

PROVIDE FOSTER CARE

When you become a foster parent/kinship foster parent, you become part of a team that's dedicated to protecting children, supporting families and helping young people to develop their fullest potential.

You can help make sure children are safe and well cared for while they can't be at home and support parents as they work towards safely reunifying with their children. When reunification is not possible, you may get the opportunity to provide a permanent home for a child in your care.

How to get your foster care license

1. Call the resource coordinator in your local Family Services district office.
2. Complete the application the resource coordinator provides.
3. We conduct background checks on all members of your household age 16 and older. This includes a national criminal records check that requires fingerprints.
4. A district worker (*usually the resource coordinator*) visits you at home to review your application, talk about foster care and tour the home.
5. A licensing worker visits you at home to talk to household members and make sure your home meets licensing regulations. This visit takes place during normal business hours and usually lasts a few hours.
6. We assess your suitability as foster parents using information from the application, home visits and background checks.
7. You take the *Foundations for Foster Care* training. You must complete it within the first year of getting your license — preferably, before a child is placed in your home.
8. If you meet the licensing requirements, you'll get a license that's valid for up to three years.



To provide foster care, you:

- ✓ Must be at least 21
- ✓ Can be single, married, living with a partner or joined through civil union
- ✓ Must meet the licensing requirements for foster homes in Vermont

Applications are considered regardless of disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity/expression, race, religion or sexual orientation.



**LICENSING REGULATIONS
FOR FOSTER HOMES**
dcf.vermont.gov/pubs

FAMILY SERVICES DISTRICT OFFICES

Barre 802-479-4260

Bennington 802-442-8138

Brattleboro 802-257-2888

Burlington 802-863-7370

Hartford 802-295-8840

Middlebury 802-388-4660

Morrisville 802-888-4576

Newport 802-334-6723

Rutland 802-786-5817

Springfield 802-289-0648

St. Albans 802-527-7741

St. Johnsbury 802-748-8374

imreadytohelp.vt.gov

THE SUPPORT THAT'S AVAILABLE

Financial Support

- ➔ You'll get a monthly stipend to help with the cost of caring for a child. The amount will depend on your training and experience as well as the age and special needs of the child. *If a youth turns 18 while in your care, this support may be extended until they turn 22.*
- ➔ You can be reimbursed for expenses related to carrying out a child's case plan (e.g., transporting the child to visits).
- ➔ An initial clothing voucher of up to \$100 may be issued if a child comes into care without adequate clothing.
- ➔ Children in foster care are eligible for free school meals. Those under 5 are also eligible for services and food through the Department of Health's WIC program.

Child Care

Subsidized child care is available if you have an accepted need for it (e.g., you work outside the home or are attending school) or it's authorized based on the child's needs. Care must be provided by an approved *specialized child care provider*.

Medical Benefits

Children in custody are covered for medical expenses either through their parents' insurance or Medicaid.

Other DCF Support

- ➔ Our district staff are available to support you during regular business hours.
- ➔ After hours, on weekends and on state holidays, you can call 1-800-649-5285 for support.
- ➔ Other foster parents may be available to mentor you through the process.
- ➔ We support the use of respite care to give you breaks so you can get things done, relax and re-energize.
- ➔ You can take advantage of training opportunities offered by the Vermont Child Welfare Training Partnership — a long-standing partnership between UVM and DCF.



RESOURCES

DCF Foster Parent Page
dcf.vt.gov/resources/foster

Vermont Child Welfare
Training Partnership
vermontcwtpp.org

Vermont Foster & Adoptive
Family Association (VFAPA)
www.vfapconference.org

Vermont Kin as Parents
vermontkinasparents.org

Voices at the Table
Blog & Website
voicesatthetable.wordpress.com