

**CATHOLIC CHARITIES, DIOCESE OF ALLENTOWN  
FOSTER & KINSHIP PARENT – JOB DESCRIPTION**

I.GOAL (FAMILY):

Foster care provides skilled and caring substitute families for children to live with until their own serious family problems are resolved. Foster and Kinship families provide children with the guidance, discipline and safety they would give their own children and work with Catholic Charities to address the child's special needs until they can return to their own families, move on to permanent homes, or live independently.

II. QUALIFICATIONS:

- Ability to provide physical and emotional care for a child
- Ability to recognize and meet individual needs of a child
- Experience in child care or supervision
- Ability to accept a child into your home as well as let him/her go
- Ability to understand and show acceptance of a children's biological parents and commitment to promoting reunification of families and permanency for children
- Ability to work as a team member with social workers
- Adequate physical and mental health certified by a physician
- Annual health assessment and TB test
- Ability to provide for physical space (a bed and private space for child's belongings)
- An adequate income for support of own family
- Pet Immunization-all up to date. Pets have no history of biting, safe to be around children
- A car and current Pennsylvania Driver's License. Auto and Homeowners insurance (amount required by Department of Public Welfare regulations)
- Ability to recognize own family's needs and limitations and to communicate these to the agency
- No previous criminal or child abuse history for household members 14 yrs. of age or older
- Ability to recognize difference between punishment and discipline and to utilize acceptable discipline practices as outlined by DPW
- Ability to be flexible and understand the foster care system

- Ability to provide child with an atmosphere for spiritual growth
- Ability to show flexibility in expectations, attitude and behavior in relation to the age, needs, and problems of child
- Agreement to consistently conform to state regulations (regarding training, discipline policy, home safety, etc.)
- Ability to remain flexible and accept changes to family structure

### III. RESPONSIBILITIES:

#### A. TO THE CHILD

1. Provide a safe and comfortable environment for child to live in, with a separate bed and place for his/her belongings
2. Provide for the child's basic physical and emotional needs (as you would your own child's)
3. Provide for school attendance, monitor progress, note special needs and accomplishments and attend parent/teacher conferences and planning meetings
4. Provide appropriate clothing for child
5. Attend to medical and dental needs, providing routine medical and dental care as per Department of Public Welfare regulations, monitoring and administering any and all medications as prescribed.
6. Provide transportation to and from medical and dental appointments, parent visitations and counseling sessions.
7. Help child through the separation, grieving and adjustment process that accompanies removal from their birth family or former foster home including participation in child's counseling program (when counseling for child is deemed appropriate)
8. To provide recreational, spiritual and enrichment activities that will promote the healthy development of the child
9. Help child maintain his/her cultural identity if of a different racial or ethnic background
10. To maintain a record (Lifebook) for the child of his/her time in care, developmental milestones, photographs, report cards, etc.
11. To provide consistent and realistic discipline and guidance that is age-appropriate and does not involve corporal punishment
12. Seek support from caseworker on any unusual or difficult child behaviors

#### B. TO THE AGENCY

1. Notify caseworker of any major or minor concerns
2. To keep Catholic Charities informed of problems and progress of children in care including results of doctor visits, reactions to visitations with birth family and immediate notification if they run away or if they are in need of emergency medical services

3. Receive permission from agency prior to taking child out of state
4. To keep Catholic Charities informed of changes in your home, including change of address, phone number, employment, deaths/departures of family members, family additions, notification before vacations, etc.
5. Complete Foster Parent Pre-Service Training Program before accepting child placement
6. To be available for meetings with agency workers
7. Each parent to obtain at least 15 hours yearly (and preferably more) agency approved resource parent training
8. Participate in case review when requested and make court appearances when required
9. Give 30 day notice when requesting removal of a child
10. Cooperate with agency workers to implement plan for family reunification or permanent placement
11. Comply with Department of Public Welfare regulations and agency policies and procedures as outlined
12. To respond ASAP to agency request for foster care placement

C. TO THE BIRTH PARENTS

1. To cooperate with visitation between child and birth family and support reunification efforts by:
  - helping a child maintain realistic perception and attitude towards own parents
  - when requested by the worker, modeling and discussing appropriate parenting behavior with the birth parent with acceptance and encouragement
  - providing necessary and appropriate information about child's growth and development, likes, dislikes, etc. to the birth parent
  - preparing the child to return home

D. TO FOSTER PARENTS OWN FAMILY:

1. To discuss openly with all members of your family the decision to foster and to include them in decision whether to accept a particular child
2. To make every effort to maintain healthy relationships including private time with own family members while providing foster care
3. To help all members understand the impact that taking in a child may have on family routines, etc.
4. To prepare all members for the arrival of a child, including discussion of coping strategies for the departure of a child
5. To recognize your own limitations and to request support from agency before problems become critical

IV. ON THE JOB SUPPORT AND SUPERVISION:

The foster parent works in cooperation with the child's caseworker and will receive supervision and support from them in relation to the specific child for which worker is responsible

New foster parents are offered a foster parent buddy who will help them through the early stages of fostering

Additional support is given through attending agency and/or Greater Lehigh Valley Foster Care Coalition trainings and agency sponsored activities

Respite care arrangements for a child in foster care is available when necessary or when family is unable to take the child with them while traveling

V. COMPENSATIONS:

1.Board Rate: A daily rate based on the age and need of the child in foster care which reimburses foster parents for estimated cost of care, paid at the end of each month

2.Reimbursement for child abuse and state police checks upon placement of the first child in foster care

3.Medical and dental care for children in foster care through state funded programs for each child

4.Emergency clothing money: when the placement agency determines the child's wardrobe is inadequate at time of placement (based on written clothing inventory)

5.Mileage reimbursement (32 cents per mile) for travel expenses related to child/family visitation, counseling, medical and dental appointments, court appearances and agency sponsored training

6.Incentive paid for foster parent recruitment of new foster parent applicants

The biggest rewards of foster care are not monetary; they originate from helping children in need, doing one's job well, and interacting with other foster parents.