Cuyahoga County Department of Children and Family Services (CCDCFS)

POLICY STATEMENT

POLICY NO. 6.02.05

SUBJECT: Specialized Family Care Program Pre-Placement and Continued Training

CHAPTER

APPROVED BY: Substitute Care
EFFECTIVE DATE: Deborah Forkas
REVIEW: March 01, 2005
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IMPACT ANALYSIS

PURPOSE: To direct the training and education of agency licensed specialized foster and to comply with ODJFS rules related to foster parents.

SCOPE: This policy applies to all DCFS prospective/licensed foster parents participating in the Specialized Family Care Program and is to be monitored and enforced by DCFS and Cleveland Clinic staff.

POLICY

A. All DCFS prospective/licensed foster homes participating in the Specialized Family Care Program shall complete at least thirty-six (36) hours of pre-service training and a minimum of sixty (60) hours of ongoing/continuing training per certification period.

B. To satisfy the required ongoing/continuing training hours requirement. All SFCP foster parents must complete a minimum of Sixty (60) hours of training per certification period which addresses one or more of the competency areas as outlined in the agency’s approved Training Plan.

PROCEDURES

A. For Pre-Certified Applicants:

Note: A medically fragile foster caregiver initially certified after the effective date of this rule (8/22/2005) shall have at least two years of experience caring for medically fragile children or the equivalent medically fragile child care experience, education or training as determined by the recommending agency. This requirement shall not apply to a foster caregiver certified prior January 1, 2003.
1. Each pre-certified foster parent applicant who desires to participate in the Specialized Family Care Program shall complete a minimum of 36 hours of approved pre-service training designed to certify the foster home at the specialized level.

2. No pre service training hours can be counted towards the completion of ongoing/continuing training requirements.

3. Each foster parent applicant must complete all pre-service training hours which addresses at least all of the following topics:
   
   (a) the legal rights and responsibilities of foster caregivers.
   
   (b) CCDCFS policies and procedures regarding foster caregivers;
   
   (c) ODJFS requirements for certifying specialized foster homes;
   
   (d) the effects placement, separation, and attachment issues have on children, their families, and foster caregivers;
   
   (e) foster caregivers’ involvement in permanency planning for children and their families;
   
   (f) the effects of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, and substance abuse on normal human growth and development;
   
   (g) behavior management techniques;
   
   (h) effects of care giving on children’s families;
   
   (i) at least (3) hours of cultural issues including cultural diversity training;
   
   (j) prevention, recognition, and management of communicable diseases;
   
   (k) community health and social services available to children and their families;
   
   (l) certification in both child and adult CPR and First Aid. If the foster parent will care for children under the age of three, certification in infant CPR is also required;
   
   (m) no less than one hour on full disclosure requirements regarding children with criminal or delinquent backgrounds who are placed as outlined in OAC 5101:2-42-90 and the ORC 2151.72;
   
   (n) issues concerning appropriate behavioral intervention techniques such as de-escalation, self-defense and physical restraint techniques and the appropriate use of such techniques;
(o) education advocacy training;

(p) courses specific to the types of children placed in medically fragile foster homes.

4. If the foster parent applicant is being licensed to care for emancipating teens, applicant, shall be provided additional training hours which addresses at least all of the following topics:

(a) preparing youth for independent living;

(b) adolescent development, needs and issues;

5. If the applicant is a licensed specialized foster parent transferring from another recommending agency, DCFS may require additional training to qualify for transfer. The Administrator of Foster Care or designee will review the training record of the foster caregiver and determine what additional course work will be required.

6. If the applicant is a DCFS licensed family foster home seeking to upgrade their certification from family foster care to the medically fragile foster level of care:

(a) the applicant must request the upgrade in writing to the agency;

(b) the agency will review the applicant’s qualifications to ascertain if the applicant qualifies to provide a medically fragile level of foster care;

(c) if the applicant qualifies for medically fragile foster care, the Administrator of Foster Care or designee will review the applicant’s training record and determine what training the applicant must complete to comply with the OAC requirements for the provision of Medically Fragile foster care;

(d) training completed as a requirement to upgrade the foster home may be used to satisfy ongoing training requirements;

(e) the Administrator of Foster Care (or designee) may consider training topics successfully completed by the foster caregiver in the most recent three years towards meeting the pre placement requirements for the higher level of foster care.

7. CCDCFS shall reimburse foster parents for completing training as outlined in the ODJFS rules (5101:2-5-38).

(a) Applicants successfully completing a minimum of 36 hours of pre-service training will be eligible to receive a training reimbursement stipend in the amount of $10.00 per hour per applicant upon certification;
(b) The maximum amount of reimbursement will be for 36 hours, the minimum number of pre-service training hours required by ODJFS rules;

(c) DCFS reserves the right to decline to make a stipend payment for pre-service training if:

1) the applicant did not complete the training at DCFS;

2) the applicant did not successfully acquire the knowledge or skills the training was designed to impart;

3) the applicant did not a scheduled DCFS pre-service training class;

B. For Licensed Specialized Foster Homes:

1. Each licensed foster caregiver participating in the Specialized Family Care Program shall complete a minimum of thirty (30) hours of approved ongoing/continuing training during each certification year.

2. The “Certification Year” shall begin on the date of the caregiver’s initial certification or the date of the most recent recertification. No pre-service training hours can be counted towards the completion of ongoing/continuing training requirements.

3. Each foster caregiver must complete ongoing/continuing training hours which are identified in accordance with the caregiver’s written needs assessment and continuing training plan. Such training shall include continuous maintenance of certification in both child and adult CPR and First Aid. If the foster caregiver will care for children under the age of three (3), certification in infant CPR is also required.

4. If the foster parent applicant is licensed to care for emancipating teens, the foster parent shall be required to complete additional training hours which address the following topics:

   (a) strategies to teach independent living skills;

   (b) emancipating youth’s needs and issues;

5. All foster caregivers will receive a quarterly calendar from the Staff Development Department outlining training opportunities provided by CCDCFS. Foster parents shall follow the instructions in the booklet for registering a space.

6. CCDCFS shall reimburse foster parents for completing training as outlined by ODJFS rules.

   (a) Applicants successfully completing at least sixty (60) hours of ongoing/continuing training per two (2) year certification period will be eligible to receive a training reimbursement stipend in the amount of $10.00 per hour per applicant;
(b) The maximum amount of reimbursement will be for sixty (60) hours, the minimum number of training hours required by ODJFS rules per two (2) year certification period;

(c) CCDCFS reserves the right to decline to make a stipend payment for ongoing/continuing training if:

1) the applicant did not complete a conventional training event;
2) the applicant did not successfully acquire the knowledge or skills the training was designed to impart;
3) the applicant was late, left early, was outside of the training room or slept during the training event;
4) the applicant failed to provide adequate documentation of a non-CDCFS training event for which they are seeking training credit.

7. Children are not permitted to attend training scheduled through Staff Development

8. Training opportunities are abundant and foster caregivers may use any, all or a combination of the following to meet training requirements:

(a) training offered by CCDCFS Staff Development Department;
(b) training offered by Cleveland Clinic which relate to topics outlined above;
(c) training or classes offered by a church, school or community agency which relate topics outlined above;
(d) college level classes related to topics outlined above, child welfare or social work;
(e) foster parent cluster meeting;
(f) attendance at training sponsored by a local, state or national foster care or adoption conference which relate to topics outlined above;
(g) any other educational experience approved by a Chief Supervisor of Foster Care.

Note: Cuyahoga County Department of Children and Family Services Pre-Service Training Department has elected not participate at this time in offering training opportunities to foster caregivers by allowing them to complete up to twenty (20) percent of their training requirements per certification period by providing training and or mentoring services to other foster caregivers per 5101:2-5-33 (HB 214) effective 5-22-2008.

**Videotapes produced for entertainment purposes may not be used to meet ongoing training requirements.**
9. For training offered outside of the CCDCFS, before attending, the foster caregiver must obtain prior approval from the Senior Supervisor of Foster Care in order to determine if the training satisfies ODJFS requirements, how many training hour credits the caregiver may receive and if the caregiver is eligible for stipend. Upon prior approval and completion of the outside training the caregiver shall provide a "Certificate of Attendance" as proof of completion.

10. The Resource Manager shall meet with the foster caregiver prior to the recertification date and develop a written needs assessment and continuing education plan which:

   (a) is effective for the two year period the foster caregiver’s certificate is in effect;

   (b) is appropriate for the type of foster home the caregiver is certified to provide;

   (c) identifies the courses which the caregiver must successfully complete within the two year period;

   (d) outlines the criteria the agency will utilize to determine successful completion of the identified courses;

   (e) assures the foster caregiver that the courses will be reasonably available and accessible;

   (f) specifies whether the agency will waive ongoing training hours (see below)

11. CCDCFS may waive up to eight (8) hours of ongoing/continuing training per two (2) year certification period if ALL of the following apply:

   (a) the foster caregiver has provided foster care for at least two (2) years and;

   (b) the foster caregiver has provided foster care for at least ninety (90) days of the twelve (12) months preceding the date the agency issues the waiver and;

   (c) the foster caregiver has not violated any requirements governing certification of foster homes during the 12 months preceding the date the agency issues the waiver and;

   (d) the foster caregiver has complied in full with the needs assessment and continuing training plan developed for the foster caregiver as outlined in 5101:2-5-33 and described in B(10) in this policy and;

   (e) there has been no allegations of abuse or neglect during the twenty-four (24) months preceding the date the agency issues the waiver and;
12. “Good Cause” for non-completion of required ongoing/continuing training may be:

(a) a documented, illness, condition, hospitalization or accident which rendered the
caregiver incapable of attending the required training; provided there has been
reasonable effort made towards the completion of the training prior to the
documented illness, condition, or accident;

(b) if the applicant was out of state or out of the country for a significant period of
time which is documented;

(c) if the care of a foster/birth/adopted/kin child or other family member made it
impossible to leave the home to attend the training which is documented;

(d) a documented emergency or circumstance which made the foster caregiver
unavailable to attend training; provided there has been reasonable effort made to
attend the training prior to the documented emergency or circumstance.

13. For Foster Caregiver’s who fail to complete at least 30 hours of ongoing/continuing
training per certification year and are able to prove “Good Cause”. The Resource
Manager shall meet with the foster caregiver prior to the annual/recertification date
and develop a written corrective action plan in which the foster caregiver shall
complete any remaining hours within 90 days of the annual /recertification date. The
corrective action plan will be approved by the Resource Manager Supervisor and
mailed to the foster caregiver within three (3) working days of the initial meeting.

14. If the foster caregiver fails to complete the required training hours within the 90 day
corrective action plan time frame, the Resource Manager shall begin the process of
revoking the Foster Home Certificate as outlined in 5101:2-5-26.

15. Foster caregivers who fail to complete (60) hours of ongoing training per the two year
certification period as required by the provisions of this policy will have their Foster
Home Certificate revoked as outlined in 5101:2-50-26. The agency encourages foster
caregivers to complete (30) hours in the first year of every two year certification
addressing the recommendations made in their training plan.

16. Foster caregiver must complete all training requirements for recertification at least
thirty (30) days prior to the license expiration date.

17. Training records of each foster caregiver are maintained:

(a) in the Staff Development Department;

(b) in the foster caregiver’s record;

(c) with the caregiver via “Certificate of Attendance” issued at every training;
18. Waivers issued for continuing training hours must be documented in the foster caregiver’s record and include the following documentation:

(a) date of the waiver;

(b) number of hours of the training waived;

(c) a statement that each of the above requirements in B(11) have been met and;

(d) the name and signature of the Senior Supervisor or Administrator of the Foster/Adoptive Resource Management.

References:
Ohio Administrative Code 5101:2-5-33
Ohio Administrative Code 5101:2-7-17

CCDCFS Policies:
Policy 6.02.03 Foster Parent Pre-Placement and Ongoing Training (Family Foster Care)

Revised 11/02/09