

2024 Plan for Implementation of the Foster Parent Law

A plan for ensuring
Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy actively
works to implement Public Act 89.19
describing the Rights and Responsibilities of
Foster Parents as participating members of
the Child Welfare Team.

Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy
1942 East Cantrell Street
Decatur, IL 62521
Phone: 217-423-6961
Fax: 217-421-6889

Table of Contents

ANNUAL PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF FOSTER PARENT LAW	3
ANNUAL EVALUATION REPORT OF 2023 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN	3
Foster Parent Involvement in the Development the Implementation Plan	3
Staff involvement in the Development of the Implementation Plan.....	3
Suggested Improvements	4
Foster Parent Review of the Grievance Procedure	4
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR YEAR 2024	5
Statement of Foster Parent Rights	5
1. Professional Member of the Child Welfare Team.....	5
2. Preservice and Ongoing Training.....	6
3. Contacts for Information and Support Services	7
4. Timely Financial Reimbursement	8
5. Written Plan for Foster Child Placement.....	9
6. Fair Resolution of Licensure Complaints	10
7. Receipt of Relevant Information Regarding Foster Child	11
8. Receive Relevant Information at Placement.....	11
9. Notification of Scheduled Meeting Regarding Foster Child.	12
10. Ongoing Receipt of Relevant Information.....	13
11. Reasonable Written Notice of Case Plan Change or Plan for Termination	14
12. Complete Notification of Court Hearings	15
13. Consideration as Placement Option for Child Previously Placed in a Foster Home	15
14. Timely Access to Placement Agency Appeals Process	16
15. Informed Regarding the Foster Parent Hotline	16
16. Foster Care Assessment and Rating at Exit (FARE).	17
Statement of Foster Parent Responsibilities.....	18
1. Openly Communicate with the Child Welfare Team.	18
2. Respect Confidentiality of Foster Child and Family	18
3. Advocate for Foster Child	19
4. Treat Foster Child and Family with Dignity.	19
5. Recognize Strengths and Support Needs of Foster Family	20
6. Know the Benefits of Affiliating with Other Foster Parents	21
7. Know and Take Action to Meet Foster Parent Training Needs	22
8. Develop and Implement Strategies to Prevent Placement Disruptions	22
9. Know the Impact of Foster Parenting on Relationships	24

10. Know the Rewards of and Promote Foster Parenting 25

11. Know the Roles, Rights, and Responsibilities of All Involved in Foster Care. 26

12. Serve as a Mandated Reporter of Child Abuse and Neglect..... 27

13. Know and Participate in the Foster Parent Role in All Case Processes 27

14. Know WCYA Appeal Procedure and Rights for Foster Parents..... 28

15. Maintain Accurate and Relevant Records 28

16. Share Information, through the Child Welfare Team, with Subsequent Caregivers 29

17. Know and be Responsive to the Cultural Identity of Foster Child..... 29

WEBSTER CANTRELL YOUTH ADVOCACY FOSTER PARENT VIOLATION GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE 30

 Step One (Informal – written)..... 30

 Step Two (Formal Written Grievance Process) 30

Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy Foster Care Chain of Command 32

Board Rates for Licensed and Unlicensed Homes 33

Trainings/ Training Recommendations for 2023/2024..... 34

 In Person Trainings for 2023/2024 34

 Training Recommendations for 2024 34

Important Contact Information for Foster Parents 35

Signature Page..... 36

ANNUAL PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF FOSTER PARENT LAW

**The Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy vision statement is:
“All children and youth are nurtured, loved, and live in safe homes.”**

Foster parenting is a demanding task that affects your lives every day. We strive to help our foster parents understand the rules and philosophy of the Foster Care System so we can all work together through the life of a foster child’s case. We emphasize that we are working towards returning the foster children home to their parents until it is determined by the judge that this goal is no longer possible. Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy provides training, home visits, and team meetings to help prepare our foster parents for this goal. We recognize that being a Foster Parent is an emotional task and support our Foster Parents with respite, celebrations, and their support group. Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy defends what is in the best interest of the foster child. We know foster parents are caring people with big hearts. We need our foster parents’ input about the foster child as you are very important members of the foster child’s team. Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy upholds all clients’ rights to be treated ethically, truthfully, and with dignity. We appreciate our foster parents’ participation in this team effort to protect children in need.

ANNUAL EVALUATION REPORT OF 2023 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Foster Parent Involvement in the Development the Implementation Plan

All foster parents involved in the Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy (WCYA) foster care program are able to view and make recommendations for the Implementation Plan for WCYA during both the in-person and virtual meetings. Copies will be made available at our Annual Trick or Treat function, and are always available at the front reception desk, and through the licensing office.

This year WCYA has planned to host both an in person as well as have a virtual option to allow foster parents the opportunity to voice their concerns, suggestions and provide feedback on the Implementation Plan. This will allow WCYA to gain insight from our foster parents on training recommendations as well. These meetings allow foster parents to make suggestions on the Plan itself. Licensing also reviews specific parts of the Plan during home visits and Licensing meetings to ensure everyone is aware and understanding of their rights and responsibilities.

Staff involvement in the Development of the Implementation Plan

Staff also have access to a copy of the new Plan at the beginning of each plan year via the WCYA intranet on the H drive. Staff are asked for improvements and updates for the upcoming year during their October staff meeting. During the year, staff are formally trained on each aspect of the Plan. Suggestions are also taken before the Plan is revised for the upcoming year. Foster Care staff will be trained in Foster Parent Law by Licensing and will be asked for their suggestions on the improvement of this document both in person and by email.

Suggested Improvements

No staff or foster parents gave any feedback or recommendations for changes in the last year. In 2022, the WCYA Committee met and formalized that grievances should be written out as described in the Grievance Procedure. There were no other adjustments made to the document. The Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council gave no feedback to the 2023 Plan. Historically during training, licensing staff provide foster parents with the opportunity to decide whether or not they would like to co-train and/or provide feedback as to any ideas they have for training. WCYA continually asks foster parents what they feel they need training in. All trainings are listed in the agency's newsletter. Foster parents are encouraged to take Trauma 201 as well, which is provided by the DCFS training department which can be done on demand. When attending in-person trainings WCYA provides snacks for our agency sponsored training, and childcare is available when requested.

WCYA has a Specialized Care contract and is able to place specialized children into our foster homes or specialize children in need while in their current placements. Due to these specialized cases, there is an increase in the mutual assessment of what the foster parent wants to be trained in. The board payment rates in the appendix do not reflect the specialized board payment. Each foster parent with a specialized child is informed about their board payment rate. Previously suggested improvements by the Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council on timely assessment and payment have been incorporated into the text of this document under Right #4.

During the previous Plan year, there were no formal complaints or grievances. During this time, WCYA has had discussions with foster parents who have taken children from other agencies or DCFS under respite and their placement lasting much longer, which has understandably added to frustrations. Foster Parents are being contacted frequently for placements and in recent months DCFS has contacted our parents directly instead of going through WCYA making it difficult for us to monitor these contacts. Complaints of if a worker has not showed up for visit or has been late are addressed at Staff Foster Care meetings. Caseworkers have weekly supervision with their supervisors and all aspects of the case are discussed. Program Supervisors are to ensure caseworkers are informing foster parents about all scheduled meetings, court dates, counseling appointments, etc. All foster parents can contact their caseworker's supervisor to ask questions, lodge a complaint, and schedule team meetings. The Chain of Command is attached in the Appendix.

Foster Parent Review of the Grievance Procedure

In 2001, a Foster Parent grievance procedure was developed with input from foster care staff and Foster Parents. The Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy Foster Parent Grievance Procedure provides for the specific needs of foster parents during the formal grievance process. The Grievance Procedure was updated in 2021 to exclude the verbal component and just keep to a written, documented process. Licensing workers discuss how WCYA is to uphold Foster Parent Law with at monitoring visits and trainings. These visits and trainings allow foster parents the opportunity to provide feedback about the Grievance Procedure. The Grievance Procedure is also discussed with each foster parent during the licensing process and investigations to ensure foster parents fully comprehend the procedure. This will also be addressed in 2024 at an upcoming training to help foster parents maintain understanding of the procedure and provide opportunities for open feedback.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR YEAR 2024

The purpose of the Implementation Plan is to firmly establish foster parents as a vital and participating part of the foster child's welfare team. The Illinois State legislature has enacted the Foster Parent Law. This law provides for the statement of the rights and responsibilities of foster parents. This annual plan is developed by Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy in compliance with the Foster Parent Law. The Plan is developed by WCYA foster care staff as well as with the foster parents as full, participating members, and is hereby submitted as required.

This plan is structured for Foster Parents to use as a resource. The Table of Contents lists each Right and Responsibility so Foster Parents may easily look up specific sections. Each Right and Responsibility attempts to completely explain that topic.

Statement of Foster Parent Rights

The following are the statements of Foster Parent Rights as written in the law and strategies for implementation of each statement by Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy during the year 2024. The rights of each foster parent include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. The right to be treated with dignity, respect, and consideration as a professional member of the child welfare team.

As full participating members of WCYA child welfare teams, Foster Parents are treated with the same dignity, respect, and consideration as all the other members of these teams. This team has the primary responsibility to plan, implement, monitor, and evaluate foster care services for children joining a foster family. The child welfare team listens to the needs of the Foster Parent, provides respect and confidentiality of information regarding the Foster Parent, provides for the privacy of the Foster Parent, ensures that the Foster Parent fully understands the information they encounter within the child welfare team context, and ensures the timely resolution of complaints. Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy staff will be considerate of scheduling issues and respectful of the time that Foster Parents put into a foster child's case so that an understanding of cooperation and collaboration is created.

WCYA schedules meetings for training and discussion between Foster Parents and Agency staff regularly. New Foster Parents are trained in agency policy as well as the role of the Foster Parent on the child welfare team. Training is also held for Foster Care Staff outlining how to effectively interact with foster parents while ensuring that all foster parents are treated with dignity and respect. The foster parents are informed of the grievance procedure during the licensing process and at a training held each year. Foster Parents are encouraged to engage in this procedure if they feel they are having problems with their role in the team and communication with other agency staff. Foster Parents can also request the assistance of the Licensing Representative when participating in this procedure. If the Foster Parent is not comfortable asking for staff assistance, they may seek assistance from an experienced Foster Parent. Caseworkers are to fully disclose the status of the child's case promptly and honestly. By using this grievance procedure, the Foster Parent is ensured a timely, objective resolution of problems and/or complaints they may have.

2. The right to be given standardized pre-service training and appropriate ongoing training to meet mutually assessed needs and improve the foster parent's skills.

DCFS Office of Training assures that standardized pre-placement training is offered on a regularly scheduled basis for all Foster Parents. All licensed non-relative Foster Parents must participate in a thirty-nine-hour training called PRIDE (Parents' Resource for Information, Development, and Education). This comprehensive pre-service training is scheduled a minimum of once per quarter throughout Illinois. This pre-service training is offered on various days in order to attempt to meet the individual scheduling needs of the Foster Parents. Online classes have been available since July of 2017. These online sessions include the complete PRIDE pre-service training. The additional twelve hours are available to licensed foster parents in the "On Demand" section on <http://dcfstraining.org>. Licensed Foster parents are encouraged to complete the Supplemental trainings for training credit. The Supplemental training topics are *Trauma, Human Trafficking, Keeping Children Connected, Social Media, and the Life of the Case*.

Relative Foster Parents are to complete a six-hour pre-service training course through PRIDE in order to be eligible to apply for a Foster Family Home License and, this can also be completed by watching a video at home. Relative Foster Parents are encouraged to complete the full thirty-nine-hour training. Ongoing training dates and times are sent to Foster Parents in our monthly newsletter. Each Foster Parent has access to a new manual during licensing. This manual and The Foster Parent Handbook are guides to most of the situations a Foster Parent might encounter. Training materials and schedules are always available online at the Virtual Training Center (VTC) at <http://www.dcfstraining.org>.

Ongoing training is offered after licensing is completed. Foster parents and agency staff are encouraged to participate in training opportunities. Additionally, WCYA would like to try and have an active support group again for Foster Parents. Foster parents are given many opportunities to attend four core training hours per year to maintain eligibility for re-licensure. WCYA does have specialized foster care cases and training is individualized to meet the needs of the foster parents. A specialized foster home is required to complete 16 hours of training per year.

The VTC webpage lists class descriptions and schedules. Foster parents can call the DCFS Training Office at 1-877-800-3393 to sign up for a class. The VTC also offers online trainings and on demand trainings. Upon completing a training or book, the foster parent must fill out a Foster Parent Training Credit Approval Form (TCAF). This form is available online at dcfstraining.org or from your licensing worker. Other approved online training links are listed in the VTC.

We encourage the increased use of the Foster Parent trainings provided by the State and WCYA, including *Trauma in Children, Human Trafficking, Caregiver Social Media, Life of the Case 1 & 2, First Aid/CPR and CPI*. WCYA will continue to discuss Reunification activities and foster parent involvement. We look at discipline training to focus on the reason a child has negative behaviors and focus on the child's emotional needs including building self-esteem. WCYA encourages the youth in foster care, ages 14 to 21 years old, to go to the Youth Advisory Board (YAB) meetings. These meeting provide information for Youth about services provided by the State after they turn 18, including college

scholarships. Adopted children are also eligible for college scholarships through the Youth in Care (YIC) program. WCYA also has scholarship opportunities for the children we serve.

The Licensing Representative and Foster Parent mutually assess areas of concern and identify training to address those areas of concern. The Licensing Representative documents these areas of concern on the CFS 590 Licensing Compliance and Monitoring Record throughout the Licensing Process for new Foster Parents and bi-annually for licensed Foster Parents. Ongoing in-service training is planned mutually by the Foster Parents and WCYA to meet assessed needs and to improve Foster Parent skills. A calendar is developed to ensure that training is organized and ongoing. Life-books are expected to be developed by the Foster Parents and we will continue to train on this topic every year. Furthermore, should any new needs arise, appropriate training will be implemented. Due to an increase in training needs for our homes, we ask the foster parents what their training needs are. We are building our specialized program and will continue to address these training needs. We will seek out other agencies for training resources on various subjects including autism, developmental disabilities, and mental health issues. We have a training team that is certified to do CPR, AED, and Car Seat Safety.

WCYA copies and files the foster parents' transcript printed from the DCFS Virtual Training Center (VTC), which tracks the various training sessions attended. Foster Parents also have access to their own transcript through the VTC. The Agency keeps Foster Parents informed via newsletters, training fliers, and support meetings regarding training opportunities available to them, and encourages their attendance.

3. The right to be informed as to how to contact the appropriate child placement agency in order to receive information and assistance, to access supportive services for children in the foster parent's care.

All Foster Parents are informed during the Licensing Process regarding how they can contact staff to receive information and assistance to help them access supportive services for children in their care. Pre-Licensure training, as well as the caseworker and licensing representative, discuss the type of support services available and how to contact support services. Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy has staff available 24 hours per day, weekends, and holidays through Foster Care on call phone, to assist Foster Parents during emergencies and for other resource needs. The agency's Foster Care on-call number is (217) 423-6961. The phones are staffed by Case Workers or Licensing Representatives in the Foster Care Program.

The Child Intervention for Placement Preservation (CIPP) program is designed to emphasize early intervention to improve placement stabilization by preserving social connections and minimizing placement changes. The caseworker or foster parent can initiate a CIPP staffing to discuss services needed for the foster child. When receiving a call from a caregiver, CIPP Intake shall contact the caseworker prior to scheduling a meeting. CIPP shall accept referrals from caregivers only for the purpose of identifying services and supports needed to preserve the current placement. When requesting a

CIPP meeting, the caseworker or foster parent shall contact CIPP Intake by phone at (312) 814-6800.

Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy also accesses placement stabilization services, such as respite care, Screening Assessment and Support Services (SASS) and Intensive Placement Stabilization (IPS). Intensive Placement Stabilization is a network of providers who help children maintain stability in relative or traditional foster care placements. It is a community and outreach-based service system that focuses on stabilizing children whose placements are at risk due to emotional or behavioral issues. SASS is an evaluation and recommendation for crises, counseling, and immediate staff response to issues or concerns of Foster Families. Foster parents can call the SASS office for psychiatric issues and receive help from a local agency. SASS calls are streamlined through the CARES Hotline, (800)345-9049.

All foster parents receive current information regarding the WCYA Foster Care Program "Chain of Command" (copy attached) to ensure all of their resource and support needs are met in a timely manner.

4. The right to receive timely financial reimbursement commensurate with the care needs of the child as specified in the service plan.

Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy staff ensures the reimbursement of funds to all Foster Parents associated with WCYA. At the time a foster child is placed in a Foster Home, the caseworker completes a "Face Sheet" which creates the "CFS 906 – I, Placement/Payment Authorization". This form is submitted to the DCFS payment office and generates the payments for the agency and the foster parents. A copy of the CFS 906-I is to be given or mailed to the foster parent for their records. This form also indicates if the child is at the regular board rate or the specialized rate.

For the Licensed Foster Homes that WCYA is responsible for, WCYA staff ensures reimbursement of appropriate funds no later than twelve days after the month in which the care was provided, or the funds expended. Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy issues monthly board payment reimbursement on the 10th of each month. If the 10th falls on a weekend or holiday, the board payment reimbursement is issued the weekday prior to the 10th. If there is a dispute or oversight regarding the distribution of funds, Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy will resolve the problem within five working days. If there is a discrepancy with the payment, we ask the foster parents to immediately contact the caseworker, licensing worker, or supervisor to clear up the issue.

On the day the funds are distributed, Foster Parents can either pick up their check at the agency between 3:00pm to 5:00pm or it will be mailed directly to their home. Three different people check to ensure the accuracy of board payments. During the Licensing Process, the licensing representative reviews when funds are distributed and expenses that WCYA will reimburse.

A Board Rate table is available in the Appendix. For the Foster Parents who are not the sole responsibility of WCYA, which are Unlicensed Foster Homes, WCYA assists them to ensure they receive appropriate reimbursement from Illinois DCFS in a timely manner. If

the Foster Parent is experiencing payment problems or concerns, Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy foster care staff works with the Foster Parent to resolve the issues of concern. The DCFS Payment hotline phone number is: 1-800-525-0499. This office is open 8:30 - 11:00am, Monday through Friday.

Additionally, WCYA provides a subsidy to enable Foster Parents to purchase special needs such as glasses, dental care, camping opportunities etc., outside of the Foster Care contract for the children in their care. This is to help them overcome financial difficulties or other issues. The Foster Parent is to submit an estimate for such items to the Foster Care case manager. The Foster Care case manager submits the estimate to the Foster Care Director, who submits it to the Chief Clinical Officer. The Chief Clinical Officer then determines how to provide funds for the request. Respite funds continue to be available to assist our agency foster parents. Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy pays our foster parents for respite care. Checks are mailed to the respite provider within one month.

5. The right to be provided with a clear, written understanding of a placement agency's plan concerning the placement of a child in the foster parent's home. Inherent in this right is the foster parent's responsibility to support activities that will promote the child's right to relationships with his or her own family and cultural heritage.

All Foster Parents are included as full participating members of the child welfare team. All Foster Parents participate in the assessment of the child's needs, the development of the child's goals, service plan, and in the evaluation of progress toward those goals. The service plan is comprehensive, addressing the child's functioning and developmental needs, as well as those needs which relate to the child's right to have a relationship with his or her own family and cultural heritage. Also, the Foster Parent has the opportunity to provide input into the visitation and communication plan for their foster children with their biological families.

The child and the Foster Parents receive a clearly written summary of the Foster Parent goals, the child's goals, and the child's summary of the service plan. This written plan, or summary of the plan, is provided to the Foster Parents within forty-five days of a child's initial placement in the foster home, and within five days of the subsequent re-placement of a child in the foster home.

In the event of unplanned changes in the service plan, including action that results in the movement of a foster child from the foster home, the foster parents are notified of such changes immediately by telephone or in person, followed by a written "Notice of Decision." Foster parents are notified of Administrative Case Reviews (ACRs) by DCFS, in writing and verbally by WCYA foster care staff. WCYA strives to ensure Foster Parents receive every support needed and encourage their attendance at all ACRs to help cope with movement of a foster child, as well as with changes in the treatment plan of the child.

6. The right to be provided a fair, timely, and impartial investigation of complaints concerning the foster parent's licensure, to be provided the opportunity to have a person of the foster parent's choosing present during the investigation, and to be provided due process during the investigation; the right to be provided the opportunity to request and receive mediation or an administrative review of decisions that affect licensing parameters, or both mediation and an administrative review; and the right to have decisions concerning a licensing corrective action plan specifically explained and tied to the licensing standards violated.

Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy's Licensing Representative is trained regarding foster parent and child rights, and how to conduct an investigation for a licensing complaint. These are included in ongoing and core training. The statement of Foster Parent rights, as stated in the Foster Parent Law, is printed on a form resembling the "Miranda" statement of rights and is provided to a Foster Parent who is the subject of a licensing complaint at the time of the investigation of the complaint. WCYA Licensing Representatives assume the responsibility for reading and explaining this printed statement of these rights to a Foster Parent in the event of a complaint against them. The foster parent has the right to have an advocate of their choosing present during the investigation.

The Licensing Representative provides the Foster Parent with a written copy of the violations with the specific standard alleged to have been violated, and with the section number of the standard identified so interpretation of the standard, and of the complaint may be sought. If needed, WCYA's Licensing Representative will ensure that this right is guaranteed, in full, to the Foster Parent.

The investigation and resolution of licensing complaints are conducted according to the following time frames as required by 89 Ill. Adm. Code 383. First, the complaint is subjected to an informal review within 10 days. If a corrective plan is not acceptable to the Foster Parent or to WCYA, the licensee is sent a certified letter within 30 days. If the complaint remains unacceptable, a second certified letter is sent to the Foster Parent within another 30 days. If corrective steps are not taken at this time, WCYA will proceed with formal enforcement action which may result in license revocation. The DCFS central office is notified of this action. Foster Parents are informed in writing of their right to appeal as well as to whom and within what time frames this can occur. Also, Foster Parents who wish to appeal any recommended remediation actions, are encouraged to, and supported by Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy foster care staff in their appeal process.

A licensing investigation is to be resolved within 30 days but, if needed, an extension can be granted. If the Foster Parent has a problem or concern with any part of the investigative process, they have the right to enter the grievance process within the framework of the Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy Foster Parent Law Violation Grievance Procedure (copy attached). This procedure was written specifically to provide objective communication for the Foster Parent and an opportunity for their concerns to be resolved.

If the investigation is concerning abuse or neglect allegations, DCFS will send a DCP or Division of Child Protection Investigator to the foster home. For this type of

investigation, Licensing will conduct a concurrent investigation. DCFS will take the lead and Licensing will be subject to their time frames. This investigation is to be resolved in 30 days but can be granted an extension in order to gather information. The Advocacy Office is available to assist foster parents. The Advocacy Office phone number is 1(800)232-3798.

7. The right, at any time during which a child is placed with the foster parent, to receive additional or necessary information that is relevant to the care of the child.

All agency caseworkers receive training regarding what types of information are relevant to the care of the foster child and may be shared or disclosed. Caseworkers are held accountable for sharing such information through the close supervision by the Foster Care Program Director and Supervisors, as well as on-going monitoring of the case record documentation.

All information which becomes available to the Foster Parent and/or to the child's caseworker, regarding the child's health, safety, behavioral, or emotional well-being, will be exchanged in a timely manner with other members of the child welfare team. WCYA provides Child Record Folders to the Foster Parents for their use to keep necessary information about the child in an orderly and retrievable manner.

The child's caseworker and/or the supervisor shares this information. Such information is exchanged in the most accountable and timely manner possible, in child welfare team staffing exchanges, Administrative Case Reviews, court hearings, and/or in person or by telephone. Foster parents and other team staff receive specific training regarding confidentiality and how that applies to the information that is shared. Additionally, if an issue of what is appropriate information that may be shared arises, this question is addressed in a one-on-one discussion, and/or team meetings.

8. At the time the caseworker places a child with a foster parent or prospective adoptive parent, or prior to placement of the child, whenever possible, the worker shall provide available information necessary for the proper care of the child in writing to the foster parent or prospective adoptive parent.

Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy Foster Care Staff have been trained in the Admission/Placement Checklist (CFS 600-4), which includes the 10-day deadline on obtaining Foster Parent signatures. A form has been created for these signatures ensuring the details in this policy are adhered to and that there will be a written record on file. The Foster Care Licensing Department will file this form in the foster parent's file and send the signature page to the GAL.

The information to be provided to the caregiver shall include:

- A. The medical history of the child including known medical problems or communicable diseases, information concerning the immunization status of the child, and insurance and medical card information.

- B. The educational history of the child, including any special educational needs and details of the child's individualized educational plan (IEP), Individual Family Service Plans (IFSP) when the child is receiving special education services or 504 Educational Special Needs Plan, if applicable.
- C. A copy of the child's portion of the client service plan including any visitation arrangements and all amendments or revisions; case history of the child, including how the child came into care; the child's legal status; the permanency goal for the child; a history of the child's previous placements; and reasons for placement changes, excluding information that identifies or reveals the location of any previous foster or relative home caregiver; and

Other relevant background information of the child, including any prior criminal history; information about behavior problems including fire setting, perpetration of sexual abuse, destructive behavior, and substance abuse habits; and likes and dislikes.

In the case of an emergency placement, when all of the above referenced information may not be available, the worker shall provide known information verbally as it becomes available and subsequently provide this information in writing. In advance of placement, the caseworker may provide the foster parent or adoptive parent with a written summary of the information listed above.

Within 10 working days after the placement, the worker shall obtain from the prospective adoptive parent, foster parent, or other caregiver, signed verification of receipt of the information described above and forward a copy of the information to the child's guardian ad litem (GAL).

Supervisory review and approval are required prior to providing any information to the foster parents or prospective adoptive parents.

9. The right to be notified of scheduled meetings and staffings concerning the foster child in order to actively participate in the case planning and decision-making process regarding the child, including individual service planning meetings, administrative case reviews, interdisciplinary staffings, and individual educational planning meetings. The right to be informed of decisions made by the courts or the child welfare agency concerning the child; the right to provide input concerning the plan of services for the child and to have that input given full consideration in the same manner as information presented by any other professional on the team; and the right to communicate with other professionals who work with the foster child within the context of the team, including therapists, physicians, and teachers.

Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy caseworkers are accountable for giving notification in a timely manner to Foster Parents regarding scheduled meetings and staffings concerning foster children in their care. This is done in writing and followed up with an in-person reminder or phone call. Foster Parents are encouraged and expected to attend meetings to ensure that they receive all pertinent information regarding the needs of the child. In addition, if the Foster Parent is unable to attend the meeting or court appointment, the caseworker will inform the Foster Parent about any decisions that were made.

The caseworker and supervisor assume primary responsibility for the information flow, as well as staffing information between the Foster Parent and the WCYA team. WCYA's caseworker is responsible for ensuring that Foster Parents are informed of decisions made by the agency and courts regarding children in their care. The casework staff is responsible for giving the Foster Parents an opportunity to provide input into case planning activities and that the input of the Foster Parent is given full consideration in the formulation of the case plan. Further, the casework staff is also responsible for encouraging Foster Parents to communicate regularly with all team members to ensure the expertise and concern of Foster Parents for their foster children is foremost in the design of the best plan of care for those children.

WCYA staff and supervisors complete CRMRS (Case Review Monthly Roster) from which DCFS sends out Administrative Case Reviews (ACR) notices to foster parents. The Foster Parents are notified of and are expected to attend the ACR for the child, and in the event that the Foster Parent is unable to attend an ACR or staffing, all pertinent information that was shared in that setting is given to the Foster Parent in a timely fashion. Also, visitation plans are given to foster parents in writing by the case manager. Subsequent changes in the visitation plan are communicated via telephone and are followed with a written copy of the plan as soon as it is available.

10. The right to be given, in a timely and consistent manner, any information a case worker has regarding the child and the child's family which is pertinent to the care and needs of the child, and to the making of a permanency plan for the child. Disclosure of information concerning the child's family shall be limited to the information that is essential for understanding the needs of and providing care to the child in order to protect the rights of the child's family. When a positive relationship exists between the foster parent and the child's family, the child's family may consent to disclosure of additional information.

Foster Parents receive any and all information important to the care and needs of the foster child. Examples of the types of information shared include a parental history of substance abuse that a child was exposed to, as well as information regarding emotional, sexual and/or physical abuse. During all exchanges of information, the requirements regarding client (parental) confidentiality are respected.

When a foster child is placed with a foster family, the Foster Parent is provided with a temporary medical card and a Foster Child Record Folder from the Agency. Healthworks of Illinois is the office responsible for tracking the medical information for children in foster care. Healthworks will supply the foster parent with all medical history known about the child. This paperwork is called the E-Health Passport or Health Passport. The Health Passport is for tracking immunizations, doctor appointments, and known allergies, dates of any scheduled follow up doctor appointments, and the name, birth date, Social Security number of the foster child if known at the time. Healthworks will generate an E-Health Passport for all new foster child cases but will only track the children's medical information for ages 0 to 6 years old. The Healthworks phone number for Macon, Clark, Coles, Cumberland, Douglas, Edgar, Shelby, and Moultrie Counties is (217)423-6988.

***Please note that it is understood that the DCFS CPS worker is making the initial placement of the child(ren) at the onset of the case, however, it is WCYA's worker's responsibility to ensure that this information was given to the foster parents when completing the transition to the agency. Also note that if the placement disrupts, it is the agency workers responsibility to get all relevant information to the new foster parents at the onset of the placement.*

The team caseworker or supervisor is accountable for sharing appropriate information with the Foster Parent in a timely manner in writing, by telephone, or by face-to-face conferences. New information is communicated to the Foster Parents by the caseworker as it is learned, including decisions made in Administrative Case Reviews (ACRs). Caseworkers review their cases with their supervisor to ensure that all information has been shared with the foster parent. Foster parents are encouraged to contact a supervisor if they have questions, concerns, or complaints about the foster child's case and the service they are receiving.

11. The right to be given reasonable written notice of any change in a child's case plan, plans to terminate the placement of the child with the foster parent, and the reasons for the change or termination in placement. The notice shall be waived only in cases of a court order or when the child is determined to be at imminent risk of harm.

Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy caseworkers guarantee that Foster Parents are, under reasonable circumstances, given a fourteen-day written notice in every instance in which plans are made to change a child's case plan or to terminate the placement of the child with the Foster Parent. The fourteen-day stipulation does not apply in situations where movement of the child is based on a court order or when the child is determined to be at imminent risk of harm.

Included in this written notice is the reason for the change or termination of the child's placement and a statement of the right of the foster parent to appeal the decision with instructions on how to do so. If the Foster Parent wishes to appeal or have an emergency review process conducted regarding the change in case plan or termination of placement of the child, the team caseworker is accountable for assisting the foster parent with the process.

In any event in which WCYA determines that the foster child is at imminent risk of harm, the fourteen-day stipulation will be waived, and the child can be immediately removed from the foster home. The Foster Parents then will be given verbal and written notice of the full reason(s) for the termination of the child's placement. Foster children can also be removed from a foster home without a fourteen-day notice during an investigation into that foster home. This is not considered a termination of placement until the investigation is complete and at that point, a termination of placement will be addressed if needed.

12. The right to be notified in a timely manner of all court hearings, including notice of the date and time of the court hearing, the name of the judge or hearing officer hearing the case, the location of the hearing, and the court docket number of the case; and the right to intervene in court proceedings or to seek mandamus under the Juvenile Court Act of 1987.

When a court date is set, the caseworker gives verbal or written notification to the Foster Parent. Foster care case managers, licensing personnel, supervisors, and Administrative Case Reviewers check for this information and discuss with Foster Parent whether or not they have been notified of court dates in a timely manner. Foster Parents have the right to be in the court hearings for their foster child. The Judge is the only person who can ask individuals to leave their courtroom. Juvenile court hearings are closed hearings. You must be a part of the child's case to be in the room so you will have to introduce yourself to get in.

The team caseworker is accountable for ensuring that notice of all court hearings is provided, including the date and time of hearing, name of judge or hearing officer, location of the hearing, the court docket number of the case, and the right to intervene in court proceedings or to seek mandamus under the Juvenile Court Act of 1987. In the event of the scheduling of a permanency hearing, the agency caseworker informs the Foster Parent of this hearing a minimum of three weeks prior to the hearing date. This ensures that the Foster Parent can provide information for the caseworker to add to their report to the court. Additionally, the agency encourages and supports Foster Parents in their seeking additional training regarding court procedures. Foster parents can also contact a supervisor if they are not being informed about court dates. The supervisor will address this with the caseworker to ensure that future court dates are disclosed.

13. The right to be considered as a placement option when a foster child who was formerly placed with the foster parent is to be re-entered into foster care, if that placement is consistent with the best interest of the child and other children in the foster parent's home.

As provided by Illinois law, Foster Parents who previously had a foster child in placement in their home are given priority consideration as a placement option in the event that a child who was formerly placed with the Foster Parents has re-entered foster care. This priority consideration is given unless such replacement is not considered consistent with the best interest of the child or that of other children in the foster home. The foster home must also have an available opening within their capacity. DCFS maintains these records and has access to past placement history when a child becomes a youth in care. WCYA has established an on-going Foster Parent Placement Roster to ensure the original Foster Parent is considered.

The WCYA or DCFS caseworker for the child facing re-entry into care will assess the risks of placement in a previous foster home for the foster child and for other children residing in that foster home. Through comprehensive study of the past placement(s) and the status of the foster child and other children in the home of question, a collaborative decision is made regarding what the best interest of the children and family is. If there is a low or non-level of risk to the children and family, agency staff assists the foster family in pursuing their right to be considered as a placement option.

14. The right to have timely access to the child placement agency's existing appeals process and the right to be free from acts of harassment and retaliation by any other party when exercising the right to appeal.

In 2001, a Foster Parent grievance procedure was developed with input from foster care staff and Foster Parents. This procedure, the Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy Foster Parent Grievance Procedure provides for the specific needs of Foster Parents in the grievance process. Every year, licensing representatives speak with Foster Parents about the Agency upholding the Foster Parent Law in trainings and provide an opportunity to give feedback regarding the grievance procedure in the foster parent newsletter. No Foster Parent has stated that they want the procedure changed. The Grievance procedure is discussed with each Foster Parent during the licensing process to ensure they have an adequate understanding of the procedure. This will also be addressed in 2024 at our Foster Parent Appreciation Event to ensure Foster Parents understand the procedure and have an opportunity to provide feedback.

Grievance discussions that occur as part of an investigation are not included in this section. WCYA does provide for Foster Parents to use this internal appeals process. Foster Parents have access to a complete and objective process which ensures the timely resolution of concerns and problems, without fear of retaliation or harassment.

Foster Parents receive information about the use of the Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy Foster Parent Grievance Procedure in their licensing home visits. Foster Parents are also informed that the grievance procedure may be used when a Foster Parent feels there has been a violation of the Foster Parent Law. Additional options for Foster Parents experiencing difficulty include the Advocacy Office for Children and Families at 1(800)232-3798 and the Foster Parent Hotline at 1(800)722-9124. Foster parents who have internet access can review the Foster Parent Manual (DCFS Foster Family Handbook) and the WCYA Client Information Manual. These manuals give information regarding the appeals resources that are available to them. Caseworkers are responsible for assisting Foster Parents in accessing the external DCFS appeals system, when needed or advisable.

15. The right to be informed of the Foster Parent Hotline established under Section 35.6 of the Children and Family Services Act and all of the rights accorded to foster parents concerning reports of misconduct by Department employees, service providers, or contractors, confidential handling of those reports, and investigation by the Inspector General appointed under Section 35.5 of the Children and Family Services Act.

Foster Parents receive information regarding the Foster Parent Hotline and of all the rights foster parents must report misconduct within the child welfare system. The hotline telephone number is published monthly in the Foster Parent Newsletter. The foster parent hotline number is 1(800)722-9124.

The agency also provides on-going training about the Foster Parent Hotline and the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) investigations. When appropriate, agency casework and administrative staff provide support and information to specific foster parents in the event of reports of misconduct. Foster Parents also receive on-going information

regarding the implementation of these stated rights through their participation in Agency sponsored Foster Parent Training and the Central Illinois Foster Parent Support Group, the regularly issued Foster Parent Newsletter, and membership in the Illinois Foster and Adoptive Parent Association (IFAPA).

16. The right to know that to ensure that all Illinois youth in care have their voices heard and their experiences considered and documented, the Illinois House of Representatives passed House Bill 4304, known as the Foster Care Assessment and Rating at Exit (FARE) interview, that became effective on January 1, 2023, and the department began implementing on August 14, 2023. This mandate requires that all children 5 years and older who exit a foster home complete an exit interview about their experiences. The interview is to take place with a qualified DCFS designee in a private setting outside the home they are leaving.

The FARE interview is something that is being implemented to ensure that children in foster care are being heard in regards to their experiences when moving from a home. Children 5 years of age and older will be interviewed about their experiences in the home they were removed from. The interview will be approximately 27 questions and will be recorded in a secure portal. If a child discloses allegations of abuse or neglect, the interviewer will contact the DCFS hotline and inform WCYA of the allegations.

The goal of the FARE interview is to determine how the needs of the child were being met in the home, their ability to contact their caseworker, therapist, or the guardian ad litem when requested, their safety and comfort in the home, and if there was a sense of normalcy for them. The interview will be saved and documented in the foster parent's licensing file, the child's case file, the child's service plan, and provided to the guardian ad litem. Foster parents can respond to the information by contacting the case worker, so that the information the foster parents give can be documented.

The information gathered in the interview will be stripped of identifying information and be aggregated and is based on the number of times a child moves to a new placement. This data will be published quarterly through DCFS.

Statement of Foster Parent Responsibilities

In recognition of the above stated rights for Foster Parents, the Foster Parent Law also includes Foster Parent responsibilities. Following are the statements of Foster Parent Responsibilities as expressed in the Foster Parent Law, and the implementation of each statement by WCYA.

The responsibilities of each foster parent include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. The responsibility to openly communicate and share information about the child with other members of the child welfare team.

Foster Parents are fully informed of this responsibility in pre-service and ongoing in-service training opportunities. Foster Parents are assisted in assuming this responsibility as they participate as full members of the professional child welfare team serving foster children. Caseworkers regularly assist in the active communication of information to and from the Foster Parent. Caseworkers need immediate information concerning a foster child's unusual behaviors, concerning statements, or any physical problems. These issues are evaluated to assess for any service needs; for example, a foster child may need increased mental or physical health services. These issues also are discussed to provide support for the foster parents.

Trainings are provided on general topics and within the PRIDE trainings, these include Court Proceedings, Foster Parent Rights, and Appeal Rights. These training opportunities all include discussions about the importance of communication and types of communication appropriate to transmit a variety of information about their foster child(ren). These discussions focus on helping Foster Parents learn what types of information should be urgently shared, and what types are of more general nature and are not urgent.

2. The responsibility to respect the confidentiality of information concerning foster children and their families and act appropriately within applicable confidentiality laws and regulations.

In pre-service training, Foster Parents are fully informed of the responsibility to comply with the mandates of the Illinois Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Confidentiality Act. A copy of the act is given to Foster Parents prior to their involvement with foster children, and periodically thereafter this Act is included in the Client Information Manual. As needed, the child welfare caseworkers inform the Foster Parents of the implications of violating confidentiality mandates and are encouraged to participate in further training on confidentiality and other related issues. Information and memos about confidentiality are shared in the newsletter. Discussion about monitoring social media, cell phones (or other electronic devices) is initiated during monitoring visits and the licensing process. Foster parents are expected to not only respect confidentiality issues but also protect the foster children. WCYA recommends restricting information on social media for the security of the foster home. The Social Media/Mobile Safety Agreement document CFS 2034 informs all foster parents about these confidentiality issues. This Safety Agreement continues to be used as needed with each foster child who is age 13 and older.

3. The responsibility to advocate for children in the foster parent's care.

Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy actively provides advocacy for all clients, including Foster Parents, foster children, and their families. Foster Parents receive training opportunities to learn more about advocacy for foster children. These training opportunities include the Educational Advocacy Training that is required for all Foster Parents by DCFS. Additionally, Foster Parents will be assisted and supported in their advocacy efforts on behalf of the foster children in their care. Trainings and brochures regarding service appeal issues address matters of working with the courts, and the appeal process, specifically the DCFS Service Appeal Brochure that is given to and/or mailed to each Foster Parent. Casework Staff encourage Foster Parents to actively participate in staffings and ACRs, and in every way to advocate for the rights of foster children in their care. Caseworkers support Foster Parents by participating in Placement Review Teams, Child and Family Team Meetings, and court hearings.

Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy works with Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA), who advocates for Macon County children and youth, including foster children. The CASA program is based on a national court advocacy model, which provides trained volunteer advocates for youth who are involved in the court system. These advocates work with youth and family (including the Foster Family) to understand the judicial system, to support the youth, and to work on behalf of the youth to ensure that their case is handled professionally, and in the best interest of the youth.

4. The responsibility to treat children in the foster parent's care and the children's families with dignity, respect, and consideration.

Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy, remains aligned with the Code of Ethics for Personnel, expects all staff, including Foster Parents, to always treat all clients and families with dignity, respect, and consideration. Foster Parents will sign the Code of Ethics. Failure to do so can result in termination of the Foster Parent's relationship with WCYA. Foster Parents are also required to read and sign the Acknowledgement and Understanding regarding the DCFS's policy concerning corporal punishment, verbal abuse, threats, and derogatory remarks.

Ensuring that foster children and their families are treated with dignity, respect and consideration is a subject that is covered in the initial licensing process as well as through ongoing trainings. Casework staff complete initial and ongoing training regarding how to incorporate the Foster Parent, foster children when appropriate, and the children's families as a part of the Child Welfare Team. PRIDE is the training for Foster Parents regarding the roles and responsibilities of each member of the Child Welfare Team. This training is offered to all Foster Parents. Foster Parents are encouraged to work with the biological family in order to best meet the needs of the child(ren). Foster Parents are encouraged to journal and keep Life Books to share with the biological family.

Casework staff are always alert to monitor the attitude toward and treatment of foster children and their families to ensure that Foster Parents remember to uphold this responsibility. This monitoring is part of home visits, phone discussions with the Foster

Parent, and participation in proceedings such as court hearings, family team meetings, and ACRs. The caseworkers are trained to speak to the child(ren) separately in order to adequately assess safety and well-being. This allows the child to express any concerns, fears, or questions in a one-on-one setting. The caseworker in return can either address any issues which may arise directly with the Foster Parent or speak to the Licensing Representative and Supervisor. Licensing also evaluates the Foster Family's ability to support the identified permanency goal at bi-annual home visits. Permanency goals are an on-going topic of discussion between the Foster Family and the Licensing Representative. The Licensing Representative, as well as casework staff, encourage the Foster Family to be involved with court hearings, case reviews and the Child and Family Team meetings.

5. The responsibility to recognize the foster parent's own individual and familial strengths and limitations when deciding whether to accept a child into care; and the responsibility to recognize the foster parent's own support needs and utilize appropriate supports in providing care for foster children.

Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy foster care staff continually work to objectively ensure Foster Parents have realistic views of their individual and family strengths as well as limitations in dealing with foster children. This practice begins with the Licensing process and the pre-service training opportunities. It continues through in-service training opportunities, and in the ongoing assessment of the effectiveness of the Foster Parents. Every effort is made to make placements of foster children based in part on the mutual assessment of some level of compatibility between the Foster Parent and the foster child's needs, strengths, and limitations. The Licensing Representative also meets with the Foster Parent in the home every six months in order to discuss any needs or concerns regarding the Foster Parent and foster child. During these discussions, the Licensing Representative and Foster Parent continue the ongoing mutual assessment of strengths and limitations in dealing with foster children. The Licensing Representative works with the Foster Parent to identify appropriate trainings to address areas of concern and/or limitations. WCYA also encourages their foster homes to establish a network of support in order to further utilize their strengths or receive assistance for areas of improvement.

During the Licensing process, the Licensing Representative discusses with the Foster Family the need to develop a list of questions they would like answered before a child is placed in their home. Foster Families are also encouraged to deny placement if they are not comfortable with the information given regarding the child(ren). Foster Families work with the Licensing Representative to identify a capacity and age range which best fits their daily routines and parenting skills. Foster parents are asked about their placement preferences in age, race, and gender. Foster Parents complete the Tolerance for Behavior Problems assessment during the Licensing process to address the type of behaviors they feel comfortable caring for, will need help with, or cannot provide adequate care for. This allows the Foster Care team staff to know before contacting the Foster Parents if the child(ren) or Foster Parents will adjust well to the child(ren)'s placement in the home. If a child is being placed from another foster home or for an adoptive placement and time allows, pre-placement visits are encouraged. Pre-placement visits allow the Foster Parents as well as staff to identify concerns and make

recommendations regarding long-term placement. Foster Parents are encouraged to make inquiries regarding their concerns and service delivery plans for each child in the decision-making process regarding the placement of a child in their home. Foster Parents are expected to discuss their strengths and limitations, to seek training to meet those needs, and to seek support systems and resources as they work to provide care for foster children. The caseworker also meets with the Foster Parent per policy for monthly (or more) in the home visits and discusses with the Foster Parent any areas of concern regarding the Foster Parent's limitations and dealing with the foster child(ren) currently placed in their home.

Important sources of support are the regular Foster Parent meetings and trainings held by WCYA, as well as the on-going work of the child welfare team. Additional support for Foster Parents comes from their participation in the activities of the Foster Parent Associations and local support groups. All supports are targeted to assist the Foster Parents to better assess the ongoing needs of the foster child, and their ability to serve that child. Foster Parents are encouraged to contact WCYA Foster Care staff with any issues that might arise. The agency maintains a 24-hour help line for Foster Parents.

6. The responsibility to be aware of the benefits of relying on and affiliating with other foster parents and foster parent associations in improving the quality of care and service to children and families.

Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy provides several on-going avenues through which Foster Parents can become aware or maintain awareness about the benefits of affiliating with other Foster Parents, and with Foster Parent Associations. Some of these include the regular Foster Parent meetings, newsletters, and training opportunities. WCYA staff provide information on support groups for Foster Parents to encourage alliances with other Foster Parents. WCYA also encourages all Foster Parents to join the monthly "Caregiver Connection." Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy promotes the Illinois Foster Parent Support Group, which has a Facebook page called Illinois Foster Parent Support Group (IFPSG). The support group and their Facebook page are run independently. Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy does not monitor the meetings or discussions. The support group is open to all Foster Parents in our service area.

The Licensing Representatives present the information and benefits of support groups during the Licensing Process and ongoing home monitoring. Foster Parents are given the opportunity to participate in Foster and Adoptive Parent Associations and Councils throughout training and in the Foster Parent Newsletter. The Illinois Families – Now and Forever newsletter provides the dates of the Foster Parent Council meetings scheduled regionally throughout the year. Foster Parents can also attend community support groups such as the local Illinois Foster Parent Association sponsored support group. Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy encourages Foster Parents to utilize trainings offered to connect with more experienced foster parents. All Foster Parents have strengths and skills in different areas. At trainings, Foster Parents can also gain increased knowledge regarding cultural and racial diversity/sensitivity. For example, a Caucasian foster parent who is fostering an African American foster child (or vice versa) may connect with a Foster Parent of the same cultural/racial background as the foster child to help with questions. A frequently addressed issue is hair care.

7. The responsibility to assess the foster parent's ongoing individual training needs and take action to meet those needs.

WCYA continuously provides information through Foster Parent meetings, child welfare team activities, newsletters, and training opportunities to assist Foster Parents in making the best assessment about their ongoing training needs. Foster Parents are encouraged to attend and participate in training opportunities. Foster Parents are informed of community and State sponsored parenting training. Website information about the DCFS Virtual Training Center (VTC) is given to foster parents at visits and during the licensing process. VTC information is also placed in the monthly newsletter. Foster parents are encouraged to utilize the VTC "On-Demand" online trainings for renewal hours and skills development.

The Licensing Representative and Foster Parent mutually assess strengths and needs in order to continue improving their skills to meet the needs of foster children. These strengths and needs are documented on the CFS 597-FFH Family Foster Home Licensing Monitoring Record and case notes. The Licensing Representatives and Foster Parent support groups ensure that all Foster Parents are aware of trainings through mailings, hand-outs at meetings, verbally at monitoring visits, and via the Foster Parent Newsletter. The Licensing Representative is available to assist in registration, and to help the Foster Parents complete the trainings if needed. Foster parents are sometimes also active in other support groups and inform Licensing about their meetings to share with all foster parents.

Our newsletters always have the contact information for the Illinois Foster Parent Association and support groups in each issue. At the Licensing monitoring visits, training needs for renewal and immediate needs for understanding of how to appropriately manage difficult behaviors of foster children are discussed. The caseworkers also discuss the needs of the foster parents and training issues. Licensing was able to identify specific needs of foster parents then staff with the Program Director and Chief Clinical Officer to implement new trainings. Licensing has also encouraged one-to-one training by asking seasoned Foster Parents with more experience to discuss their personal stories in order to help other Foster Parents.

8. The responsibility to develop and assist in implementing strategies to prevent placement disruptions, recognizing the traumatic impact of placement disruptions on a foster child and all members of the foster family; and the responsibility to provide emotional support for the foster children and members of the foster family if preventive strategies fail and placement disruptions occur.

The Integrated Assessment (IA) is initiated when a new foster child comes into care. The case is received by a DCFS Intake Coordinator and assigned to a Clinical Screener who works directly with the WCYA Caseworker. In this initial assessment process, the Clinical Screener and Caseworker conduct joint interviews with the child, Foster Parents, and birth parents. A DCFS Master's level clinician completes the Integrated Assessments. This method will help identify a child at risk and outline services recommended for the child based on the assessment of their needs. During the IA, the child is screened for physical, emotional, and developmental needs.

Foster Parents will work with that team to develop and implement strategies to prevent placement disruptions for the child(ren) in their care, and for foster children in general. These parents as well as the team caseworker have the availability to contact Intensive Placement Stabilization (IPS) in order to submit a referral for added support. IPS is used when there is a crisis causing placement disruption and the Foster Child does not need psychiatric intervention and is also not a danger to themselves or others. SASS or Screening, Assessment and Support Services are utilized for psychiatric issues. SASS services can be initiated through contacting the CARES Hotline, in situations where a foster child has unusual behaviors, is self-harming, or harming others. The CARES phone number is 1(800)345-9049 or can be texted at - 839863. Increased levels of casework intervention and monitoring are considered to be indicators of increased risk of placement disruptions in a foster family home. Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy requires caseworkers to be in the home bi-monthly in order to assist in identifying signs of disruption and as a tool to de-escalate a potential crisis situation. The team caseworker accesses IPS services when there are signs of increased risk of placement disruption. IPS provides counseling for the foster child and training to work with the identified behaviors for the Foster Parents. IPS also provides financial support for items that will help in maintaining the stabilization of the placement (i.e., weighted blanket, sensory tools, etc.).

Foster Parents are in a particularly good position to develop strategies, due to their day-to-day involvement with difficult behaviors, and their perspective as experienced parents. Agency staff assists the Foster Parents in this effort through ongoing training opportunities and resolution of problems as they arise. WCYA Licensing Staff adds important information to the monthly Foster Parent Newsletter, emails, and group text messages.

Additionally, Foster Parents are assisted in becoming more knowledgeable about the services and resources they may need to prevent placement disruptions. This is particularly important for Foster Parents who may be dealing with difficult behaviors or special needs children. Such assistance includes but is not limited to helping Foster Parents access and utilize Intensive Placement Stabilization services. The IPS program provides mentors for children in care and creates a higher level of support for the child, as well as the Foster Family.

Efforts are also expanded to include educating Foster Parents regarding the benefits of respite care for children, and the assistance from participation in various support groups through which they have access to a system of exchanging childcare opportunities. The addition of the availability of respite funding also assists foster parents in having the opportunity to receive a much-deserved break.

Foster Parents are encouraged to openly communicate their own needs regarding trainings in specific areas such as Trauma, Mental Health Services, At Risk Youth, and Appropriate Discipline. Counselors are available to assist Foster Parents in developing Behavioral Management techniques and to educate the Foster Parent in areas such as the effects of sexual abuse, physical abuse, and/or mental health diagnoses. Foster Parents are encouraged to communicate with Counselors to better serve the foster children and decrease the chance of placement disruption. Counselors will often contact

the Foster Parents to discuss areas of concern or invite the Foster Parents to participate in counseling sessions with the child.

Prior to a Foster Parent adopting a foster child, the Foster Parent is required to attend the Fostering to Adoption training provided through PRIDE. This training provides resources for adopted children and the Foster Parents who adopted them. Placement disruption issues are still addressed after an adoption occurs. There is a Post Adoption Unit to call for assistance with foster children who have been adopted. The Post Adoption Unit has the knowledge and resources to help with many issues such as subsidy payment, Medicaid card, therapeutic daycare, medically fragile respite care, educational and transitional services for the child, preservation services, crisis intervention, support groups, mental health advocacy, search for birth family, and Adoptive Parent Training. The Post Adoption Unit also has access to Summer Camps for children with mental health diagnoses. This has been very helpful to many of our Foster Parents. Adoptive and subsidized guardianship parents can call the DCFS Adoption/Guardianship Support Line at (866)538-8892 or (217)278-5316 for the Central Region.

If preventative strategies should fail, the Foster Parent is required to give the caseworker fourteen-day written notice of their request to have a new placement secured for the foster child. During this time, the caseworker discusses where the preventive strategies failed in order to ensure more successful preventative measures are in place prior to the placement change. Foster Parents are asked to consult with the professionals in the foster child's team (psychiatrists, counselors, teachers, etc.) to understand the foster child's behaviors. The Foster Care staff also discuss trainings available to improve upon the strengths and limitations of the Foster Parent in order to assist with possible preparation of another foster child being placed in their home. If a disruption occurs, WCYA understands it is not due to any inadequacies with the Foster Parent and fully support our Foster Parents in their decision to have a child moved out of their home. The child welfare team then reviews and assesses what child will fit best in their family. At the same time, the child being removed will have evaluations and increased services to address that child's specific needs.

9. The responsibility to know the impact foster parenting has on individuals and family relationships; and the responsibility to endeavor to minimize, as much as possible, any stress that results from foster parenting.

Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy expects that Foster Parents learn about the impact foster care may have on individuals and the family as a whole. This topic is a very important part of the mutual assessment process included in the PRIDE pre-service training. When Foster Parents are able to evaluate and anticipate the various events that can result in an abnormal amount of stress for the family, they are more capable of communicating their needs to the child welfare team and minimizing potential disruptions. It is a frequent topic featured in face-to-face communication between Foster Parent and Agency staff and newsletter articles.

The topic Managing and Minimizing Stress for the Foster Parent is addressed for the Foster Parents in pre-service and on-going in-service training, and as an agenda item for

the regular Foster Parent meetings. Agency staff encourages Foster Parents to openly communicate questions and concerns regarding the stress which can and probably will occur for the Foster Parent, as a result of having a foster child(ren) join their family.

The Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy foster care staff encourages the use of “voluntary hold” methods in instances where the Foster Parent is indicating that, due to increased stress in the family or other circumstances, they are temporarily unable to accept any additional placements in their home. The use of these voluntary methods can often assist the foster family to re-group and learn to better manage the strain they may be facing. The uses of the “voluntary hold” methods are taught during the licensing process and ongoing Foster Parent training sessions. This option is also offered by casework staff if a Foster Parent is indicating increased levels of stress.

Foster Parents are encouraged to utilize community support and resources to assist with stress management and reduction. Several strategies of stress management are encouraged to stop or reduce placement disruption. Communication with counselors and team caseworkers is highly encouraged. The caseworker may also initiate support services, such as the Intensive Placement Stabilization (IPS), in order to provide support not only for the foster child, but the Foster Parents as well. WCYA Staff also encourage the Foster Parents to utilize trainings and support services during home visits. WCYA offers respite care on a regular basis to give foster parents a break. The Foster Parent in need of respite is encouraged to give ample notice when in need of respite, but WCYA understands there will be situations where this is not possible. Traditional foster parents are encouraged to participate by taking in these children for a short time to help another foster home.

10. The responsibility to know the rewards and benefits to children, parents, families, and society that come from foster parenting and to promote the foster parenting experience in a positive way.

Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy firmly believes that effective foster care can be critical in the development of children who are separated from their families. WCYA continuously strives to reflect the concept that the foster care system benefits not only the children in care and their families, but the community and society as a whole. Therefore, Foster Parents receive training in the public relations aspect of foster parenting.

This positive perspective of the foster care service is addressed in pre-service and on-going in-service training opportunities for Foster Parents, and in the child welfare team activities in which they participate for individual children. The Director of Marketing Development for the agency, working with the Foster Care program, routinely strategizes media exposure to provide public awareness of the importance of the fostering experience and to recruit new foster families. Components of this media strategy are social media posts, radio spots, television interviews, billboards, speaking to community groups, and letters to local churches. Additionally, the local print media are encouraged to run special articles of a positive nature on various aspects of the foster parenting experience. The Director of Marketing has spoken to local businesses about the Foster Care program. During the Plan year 2022, Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy had a foster

parent do a live News interview about foster care. As well, using social media for benefits of fostering children. A change in visual media to address growing need for foster parents for older children and teens. In the upcoming year, WCYA hopes to increase efforts with more in person and outreach events to recruit new foster families. Licensing staff will continue to give attention to the recruitment of new foster family homes as well as specialized homes. Foster Parents and Caseworkers will be invited to participate in recruitment and retention efforts as well as serve on recruitment and retention committees.

11. The responsibility to know the roles, rights, and responsibilities of foster parents, other professionals, in the child welfare system, the foster child, and the foster child's own family.

The process of assisting the Foster Parent to know and understand their role, rights, and responsibilities as a childcare professional, and the role, rights and responsibilities of all other professionals, the foster child, and the child's family, begin with the first contact leading to the licensure of the Foster Parent. WCYA staff teach all Foster Parents of their role, rights, and responsibility through participation in activities of the child welfare team, through pre-service and in-service training, and through all on-going contacts with the Foster Parents. WCYA encourages all Foster Care staff to attend all Foster Parent trainings to stay updated with new information. Foster Parents are encouraged to attend trainings and participate in co-training experiences with foster care staff. These opportunities are stated through the regular newsletter, manuals from the agency and from DCFS, and from the Bill of Rights committee. Foster Parents are encouraged to attend the PRIDE training entitled "Working as a professional Team Member", which discusses in depth the roles and responsibilities of each member of the professional child welfare team. Case workers are encouraged to attend trainings.

Foster Parents assist in the development and revision of the Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy Annual Implementation Plan of the Foster Parent Law (Public Act 89.19) and participate in the evaluation of the implementation of this plan. WCYA staff continuously assist the Foster Parents to better understand the mandates of the Foster Parent Law. All Foster Parents are given a copy of the Annual Implementation Plan of the Foster Parent Law (Public Act 89.19) for their reference. A copy of how this agency implements this plan is made available to every foster parent, licensed and unlicensed, that is working with this agency via WCYA website posted at the start of every year. Foster Parents provide their continuing input to each annual plan development. For 2024, the Foster Parent Law- rights and responsibilities was reviewed with the foster parents during monitoring visits, in person and virtual meetings held in October and our annual Halloween Party in October. Foster parents were given the opportunity to make comments, voice their concerns, make any complaints, or provide recommendations for improvement.

Foster Parents have a recognized voice within the Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy management structure. Their concerns and problems are relayed to WCYA administrative staff on a regular basis by the Program Directors, Foster Care Supervisor, and the Chief Clinical Officer. Foster Parents can also request a meeting to have direct dialogue with the team. Please contact your caseworker, Supervisor, Program Director, or Chief Clinical Officer to be included in an Administrative meeting.

12. The responsibility to know and, as necessary, fulfill the foster parent's responsibility to serve as a mandated reporter of suspected child abuse or neglect under the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act; and the responsibility to know the child welfare agency's policy regarding allegations that foster parents have committed child abuse or neglect and applicable administrative rules and procedures governing investigations of those allegations.

Foster Parents are required to sign the Mandated Reporter Form at both the initial licensure and at the renewal of licensure. Licensing personnel discuss this with each foster parent to insure they understand that they have to report child abuse and neglect. Foster parents agree to report child abuse and neglect of any child to the Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-252-2873 or 1-800-25-ABUSE. Foster Parents are taught their responsibility as mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect, and of the investigative processes which accompany such reports. Foster Parents are to inform the caseworker for the child involved and call the hotline. PRIDE pre-service training provides information to the foster parent on being a Mandated Reporter. An in-depth training on being a Mandated Reporter is offered online at dcfstraining.org. Foster Parents receive training credit for this training.

Foster Parents have the responsibility to report abuse and neglect and may also be accused of child abuse and neglect. Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy includes a discussion of the responsibilities of Foster Parents under the mandates of the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act, and of the Agency Personnel Policy, 3.9.2 - Suspension and Dismissal Policy. This addresses WCYA Policy regarding allegations of child abuse and/or neglect for employees/volunteers. The Suspension and Dismissal Policy applies to Foster Parents as to all other WCYA personnel. Foster Parents may receive the support of WCYA staff in any such investigations.

13. The responsibility to know and receive training regarding the purpose of administrative case reviews, client service plans, and court processes, as well as any filing or time requirements associated with those proceedings; and the responsibility to actively participate in the foster parent's designated role in these proceedings.

Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy assumes the responsibility to provide and/or facilitate the provision of pre-service training for Foster Parents regarding Administrative Case Reviews, client service plans, and court processes, and for observing filing timelines. While the Foster Parents are responsible for knowing these processes, including filing and time requirements, WCYA realizes that these are complex service issues. To date, a majority of Foster Parents attend family meetings in preparation for their foster child's Administrative Case Review (ACR).

The Foster Care Team did not report an increase or decrease in Foster Parent attendance at court hearings or administrative case reviews. During the plan year 2023, emphasis on ensuring that Foster Parents understand that they have a right to be active participants in these proceedings was reviewed during monitoring visits and upon licensure. WCYA assists the Foster Parents in learning these processes and to practice them as participating members of the child welfare team. This gives time for the Foster Parent to

fully understand their role in these proceedings and court appearances. Emphasis is placed on the active participation in these proceedings.

14. The responsibility to know the child welfare agency's appeal procedure for foster parents and the rights of foster parents under the procedure.

The Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy Foster Care Program staff assumes the responsibility for training the Foster Parents regarding the WCYA Grievance procedure for Foster Parents, and regarding the appeal procedure as set forth in Title 89: Social Services, Chapter III: Department of Children and Family Services, Subchapter a: Service Delivery, Part 337: Service Appeal Process. WCYA staff also assist Foster Parents in the event that they would need to access either procedure, or to understand their rights under each. Additionally, a brochure on the appeals process is distributed to foster parents. A training session on the Appeals Process of the Court System is offered as needed. The rights of Foster Parents are clearly stated in the Agency's Implementation Plan and in the Foster Parent Handbook. (Available at <http://www.dcfstraining.org/>)

This Grievance Process is to be used by foster parents only for grieving alleged violations of the Foster Parent Law that are not covered by an already existing grievance or appeal process. Therefore, it cannot be used to address issues that are covered by the service appeal process, the appeal process for indicated cases of child abuse/neglect, the process for appealing licensing investigation findings or license revocations, etc. We review the Grievance Procedure and appeals process in training and home visits. The Foster Parents can ask for clarification and make suggestions for improvement every year verbally and by making written suggestions on the signature page.

15. The responsibility to know and understand the importance of maintaining accurate and relevant records regarding the child's history and progress; and the responsibility to be aware of and follow the procedures and regulations of the child welfare agency with which the foster parent is licensed or affiliated.

Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy provides pre-service and on-going in-service training to Foster Parents regarding the maintenance of Foster Child Records, a rule in Licensing Standards. The Instructions for maintaining the Foster Child Records are in the Childcare Folder given to each foster parent for each foster child at the beginning of a case. An explanation of the Clothing Allowance and Personal Allowance records to be maintained is also included in the Appendix.

Foster Parents receive a written statement of the regulations and expectations for their maintenance of complete, meaningful, and useable foster parent records. The Foster parent learns of their responsibility in maintaining accurate, relevant, and complete records regarding the child's history and progress that become a part of the client record. The case record folders ensure the safe storage and transportation of foster children's records. The caseworker monitors the records to ensure that those records are updated and fully document the progress of the child.

The knowledge of procedures and regulations is further reinforced in the ongoing participation of the Foster Parent in the child welfare team. Foster Parents are expected

to include the child's "Health Works Passport" in the Childcare Folders and to update these documents regularly.

16. The responsibility to share information, through the child welfare team, with the subsequent caregiver (whether the child's parent or another substitute caregiver) regarding the child's adjustment in the foster parent's home.

All Foster Parents, as members of the child welfare team, are trained to fully disclose all pertinent information regarding how the child adjusted to living in their home. They also receive training regarding this disclosure of information as a normal and usual part of the child welfare team. We strive to accurately assess the child and to make service plans that are beneficial to the child. Caseworkers expect the free exchange of information regarding a child and reinforce the Foster Parents for their objective assessment and sharing of information.

17. The responsibility to provide care and services that are respectful of and responsive to the child's cultural needs and are supportive of the relationship between the child and his or her own family; the responsibility to recognize the increased importance of maintaining a child's cultural identity when the race or culture of the foster family differs from that of the foster child; and the responsibility to take action to address these issues.

Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy continuously implements a plan by which all staff, including the Foster Parent, receives initial and ongoing training regarding how to effectively address issues of gender, gender identity, color, race, creed, national origin, ancestry, religious persuasion, physical or mental disability, pregnancy, and real or perceived sexual orientation of a client or staff as a gay, lesbian, bisexual, heterosexual or transsexual individual, and culture that are identified client needs. Additionally, all staff work to ensure that the cultural needs and identity of all clients are understood and respected. This is considered a particularly sensitive and important issue to address when the cultural identity, including that of LGBTQ, of the foster child differs from that of the foster family. The goal of being sensitive to this need and how that is accomplished become components of the child's individual service plan. PRIDE In-Service has Cultural Diversity Training for all Foster Parents. In 2023, WCYA provided our own Cultural training and LGBTQ and Inclusion trainings. Foster Parents are also encouraged to utilize the Foster Parent Mentor Program support services for foster children which are of different culture, race, or sexuality of the Foster Parent in order to continue to provide a sense of identity for the foster child. The Foster Care Staff will assist in matching Foster Parents with foster children of different cultural and racial backgrounds with veteran Foster Parents of the same cultural or racial background of the foster child.

Foster and/or adoptive parents are encouraged to meet the cultural needs of children outside their racial or cultural boundaries through books, training, and outside resources. Youth in care also have the right to be treated equally, to express their gender identity, and to have the choice to be open or private about their sexual orientation, gender expression and gender identity. Further, WCYA includes resources throughout the community that can be helpful to Foster Parents in being more responsive to the cultural needs of foster children.

WEBSTER CANTRELL YOUTH ADVOCACY FOSTER PARENT VIOLATION GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy provides for a grievance procedure for Foster Parents in order to specifically address alleged violations of the Foster Parent Law by Agency staff, and to promote positive service delivery environment within which communication between Foster Parents and the Assistant Director, Foster Care Program Director, the Chief Clinical Officer, and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is informed regarding such alleged violations. This grievance process is to be used by foster parents only for grieving alleged violations of the Foster Parent Law that are not covered by the service appeal process, the appeal process for indicated cases of child abuse/neglect, the process for appealing licensing investigation findings, license revocations, etc.

This procedure is developed with the input of WCYA foster care staff and Foster Parents.

A grievance is defined as any alleged violation of the Foster Parent Law by Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy staff that a subject thinks or feels has been committed.

Foster Parents (hereinafter referred to as Grievant) may submit grievances for such alleged violations of the Foster Parent Law by Agency staff according to the following sequence:

Step One (Informal – written)

1. A grievance at this level may be presented to the Agency Foster Care Director or the Chief Clinical Officer, in writing. The grievance must include:

- Full name of grievant and Director to whom the grievance is submitted.
- Date, time, and place the initial informal grievance was submitted.
- The specific alleged violation of the Foster Parent Law that has occurred.
- Specific nature of the grievance.
- Corrective or remedial action sought by the grievant.

2. The grievance must be submitted within ten (10) calendar days of the event that prompted the grievance. Every effort is taken to resolve the grievance at this initial informal step. An informal Memorandum of Record is prepared by the Director to whom the grievance was submitted, and is signed by the Director and the grievant, whether the grievance is resolved or not.

3. A copy of the Memorandum of Record is forwarded to the Chief Executive Officer within ten (10) calendar days of the date of submission of the grievance.

4. A copy of the Memorandum of Record is placed in the grievant Foster Parent Record.

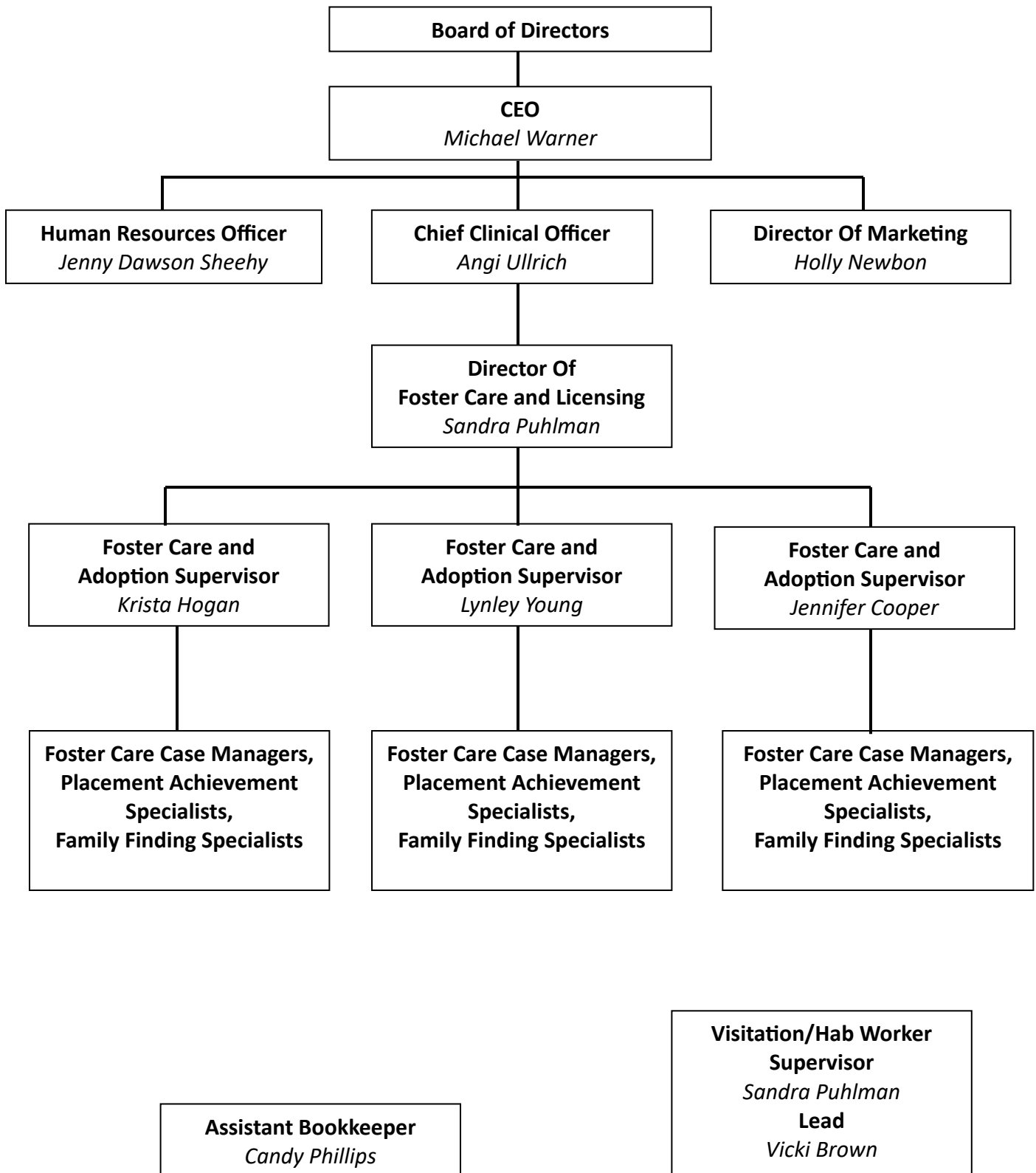
Step Two (Formal Written Grievance Process)

1. If the grievance has not been resolved at Step One and the grievant desires a review of the informal resolution of the grievance by the CEO, the grievance must now be submitted in writing to the CEO, also within ten (10) calendar days of the original informal submission of the grievance.

In this written grievance submitted to the CEO, the grievant must state:

- The decision why the decision or resolution made by the Director to whom the grievance was submitted is considered unjustified or unwarranted: and
 - The evidence that the grievant wishes for the CEO to consider.
2. The CEO will, within ten (10) calendar days of the submission of the grievance for Step Two – formal stage of the grievance process, render a written decision regarding the resolution of the grievance.
 3. The written decision of the CEO represents the final Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy decision.
 4. The CEO will convene a meeting with the grievant, the appropriate Director(s), and a DCFS representative to further clarify and discuss the resolution of the grievance.

Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy Foster Care Chain of Command



Board Rates for Licensed and Unlicensed Homes

Licensed Foster Family and Relative Home Care (Effective Nov 1, 2023)
Licensed Department and Private Agency Maintenance Rates

Licensed Homes Relative & Traditional Home Care

Age of Child	Room and Board	Transportation	Clothing	Allowance	Total Rate/Month
0-11 months	\$486.00	\$117.00	\$50.00	\$19.00 ¹	\$672.00
1-4 years	\$480.00	\$117.00	\$55.00	\$20.00	\$672.00
5-8 years	\$534.00	\$123.00	\$68.00	\$21.00	\$746.00
9-11 years	\$551.00	\$126.00	\$84.00	\$35.00	\$796.00
12 years and over	\$515.00	\$160.00	\$90.00	\$62.00	\$827.00

Relative Unlicensed Home Care

Foster Care- Standard of Need ²	
1 child	\$388.00
2 children	\$776.00
3 Children	\$1,164.00
4 Children	\$1,552.00

- Licensed Caregivers with Child Welfare Contributing Agencies (CWCAs) are paid by the CWCA. Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy is a CWCA.
- Respite Care is for Licensed Traditional Homes that are caring for a foster child that is living in a different foster home. Examples are a medical emergency, weekend break, family emergency, etc. **Respite Care is not guaranteed.**

¹ Personal allowance for children aged 4 years and under is to be used by the Foster Parents for incidentals (toys, rattles, etc.) which then become property of the child.

² The Standard of Need Monthly rate is calculated on a per child basis.

Trainings/ Training Recommendations for 2023/2024

In Person Trainings for 2023/2024

November 15, 2023-	DEI
December 13, 2023-	Open Forum
January 2024 -	Mandated Reporter online training all of January
February 7, 2024-	Role of the Foster Parent
March 13, 2024-	Disciplining Your Foster Child
April 17, 2024-	Teen Drug Use
May 15, 2024-	Open Forum
June 12, 2024-	Anger Pie
July 17, 2024-	LGBTQ
August 14, 2024-	Think Trauma
September 18, 2024-	Establishing Boundaries
October 16, 2024-	Kinship
May 18, 2024-	Saturday CPR
October 19, 2024-	Saturday CPR
June 15, 2024-	Ethnic Hair/Skin Care
July 20, 2024-	Saturday Car Seat

Training Recommendations for 2024

Cultural Diversity

IPS- Dealing with Behavior Issues in Children

Foster Parent Law/Agency Policy/Foster Care Rules

Fire Safety

Youth In College/ as youth age out of the system

YouthCare

Youth Advisory Board

Join us at the next meeting to address your concerns, learn valuable leadership skills, and receive free DCFS resources. All youth in care and former youth in care ages 14–21 are encouraged to attend.

Transportation can be arranged for returning youth, if necessary. Please talk to your youth's Caseworker about who to contact to participate!

Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council or Illinois Adoption Advisory Council-

These two groups give a voice to caregivers throughout the state. Applications to join are done and fulfilled on a 3-year basis. For more information please contact

DCFS.StatewideFosterCareAdvisoryCouncil@illinois.gov or DCFS.AdoptionAdvisoryCouncil@illinois.gov.

Important Contact Information for Foster Parents

Abuse Hotline	1-800-25ABUSE
Advocacy Office	1-800-232-3798
Adoption/Guardianship Support Line	1-866-538-8892 or
Central Region for Adoption/Guardianship Support	217-278-5316
CARES Hotline (SASS/IPS)	1-800-345-9049
CIPP Intake	312-814-6800
DCFS Payment Hotline (Mon.-Fri. 8:30 am-11 am)	1-800-525-0499
Foster Parent Hotline	1-800-722-9124
HealthWorks	217-423-6988
(Medical ages 0-6 for Macon, Clark, Coles, Cumberland, Douglas, Edgar, Shelby, and Moultrie Counties)	
To Sign up for Trainings Through DCFS	1-877-800-3393
Virtual Training Center through DCFS	www.dcfstraining.org
WCYA On Call Phone	217-521-8679
WCYA Office Number (caseworkers, Supervisors etc.)	217-423-6961

Signature Page

Please answer the following questions:

Print Name: _____

Is your Home:

- Unlicensed, Home of Relative
 Licensed Home of Relative
 Licensed Traditional Home

Number of Foster Children Currently Placed in Your Home: _____

This number does not include children you have adopted or are your own biological children.

I attest that I have been given the opportunity to provide feedback on the Implementation Plan for 2024 prior to receiving a copy of the Foster Parent Law 2024. I have read and understand the expectations of me as a Foster Parent and understand the responsibilities that are expected of me while being a Foster Parent.

Signature _____ Date _____

Please Return To:
 Webster Cantrell Youth Advocacy
 ATTN: Foster Parent Licensing
 1942 E Cantrell St.
 Decatur, IL 62521