



Thank you for your interest in the foster parenting program at Montgomery County Child Welfare Services. We hope this information will provide answers to some of your questions about the roles and responsibility of a foster parent.

What is Foster Parenting?

Foster parents are people who choose to become the substitute families for children in need. Foster parents provide temporary care for children and youth in their homes until that child can be reunited with their families/relatives or adopted. Caring for a child in foster care includes meeting their emotional, physical, education, medical and recreational needs.

What is Foster to Adopt?

“Foster to adopt” parents are foster parents who provide temporary care for children and youth, but are open to adopting the child. Before adoption can be considered, substantial efforts need to be made to reunify the child with their parent or place them with relatives. All families are dually licensed for foster care and adoption.

How does Montgomery County Child Welfare Services help their Foster Parents succeed?

Montgomery County Child Welfare Services provides pre-service and ongoing training for all foster parents. Foster families receive a monthly stipend which is to be used to cover the foster child’s expenses. All children in foster care are eligible for medical, dental and prescription drug coverage, mental health coverage and child care assistance.

Is there a critical need for Foster Parents in Montgomery County?

In Montgomery County, there is an urgent need for flexible foster parent who are open to providing care for some of the harder to place groups of children and youth:

- ❖ Teenagers
- ❖ Sibling Groups
- ❖ Children and adolescents who have significant developmental, emotional and/or behavioral needs
- ❖ Children from birth to age 5



Can I pursue adoption with a private agency at the same time as being licensed to provide foster care?

No. Maryland law only allows a family to be licensed with one agency at a time, regardless if the agency is public or private. You cannot foster/adopt with Montgomery County while working with a private adoption agency.

How do I become a foster parent?

Becoming approved as a foster parent in Montgomery County is a process that includes training, a home study and meeting home safety requirements. We will be asking you to provide personal information to the agency throughout the home study process and will assure you that everything shared with the social worker is kept confidential.

If you are ready to get started, contact our recruitment line (240-777-1664) and plan to attend one of the upcoming information meetings. To learn about upcoming information sessions, call our recruitment line or email us at fprecruiter@montgomerycountymd.gov.

Do foster parents receive any type of training?

All foster parents must participate in a 27-hour foster parent training program. This training will help prepare you for the challenges you might face when caring for a child or adolescent who has been abused or neglected. Once you are licensed, you will need to complete 10 hours of continuing education annually. Montgomery County Child Welfare Services provides a number of training opportunities for foster parents at no cost.

Do foster parents have to submit to any type of clearances or background checks?

Every member of the household 18 years and older must be fingerprinted and provide consent for the agency to obtain the following information:

- ❖ Child Abuse Registry and National Sex Offender Registry
- ❖ Child Support Clearance
- ❖ Motor Vehicle Administration Clearance
- ❖ Criminal Background Check



Do foster parents have to submit to any other examinations or inspections?

The foster parent's home must be a safe place for children to live, without structural or health hazards. The Division of Housing Code Enforcement and the Fire Department will inspect your home at the request of your assigned social worker. In addition, all members of the household must provide proof of a medical exam from a doctor and show to be in good physical and mental health.

What happens when we go on vacation?

If you will be going out of town, contact your social worker as soon as possible. Foster parents are eligible for up to 7 days of respite care a year at no cost.

Foster children may be able to go on trips with you. Contact the social worker to get permission to travel with the child. The Department will work with you to find solutions. (Vacations are good for everyone!)

How does babysitting work?

As a licensed foster parent, you are able to choose a babysitter (for short periods of time) for the foster child just like you would for a biological child. Any regular presence in the home (nanny, regular babysitter) who is over the age of 18 years must be fingerprinted. Other licensed foster families can babysit for you too!