

KANSAS FOSTER PARENTS' RIGHTS

Foster parents are volunteers providing care for children who are in the custody of the Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF). They play an integral, indispensable, and vital role in the State's effort to care for dependent children displaced from their homes. It is in the best interest of Kansas' child welfare system to acknowledge foster parents as active and participating members of this system and they should be supported through the following rights:

1. The right to be treated by DCF and other partners in the care of abused and neglected children with dignity, respect, and trust as a primary provider of foster care and a member of the professional team caring for foster children.
2. The right not to be discriminated against on the basis of religion, race, color, creed, gender, marital status, national origin, age, or physical handicap per Kansas statute.
3. The right to continue with their own family values and beliefs, so long as the values and beliefs of the foster child and the biological family are respected and not infringed upon. Consideration shall be given to the special needs of children who have experienced trauma and separation from their families.
4. The right to exercise decision making in connection with foster child, consistent with the limits of the policies, procedures, and other directions of DCF, Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) and within the limits of state and federal law.
5. The right to receive standardized pre-service training by DCF or the placing agency and at appropriate intervals to meet mutually assessed needs of the child and to improve foster parents skills.
6. The right to receive timely financial reimbursement according to agreement and applicable law and to be notified of any costs or expenses for which the foster parent may be eligible for reimbursement.
7. The right to receive information regarding services and to reach DCF and/or DCF contracted provider personnel during regular business hours and the right to have information for contact number after business hours in the event of an emergency.
8. The right, prior to the placement of a child, to be notified of any issues relative to the child and known to DCF and/or DCF contracted provider at such time and which may jeopardize the health and safety of the foster family or the child or alter the manner in which foster care should be administered.
9. The right to discuss known information regarding the child prior to placement. DCF will provide such information as it becomes available as allowable under state and federal laws.
10. The right to refuse placement of a child in the foster home or to request, upon reasonable notice, the removal of a child from the foster home.

11. The right to receive any available information through DCF regarding the number of times a foster child has been moved and the reasons therefor; and to receive the names and phone numbers of the previous foster parents if the previous foster parents have authorized such release and as allowable by law.

12. The right, during the time a child is placed with the foster parent, to receive from DCF information known to DCF and relevant to the care of the child.

13. The right to provide input and participate in the case planning process regarding the child and the right to participate in and be informed about the planning of visitation between the child and the child's biological family, recognizing that visitation with the biological family is important to the child and necessary to the success of timely reintegration if reintegration is the case plan.

14. The right to communicate with the child's Child Welfare Provider Case Manager (CWPCM) and to share and obtain relevant and appropriate information regarding child in placement.

15. The right to communicate for the purpose of participating in the case plan of the foster child with other professionals who work with such child within the context of the professional team including, but not limited to, therapists, physicians, and teachers, as allowable by regulation, state and federal law.

16. The right to be notified in advance, of any court hearing or review where the case plan or permanency of the child is an issue, including periodic reviews held by the court and the right to submit a completed Foster Parent Court Report Form per DCF policy.

17. The right to be considered, where appropriate, as a placement option when a child who was formerly placed with the foster parents has re-entered the foster care system.

18. The right to continue contact and/or communication with child subsequent to the child moving from the foster parent/s' home, subject to the approval of the child and child's biological parent/s whose rights have not been terminated.

19. The right to direct questions to KDHE regarding information, concerns, policy violation and/or a corrective action plan relating to licensure as a foster family home.

20. The rights and responsibilities enumerated hereinabove shall be given full consideration when DCF develops and approves policies regarding foster care and adoptive placement.