@fosteringmediaconnections.org	 FOSTERING FAMILIES TODAY This certificate declares that Jessie Coleman San Francisco Human Services Agency - RFA has completed CEU Quiz November/December 2023 on 10/20/2023 With passing score of 100% Certificate ID XN9GHQ-CE000004 Made for free with Certify'em

Additional Information and Resources

THE CALIFORNIA KINSHIP NAVIGATOR (CKN) – [ACIN I-55-25](#)

The California Department of Social Services has launched the California Kinship Navigator (CKN) – a free, statewide service that helps caregivers and youth find and connect to local resources and supports.

CKN is designed for:

- **Kinship caregivers** – relatives, fictive kin, non-relative extended family members (NREFMs), and extended family members, including Tribal families
- **Resource / adoptive families and legal guardians**
- **Current and former foster youth** up to age 21, including youth supervised by probation, nonminor dependents, and youth who moved to guardianship or adoption.

CKN connects Families and to local practical supports including:

- Clothing and basic supplies
- Financial assistance and food
- Childcare and enrichment activities (sports, camps, etc.)
- Housing supports
- Mental and physical health services
- Education and employment resources
- Legal services

Services are available in **English and Spanish**.

How to get help from CKN

Self-referral only: Caregivers, youth, and social workers can all connect with CKN, but the caregiver or youth must be the main person in contact. You can:

1. **Call:**

- 619-505-3950 – leave your name, phone and/or email, and a few good days/times to reach you.
- A community responder will follow up, usually within 72 hours (often within eight business hours).

2. **Online – “Get Support”:**

- Go to the **California Kinship Navigator website** (ca.getvirtuallsupport.org)
- Click “**Get Support**” and complete the short form with your information and needs.

3. **Online – “Find Resources” on your own:**

- On the website, click “**Find Resources**”
- Use the search boxes/drop-downs to look up local services
- If you need help at any point, click “**Help Getting This**” to ask a community responder for support.

Need immediate help or in Crisis?

If there is an urgent situation, CKN community responders can connect families directly with the Family Urgent Response System (FURS).

FURS provides:

- 24/7 statewide **phone and text crisis support**
- **In-person mobile response** at the county level
- Help to **stabilize crises, reduce conflict, support the caregiver–youth relationship, and connect you to local services**

Who can use FURS? Youth up to age 21 who are current or former foster youth (including youth placed with relatives/resource families, nonminor dependents, youth in guardianship or adoption after foster care, and youth under juvenile probation), and their caregivers.

FURS contact (24/7):

- **Phone or text: (833) 939-3877**
- **Email:** info@cal-furs.org

CAREGIVER SUPPORT

- **Educational Travel Reimbursement** is a state reimbursement requirement for the cost of reasonable travel for the child in foster care to their school of origin as an allowable foster care maintenance cost.
cdss.ca.gov/cdssweb/entres/forms/English/PUB463.pdf
- **Caregiver Support Webinars & Resources** consist of live webinars provided by The CDSS in partnership with the California Alliance of Caregivers
cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/cdss-programs/foster-care/caregiver-support-webinars-resources

CHILD WELFARE POLICY AND PRACTICE

- **California Core Practice Model** is a statewide effort to develop and implement a framework to support child welfare practice and allow child welfare professionals to be more effective in their roles. calswec.berkeley.edu/programs-and-services/child-welfare-service-training-program/core-practice-model
- **CDSS Resource Family Approval Program** provides all state information about the Resource Family Approval Process, including all versions of the Written Directives.
cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/resource-family-approval-program
- **Family and Children's Services Policy (San Francisco Human Services Agency)**
fcspolicy.sfhsa.org

DISASTER PLANNING

- **California Childcare Disaster Plan** builds community and family resilience, supports optimal child development, and promotes healthy and safe childcare before, during, and after a disaster.
cchp.ucsf.edu/resources/disaster-preparedness
- **Planning for Disasters and Emergencies** helps you know which types of disasters could affect your area, how to contact one another, establish a family meeting place, and more.
ready.gov/plan

LEGAL AND ADVOCACY

- **Caregivers and the Courts** inform caregivers about the dependency process and their role in the case. courts.ca.gov/documents/caregivers.pdf
- **California Legislative Code Search** helps you find the California Legislative Codes referenced in this guide. leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes.xhtml
- **Foster Care Ombudsperson** is an independent person who investigates and informally resolves complaints affecting foster youth and advocates for foster youth rights. fosteryouthhelp.ca.gov
- **San Francisco Superior Court Local Rules** for Juvenile Dependency Court.
sfsuperiorcourt.org/general-info/local-rules
- **San Francisco State University – Family Acceptance Project** provides a variety of resources to families, providers and policymakers to decrease risk and promote well-being for LGBTQ children and youth and to strengthen families.
familyproject.sfsu.edu/publications

SAFETY AND WELL-BEING

- **California Alliance of Caregivers** is a group of foster parents and community members who promote the interests of children in foster care in caregiver programs and statewide child welfare policy and legislation.
cacaregivers.org/
- **Choosing the Right Seat: Child Passenger Safety Tips**
 - English: nhtsa.gov/equipment/car-seats-and-booster-seats
 - Spanish: nhtsa.gov/es/equipo/car-seats-y-asientos-elevados-booster
- **Reporting Suspected Child Abuser form BCIA 8572** is for mandated child abuse and neglect reporters (translated versions are available). oag.ca.gov/childabuse/forms
- **Safe Sleep for Your Baby** reduces the risk of sleep-related causes of infant death through various informative materials.
 - English: safetosleep.nichd.nih.gov/resources/caregivers
 - Spanish: espanol.nichd.nih.gov/actividades-proyectos/sts

SERVICES AND PUBLIC BENEFITS

- **CDSS Resource Family Home Insurance Fund** is a state program that pays for certain liability claims on behalf of resource parents for certain activities. cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/foster-care/fsh-fund-information
- **San Francisco Human Services Agency** supports individuals, families, and communities with food, health care, financial, employment, childcare, and protective services. sfhsa.org
- **Support for Families of Children with Disabilities**, a parent-run organization, offers information and support to families of children with any disability or special healthcare need. supportforfamilies.org
- **Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)** is a nutrition program that helps pregnant women, mothers with infants, and young children eat well, be active, and stay healthy. cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CFH/DWICSN/Pages/Program-Landing1.aspx

URGENT CARE

- **Seneca Mobile Response Team (MRT)** provides crisis intervention for children and youth who are in an open case with San Francisco Family and Children's Services or Juvenile Probation and living with their birth parents in a Resource Family home or a Foster Family Agency home within 90 miles of San Francisco. A resource parent or youth can call **(877)-305-8989** when in crisis. Call 911 if a child is actively attempting to hurt themselves or others.
- **Family Urgent Response System (FURS)** includes a statewide hotline and local mobile response teams that provide immediate trauma-informed support to current and former foster youth and their resource parents. Call or text **(833) 939-FURS**.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP

- **California Youth Connection (CYC)** is a youth-led organization that develops leaders who empower each other and their communities to transform the foster care system through legislative, policy, and practice change. calyouthconn.org

RESOURCES FOR POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

- **College Applications**
 - **California Community Colleges:** cccapply.org
 - **California State Universities:** csumentor.edu
 - **Universities of California:** admission.universityofcalifornia.edu
- **Foster Youth Support Services**
 - **Foster Youth Support Services** empowers foster youth to navigate the challenging transition into adulthood. cde.ca.gov/ls/pf/fy/
 - **Foster Youth Success Initiative (FYSI)** liaisons in each of the 116 California community colleges help develop a supportive and smooth transition for students

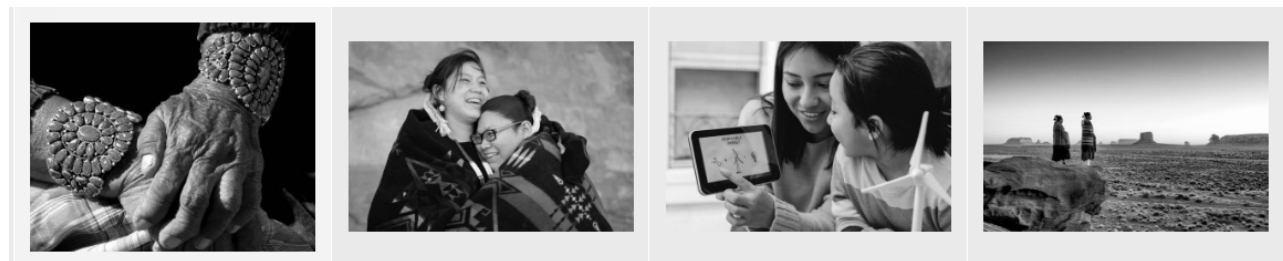
from foster care. View the [Directory of Foster Youth Liaisons \(On-Campus Supports\)](#).

- **Financial Aid**

- **Board of Governors fee waiver application for California Community Colleges:** icanaffordcollege.com
- **Chafee Education and Training Voucher** grant program: chafee.csac.ca.gov/
- **Foster Care to Success** information about scholarships and grants: fc2success.org/programs/scholarships-and-grants/
- **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA):** studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa
- **California Career Zone:** cacareerzone.org
- **Career One Stop:** careeronestop.org
- **My Next Move:** mynextmove.org
- **California College Pathways:** cacollegepathways.org

Indian Child Welfare Act

American Indian/Alaska Native tribes have the autonomy to create approval standards for families caring for American Indian/Alaska Native children, and many tribes utilize them. Therefore, RFA requirements do not always apply to situations involving an American Indian/Alaska Native child. Instead, the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) governs some of the processes for such children.



Background

American Indian children have been overrepresented in the foster care system. In the past, American Indian children were removed from their homes by state child welfare and private adoption agencies, and 85% were placed outside their families and communities. Such practices negatively impacted Indian children, families, and tribes. ICWA aims to "protect the best interests of Indian children and to promote the stability and security of Indian tribes and families." (25 USC § 1902)

To Whom Does ICWA Apply

ICWA applies to certain child custody proceedings that involve an Indian child. ICWA defines an Indian/Alaska Native child as an unmarried person under 18, either a member of an Indian tribe or eligible for membership in an Indian/Alaska Native tribe, and is the biological child of a Indian/Alaska Native member. ICWA also applies to non-minor dependents—those between 18 and 21.

Child Welfare under ICWA

An Indian/Alaska Native child may only be removed from parental custody if there is an imminent risk of physical damage or harm. The placement of an Indian/Alaska Native child must comply with the requirements of ICWA. Where a county child welfare agency removes a child, the County is required to quickly identify whether the child is a tribal member or eligible for tribal membership and send a notice (ICWA-030 Form) to the child's parents or legal guardian, Indian custodian, and the child's Tribe. ICWA requires anyone with reason to know the child is an Indian/Alaska Native child shall treat the child as an Indian/Alaska Native child until determined otherwise (including caseworkers, probation officers, judges, and child welfare officials). The child's Tribe has the right to intervene as a full party to the child's county child welfare case or to seek to transfer the case to tribal Court where tribal law would apply.

If a child is domiciled (where a child is domiciled means where the parent or custodian lives or treats as their permanent home, not necessarily the physical residence of the child) on the reservation of a tribe with exclusive jurisdiction over child welfare matters, the case must be transferred to the Tribe. Also, when a child is a ward of a tribal court, the Tribe has exclusive jurisdiction over the child. In these cases, the laws of the Tribe would apply.

Tribally Approved Homes and Tribally Specified Homes

When an Indian/Alaska Native child is removed from parental custody, the County must make "active efforts" to find a home for the child according to the preferences outlined in the ICWA, which gives priority to extended family. A tribe may specify a particular home as the preferred placement. These placements are known as "Tribal Specified Placements." Tribally Specified Placements are subject to the RFA requirements. Tribes are also permitted to develop their own approval standards that do not have to conform with state requirements, including RFA. Where a tribe chooses to approve a placement for an Indian/Alaska Native child, the placement is known as a "Tribally Approved Home." Tribally Approved Homes are eligible for foster care funding without completing RFA. Where a placement is a Tribally Approved Home, the County or state can conduct the CLETS, CACI, and requested exemptions, or the Tribe can conduct CLETS, CACI, and requested exemptions.

(Source: stepupforkin.org/rfatoolkit)

Other Resources:

- California Indian Child Welfare Act-State Plan: cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/tribal-affairs/icwa
- California Courts Indian Child Welfare Act: courts.ca.gov/3067.htm
- California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC): calswec.berkeley.edu/indian-child-welfare-act-icwa



Foster Care Benefits

Children or Youth in foster Care May Access Benefits as Listed Below:

- All Approved resource families receive a monthly benefit known as the basic rate to provide for the care and supervision of the children or youth placed in their homes. The child or youth in your care may be eligible for additional benefits in your County to meet their care and supervision needs. Eligibility rules vary. Consult with the PSW assigned to the child/youth case.
- **Level of Care (LOC):** The LOC Protocol uses a strength-based rate-setting methodology to identify the individual care and supervision expectations that are paired to the daily needs of a child or youth based on the 5 Core Domains. LOC assessments may result in a higher rate in addition to the basic rate. [ACL 21-17](#).
- **Emergency Caregiver Funding:** Emergency Caregiver (EC) Funding is available for emergency or compelling reason placements before Resource Family Approval (RFA) or Tribally Approved Home (TAH) status. If certain criteria are met as described in [ACL 19-84](#), the funding (equivalent to the basic funding rate) may be continued for up to 365 days. [ACL 20-93](#).
- **Supplements:** A parenting teen or a child with specialized needs may be able to receive additional support to supplement the basic rate.
- **Specialized Care Increments (SCI):** Some counties operate an SCI program to provide additional financial support to RFA and TAH homes when children or youth have exceptional behavioral, emotional, or physical needs. Eligibility rules vary. Consult with the PSW assigned to the child/youth case.
- **Education Transportation Funding:** Reimbursement is available for transporting a child or youth to the school in which the child or youth was enrolled at the time of placement if the school is more than 3 miles from home, the travel is considered reasonable, and remaining in the school of origin is in the child or youth's best interest as described in [ACL 11-51](#). Additional detail and clarification is provided to counties and providers in [ACIN I-86-20](#). The funding goal is to support caregivers in meeting the educational needs of the children or youth in their care.
- **Infant Supplement:** The infant supplement helps cover the additional cost of providing food, clothing, shelter, and supervision to the infant of a foster youth placed in your home. (An infant born to a young person in foster care is not automatically in foster care.) [ACL 17-93](#).
- **Dual Agency Rate:** Eligible children or youth in foster care who are also clients of a Regional Center may be eligible for a monthly payment referred to as the dual agency rate. Regional Centers serve children and youth with a developmental disability, as defined under state law, and children aged 0 – 3 who qualify for early intervention services before an official diagnosis.
- **Clothing Allowance:** Some counties offer a clothing allowance on top of the basic rate to help purchase new clothes, including school or other uniforms, based on the needs of children or youth in your care.

Use of Video Camera in Resource Family Homes

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) recognizes the importance of maintaining a safe and comfortable home environment for foster children and non-minor dependents (NMDs). To assist you, we have provided guidelines on the use of video cameras in Resource Family (RF) homes. ([ACL 24-50](#))

KEY POINTS ON VIDEO CAMERA USE IN RESOURCE FAMILY HOMES

Purpose and Usage:

- Video cameras should not replace supervision or be used to monitor the behavior of foster children or NMDs.
- Cameras should be positioned for genuine security purposes, defined as protecting the home and valuables from potential violence or crime in the neighborhood.

Notification Requirements:

- Inform all placement workers about the presence of video cameras before accepting any placement.
- Notify foster children, NMDs, and their visitors about the location and presence of cameras, especially if they capture audio.

Privacy and Personal Rights:

- Cameras are not allowed in private areas such as bedrooms or bathrooms with the exception of a baby monitor used for its intended purpose of monitoring the safety of an infant in a crib.
- Cameras including those with audio capabilities should not violate the personal rights of foster children or NMDs, such as their right to make private phone calls and communicate privately inside or outside the home.
- If cameras have a recording feature, only Resource Parents may be designated to access to the recordings.

Indoor Camera Guidelines:

- Permitted in common areas like hallways and living rooms for genuine security reasons.
- Cameras must not point at private rooms and should not capture audio. The audio capability must be completely turned off.

Outdoor Camera Guidelines:

- Generally allowed, provided they do not point towards bedroom windows, inside the house, or places used for private meetings.
- Best practice is to disable audio or ensure it does not capture confidential conversation.

Best Practices for Resource Families:

- **Respect Privacy:** Ensure cameras do not infringe on the personal rights and privacy of children and NMDs.
- **Transparency:** Always communicate openly with placement workers, foster children, and their visitors about the use and placements of cameras.
- **Use Judiciously:** Only use cameras where necessary and ensure they serve a genuine security purpose without causing distress to the children in your care.

Resource Family Approval Satisfaction Survey

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) provides a satisfaction survey for Resource Families.

Who Should Participate?

All Resource Family applicants, regardless of the outcome of their approval process (withdrawal, approval, or denial), are encouraged to participate. Those who withdrew can explain their reasons, which helps identify potential barriers in the process.

How to Participate:

Online: Access the survey via the links below:

- English: survey.alchemer.com/s3/7238688/RFA-Satisfaction-Survey
- Spanish: survey.alchemer.com/s3/7238688/RFA-Satisfaction-Survey-Spanish
- Vietnamese: survey.alchemer.com/s3/7238688/RFA-Satisfaction-Survey-Vietnamese
- Chinese: survey.alchemer.com/s3/7238688/RFA-Satisfaction-Survey-Chinese

Hard Copy: Request a hard copy in English, Chinese, Spanish, or Vietnamese from the RFA Social Worker.

Completed surveys can be scanned and emailed back or mailed to:

California Department of Social Services
744 P Street, MS 8-13-551, Sacramento, CA 95814
ATTN: Youth and Caregiver Support Bureau, Family Permanency and Support Services
Branch, Children and Family Services Division

RFAsurvey@dss.ca.gov

Confidentiality:

All participant information will remain confidential. While the survey is not anonymous, individual responses and names will not be shared with the county.

Your input is valuable in improving the RFA program. Thank you for your participation!

Acknowledgments

We sincerely thank our colleagues and partners who gathered all the information and wrote this Resource Family Guide. This guide is a summary of the CDSS RFA Written Directives and FCS Policies, including links and sections of the Written Directives, for your reference. The most recent version of this guide will be available online at our public site: <https://foster-sf.org/information/>. Thank you.