

Department of Human Services (DHS)

FOSTER PARENT BASICS

A summary of important information for DHS foster/resource families

(If you are interested in becoming a foster parent,
please call Partners in Development Foundation(PIDF)-Hui Ho'omalua (HH):
at 441-1117 or toll-free 1-888-879-8970)

DHS = Dept. of Human Services

CWS = Child Welfare Services

SW = Social Worker

SSA = Social Service Assistant

GAL = Guardian Ad Litem

VGAL = Volunteer Guardian Ad Litem

PC = Permanent Custody

Child = child in DHS foster or permanent custody who has been placed under your care

TOPIC	INFORMATION
After-Hour Calls	<p>A. Call 911 first for emergencies such as medical or dangerous crisis situations.</p> <p>B. Call the Child Abuse & Neglect (CAN) Hotline: 832-5300 (Oahu) 1-800-494-3991 (toll-free for Neighbor Islands) to seek consultation and for medical consent.</p> <p>C. Call 911 & the CAN Hotline to report runaway incidents and report it to the child's SW on the next working day.</p>
Child Information Folder (CIF)	<p>Every foster child has a CIF. The folder contains all health/medical, psychological, social and educational documents that are available to DHS at the time of the child's placement. The CIF is to be provided to foster parents within 30 days of a child's placement. It is also used to file additional information and case plans provided to the foster parents during the placement. If the child moves from the foster home, the complete CIF must be returned to the SW.</p>
Clothing Allowance	<p>A purchase order or reimbursements for clothing are available up to a limited amount per year, depending on the child's age. Contact the child's SSA or SW before purchasing any clothing for reimbursement. SW may request clothing from the child's parents also.</p>
Clothing for Special Events or Activities	<p>Reimbursement for sports uniforms and assistance on purchasing clothing for proms, etc. (up to \$125 per child per year) is available also. Contact the child's SSA or SW before buying any clothing.</p>
Community Clearinghouse	<p>Helping Hands Hawaii's Community Clearinghouse may be able to provide donated items, such as clothing, cribs, or beds. Ask the child's SW to fax a request sheet so that your family can schedule an appointment with them. 536-7234, ext. 800. Available for Oahu families only.</p>
Difficulty of Care Payments (DOC)	<p>If the child requires a higher level of care and you are able to provide the extra service/support, the child may be eligible to receive DOC, up to \$570 per month. Inquire and discuss with the child's SW.</p>
Discipline	<p><u>NO physical discipline of foster children is allowed!!</u> Contact the child's SW, therapist, or other support services to seek assistance in appropriate discipline methods and approaches.</p>
Driver's License for PC Foster Youth	<p>DHS is to sign the driver's license application for any youth for whom DHS has PC and who is qualified to apply for a driver's license. Consult your auto insurance agent regarding appropriate coverage & liability issues before you allow a foster youth to drive your car.</p>
Enhancement Funds-Family Programs Hawai'i	<p>Foster youth may qualify for enhancement funds to buy special items that cannot be provided by DHS. (eg., camp, sports and school functions, airfare for family vacations, etc.) Foster parents can coordinate a request through the child's SW. SEE ATTACHED FORM or form available on DHS website.</p>

Federal Tax Benefits	An in-depth manual on tax benefits for foster and adoptive parents is available on HFPA’s website: www.hawaiifosterparent.org . Click on “Articles” on the top of the page, then click on “Financial Information.”
Financial Assistance for Child Care or Preschool	Child care/preschool financial subsidies for children may be available from various programs, call the Warm Line at 545-1130 (Oahu) or 1-866-545-0882 (toll free) for information and referrals.
Financial Assistance for Summer Fun & Recreational Activities	Foster parents may be reimbursed for group activity fees such as soccer or baseball. Tuition waivers for City and County Summer Fun Programs are available for those who apply. Contact the child’s SSA or SW.
Foster Board Payment	\$529 a month per child.
Foster Home Recruitment, Licensing	--If you know someone who would like to become a <u>general-licensed foster/resource parent</u> , please refer them to Hui Ho`omalua at 441-1117 or toll-free 1-888-879-8970 --PIDF-Kokua Ohana <u>targets recruitment of Native Hawaiian foster/resource families and provides support for Native Hawaiian families.</u> (Oahu in-person, Statewide by phone: 595-6320; 1-888-879-8970) --If you are a <u>child-specific placement parent and interested in becoming a general-licensed parent</u> , please call your licensing social worker. -- <u>Child-specific training and licensing</u> for families who are either related to or have a prior relationship with the child is provided by the DHS contracted agency, Catholic Charities Hawai’i, a partner of PIDF, as referred by DHS.
Foster Parent Info. Handbook	The handbook includes basic foster parenting information and is available from your DHS licensing worker.
Helpful Tips About Communicating With Team Members	-When leaving phone messages for a SW: leave a clear message with your name & number, the child’s name, what you need and when are good times to call back. -If the call is regarding medical coverage, clothing or payments, contact the SSA. -If you need to speak to someone immediately, call the number indicated on the SW’s voice mail or extension 0 and ask for the Office Duty SW on call that day. You also may ask to speak to the Unit Supervisor or your DHS licensing SW. -Other helpful people to call are the GAL or VGAL for information or advocacy, or the child’s therapist for help on dealing with some of the child’s behavioral/emotional challenges. The child’s therapist should have after-hour emergency contact numbers. -Always ask for names and numbers and keep the list handy.
Higher Education Board Payments	A. If a youth wishes to attend an institution of higher education and qualifies: Higher Education Board payments of \$529 per month may continue through the youth’s 21 st year. Discuss this with the child’s SW. SEE DHS WEBSITE. B. Education Training Voucher (ETV): Former DHS foster youth adopted from DHS at 16 or older may be eligible to receive up to \$5,000/year to assist with cost of attendance until age 23.

Infant Care	Seek guidance from the child's SW and materials from the DHS licensing worker, child's Primary Care Physician, etc. regarding general care, critical safety measures, etc. NO SHAKING OF INFANT (Shaken Baby Syndrome).
Keeping Records	Keep detailed documentation of the foster child's behaviors, eating patterns, and child's likes and dislikes. Also, record all doctor appointments, dental visits, educational milestones and difficulties, telephone contacts & home visits with child welfare personnel, and visits with biological family. Maintain a list of all people who are involved in the child's life, including their name, agency and phone number.
Liability Insurance	Licensed DHS foster parents providing care for DHS foster children are included in a LIMITED liability Insurance Coverage purchased and provided by the Department. Review the brochure with your DHS licensing social worker. It is also highly recommended that all foster parents should purchase homeowner or renter's insurance.
Medical Insurance Coverage	Foster children are covered by the State's Medicaid Program. You should receive medical card information for each child. If you haven't received a medical card, if you do not know where to take the child for medical or dental services, or to inquire about changing providers, contact the child's SSA.
Mileage Reimbursement	If you transport the child for therapy appointments, visitation, school meetings, IEP meetings, etc. or you attend child-related trainings, you may be reimbursed at the current state mileage allowance rate. Call the child's SSA or SW (for child-related situations).
Newsletters	<u>DHS provides funding for quarterly Newsletter mailouts to DHS foster parents:</u> 1. <u>Hawaii Foster Parent Association (HFPA)</u> provides excellent information & resources for foster/resource parents. To request, call HFPA at 522-1016 (Oahu) or 1-877-775-4400 (toll free). 2. <u>PIDF-Hui Ho'omalua's Statewide Resource Advisory Committee</u> also provides resource and support information for foster/resource families. To request, call Hui Ho'omalua at 441-1115 (Oahu) or 1-888-879-8970 (toll free).
Ohana Conferencing	EPIC provides Statewide Ohana Conferencing. 'Ohana Conferences bring together the extended family members of children who are involved in the CWS system to thoughtfully and carefully plan for the protection and safety and permanency of the children. EPIC also empowers older youth to hold Youth Circles to plan for independent/interdependent living. Foster parents can also request an Ohana Conference and are strongly encouraged to attend these valuable meetings. Statewide: 838-7752 (Oahu) or 1-866-636-1644 (toll-free)
Parenting Classes	PATCH offers a variety of free and low-cost services to educate parents, etc. Parenting classes are available to foster/resource families through a Department contract. PATCH will do direct mailouts to the DHS foster/resource families. Oahu: 839-1988; Kauai: 246-0622; Maui: 242-9232; East HI: 961-3169; West HI: 325-3864; Molokai & Lanai: 1-800-498-4145 (toll free). For other parenting resources, call the Warm Line at 545-1130 (Oahu) or 1-866-545-0882 (toll-free).
Psychological or Therapeutic Services	Discuss with the child's SW any concerns for therapeutic services. --Foster children can access therapy through MedQuest Health Plan. --Foster children may also be eligible for therapeutic services through their school, if the child is certified for these services and if it is included in the child's IEP. Work with the child's SW, the school

	and the Dept. of Education's Surrogate Parent. --Foster children may also be eligible for therapeutic services through Dept. of Health-Child & Adolescent Mental Health Division (CAMHD). Work with the child's SW regarding a possible referral.
Resource Library	Your CWS Unit may have books to borrow on foster care. Call your DHS licensing worker for availability or call the Warm Line for a list of books available at your local library. (See Warm Line)
Respite Funds	If you need a break or are going on vacation, respite funds can help pay for someone to care for the child. Limited funds are available by fiscal year. Call the child's SSA or SW.
Role of Foster Parent	A Foster Parent is a temporary caregiver. -It is therefore essential to work with DHS to support reunification or to transition the child to appropriate relatives for permanency. Dependent upon the situation, it may involve at least an initial meeting with birth parents. Some foster parents may even feel comfortable to mentor the birth parents. It may involve transporting or supervising and supporting visits between the birth parents and child or between siblings. Also, it will involve facilitating and participating in services to support the child's well-being (cultural, ethnic, mental and physical health, education, spiritual, etc.).
School-Based Benefits	Check with the school on applications for free or reduced-rates on school lunches, bus passes, summer school tuition waivers (summer school waivers based on available funding) for children in foster care. If the child does not receive a free bus pass, check with the SSA or SW about reimbursement or purchase order procedures for bus passes. Remember to note on the applications that the child is in foster care and who the social worker is and contact # so that the application will have special processing. Check on any benefits/scholarships that the school offers. At the same time, please consider the feelings of the child as some children are embarrassed by these types of "freebies" that identify them as foster children.
Summer School Scholarships	Kamehameha Schools will often offer scholarships/ financial assistance for summer school sessions for Native Hawaiian children.
Supplemental Payment for Medical Issue	Medical treatments or medication for the foster parents or members of the foster home may be provided up to \$500 per incident or \$500 per person, depending upon a doctor's recommendations for a child's physical condition such as Hepatitis B, etc. The need for cleaning supplies for the home or family must be established by the SW. The need for those treatments, medications or supplies must be related to the physical condition of the child in foster care.
Support Groups	Support groups are available in various geographic areas. Call the Warm Line for more information. (See Warm Line)
Support: Counseling & Services (In addition to child's SW & therapist, DHS licensing worker)	A. <u>Comprehensive Counseling & Supportive Services (CCSS)</u> : The Department contracts with various agencies statewide to provide counseling and support services to stabilize and preserve the child's home environment (birth or foster/resource families). Call the child's SSA or SW. B. <u>Permanency Support Services</u> : The Department contracts with Child and Family Services (CFS) to provide pre & post-permanency services to support foster/resource families who plan to provide permanency for a child, or have adopted, assumed legal guardianship or permanent custody of a child. (Oahu, Maui, Kauai). The goal is to preserve a safe, nurturing and permanent home. Families may be referred by DHS, other professionals, or self-referred. CFS: 543-8402 (Oahu); 877-6888 (Maui); 245-5914 (Kauai)

Trainings and Workshops	<p>-The Department provides funding to support foster parent training for DHS foster home licensure through Hui Ho’omaluu; also for ongoing foster parent training through Family Programs Hawaii (Hui Ho’omaluu).</p> <p>-Community workshops are listed at www.hawaiifosterparent.org or you may call the Warm Line.</p> <p>-Speakers and workshops on a variety of topics of interest are available throughout the year. Many of the community workshops are at little or no cost, especially those hosted/sponsored by the collaborative Foster Care/Training Committees (FCTC) on each island.</p>
Traveling With Foster Children	<p>Parental consent is required for children in foster care to travel off-island with their foster parents. -</p> <p><u>Voluntary cases</u>: If the parents do not consent, the child cannot travel.</p> <p><u>Court cases</u>: If the parents and the GAL/VGAL consent, the Court must be informed that the parents and the GAL/VGAL do not object. If the parents or the GAL/VGAL object, a motion must be filed with the Court and the Court will render a decision on whether the child can travel. In situations where the parents cannot be located but the DHS & the GAL/VGAL do not object, the Court must be informed of the Dept.’s efforts to locate the parents & that there are no objections by DHS & the GAL/VGAL.</p>
VGAL/GAL	<p>A Volunteer Guardian Ad Litem or a Guardian Ad Litem is appointed by the Family Court to advocate in the best interest of the foster child. Know the child’s VGAL/GAL & his/her phone number (available from the child’s SW) as he/she may be able to assist you in advocating for the child.</p>
Warm Line	<p>The Department contracts with Partners In Development Foundation-Hui Ho’omaluu to provide recruitment, training, licensing, and support services. The support services are provided through Family Programs Hawaii (partner in the Hui Ho’omaluu contract)—Support Groups, Mentoring, Training, & the Warm Line.</p> <p>The <u>Warm Line</u> is a number you can call for information, referrals, & telephone support. They have lists of community resources (also available on-line at www.FamilyProgramsHawaii.org), support groups, and training opportunities for foster/resource families. Call 545-1130 (Oahu) or 1-866-545-0882 (Toll-free for Neighbor Islands), Mon-Fri 8:30am – 5pm or e-mail: WarmLine@FamilyProgramsHi.org.</p>

Helpful Resources

(Call the Warm Line for more information on all resources; * - call the child’s SW to initiate a referral)

<p>*<u>Comprehensive Counseling & Support Services</u>: Contracted services to provide support and counseling for foster parents to sustain foster placements. (listed above)</p> <p><u>Dept. of Education (DOE) Surrogate Parents</u>: If the foster child is eligible for special education services, a surrogate parent can be assigned through talking with the child’s school</p> <p>*<u>E Makua Ana Youth Circle</u>: provides a group process for teenagers to celebrate their emancipation from foster care and to assist them in planning for their independence</p> <p>*<u>Hawaii Keiki Information Service (H-KISS)</u>: the initial point of contact for questions or resource information for children with developmental delays (0-3 years of age).</p> <p>*<u>Independent Living Program (ILP) Services</u>: helps youth (from age 12) develop knowledge, skills, and connections to make a successful transition to living on their own</p>

Learning Disabilities Association of Hawaii (LDAH): provides information and has advocates who can advise you or possibly attend the Special Education-IEP with the caregiver

*Public Health Nurses (PHN): valuable assistance especially for caregivers for newborns – 3 years of age, wealth of resources, educating new parents, safety tips, assessing the child’s health and development, can assist in making referrals for developmental evaluations, etc.

*Pre & Post-Permanency Services: Comprehensive services (counseling, educational, support, referral) for pre or post permanency parents. (listed above)

WIC Program: Foster children less than 5 years of age may qualify for nutritious food, health care referrals, nutrition education, etc.

Helpful Internet Websites

www.hawaii.gov/dhs - The Department of Human Services of Hawaii’s website provides information on different programs, resources and policies within their department.

www.auw.org/211 – Aloha United Way’s 211 website allows people to search their database online for different agencies and programs available within the state.

www.cwla.org – Child Welfare League of America’s website has information about programs, publications, and national conferences and trainings.

www.FamilyProgramsHawaii.org – Family Programs Hawai`i’s website has on-line Resource Manuals with lists of agencies and programs helpful to foster/resource families.

www.fosterparents.com – Foster Care and Adoptive Community’s website provides innovative, on-line training modules for foster parents in Alaska but available and applicable to all foster parents, professionals or interested parties. (Modules available for information only.)

www.hawaiifosterparent.org – The Hawaii Foster Parent Association’s website has updated information about events and training, resources, and articles for foster and adoptive families in Hawai`i.

www.nfpainc.org – The National Foster Parent Association’s website provides information on foster parenting, programs, training & education, scholarships, references and links to other sites.

www.pidfoundation.org - The Partners In Development Foundation website has information on Hui Ho’omalua, Kokua Ohana and other programs and projects to help the community, especially the Native Hawaiian Community.

Compiled by Department of Human Services (DHS) staff and Family Programs Hawaii Resource Families Support Services, incorporating information from Hawaii Foster Parent Association (HFPA) and other resources.

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