

	<b>INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY</b>	
	<b>Chapter 12:</b> Foster Family Home Licensing	<b>Effective Date:</b> December 1, 2012
	<b>Section 14:</b> In-Service Training Requirements	<b>Version:</b> 4

<b>STATEMENTS OF PURPOSE</b>
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The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will require all Foster Family Home licensees to successfully complete In-Service Training. The In-service training requirements will need to be completed by each licensee in the foster family household.

DCS requires each licensee in the foster family home to successfully complete 15 hours of in-service training annually, which includes specialized training to meet the child's specific needs.

DCS requires each licensee with a therapeutic certification to successfully complete 20 hours of in-service training annually, which includes 10 hours of general training and 10 hours of additional therapeutic training to meet the child's specific needs.

DCS will allow any in-service training completed in the three (3) month period prior to the end of the current training year to be counted toward the annual requirement for the next training year, if the in-service training credit is not needed to fulfill the training requirement for the current year. No more than five (5) training hours can be carried over to the following year. Rationale for exceptions to In-Service Training requirements must be maintained in an individual file at each licensing agency.

The applicant is in applied status until the effective date of their license. Issuance of the foster care license demonstrates that all license requirements are met and begins the annual cycle for completion of in-service training requirements.

Each DCS region will provide opportunities for in-service training on a regular basis.

DCS will allow licensees to earn up to eight (8) hours through alternative trainings (online trainings, books, videos, etc.).

**Note:** CPR, First Aid and Universal Precautions cannot count as in-service credit as they are considered licensing requirements.

Code Reference

1. [465 IAC 2-1.5: Licensing of Foster Family Homes for Children](#)
2. [IC 31-27-4-2: Therapeutic foster home; certificates; requirements; supervision and care limits](#)

<b>PROCEDURE</b>
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Each foster parent who substitutes alternative training hours will:

1. Verify alternative training activities are on [Approved Alternative In-Service Training](#) document lists;

2. Contact the licensing worker to request approval of any non-approved training activities; and
3. Complete and submit an [Alternative Training Verification \(SF52643\)](#) form to be approved by the licensing worker.

The licensing worker will:

1. Maintain documentation for in-service trainings and any training requirement exceptions in an individual file at the DCS local office or Licensed Child Placing Agency (LCPA) office;
2. Log in-service training records, including dates of completion, in the foster family's case file and the case management system;
3. Track training hours and documentation by each participant, not by family or home; and
4. Request approval from the Staff Development Supervisor for any alternative training requests that are not listed on the [Approved Alternative In-Service Training](#) document lists.

#### **PRACTICE GUIDANCE**

N/A

#### **FORMS AND TOOLS**

1. [Approved Alternative In-Service Training](#)
2. [Alternative Training Verification \(SF52643\)](#)

#### **RELATED INFORMATION**

For foster family homes licensed by a local DCS office, all in-service training curriculum must be related to the roles of the foster parent in working with families and children and must be approved by the Staff Development Supervisor. Training hours will not be given, nor will they be accepted, if they are not on the [Approved Alternative In-Service Training](#) list. For foster homes licensed by an LCPA, credit for alternative training will be approved by the LCPA. LCPAs should use the same training criteria as is used by DCS.

All requests for additions to the [Approved Alternative In-Service Training](#) document list should be sent to the Staff Development Supervisor for review and approval. Only materials written or produced by credentialed authorities which are available to all resource parents free of charge or at a minimal cost will be approved.

#### **Alternative Training**

Those who view the materials on the [Approved Alternative In-Service Training](#) document may receive in-service training credit following these established guidelines:

1. For videos, 60 minutes equals one (1) hour of training credit.
2. For written resources, 60 pages equals one (1) hour of training credit.
3. Time is figured in quarter hour (15 minute) increments and rounded when necessary. For example, 53 pages rounds to 1 hour, 47 pages rounds to .75 hours.
4. Credit hours are not given for completing the [Alternative Training Verification \(SF52643\)](#) form.
5. Each person is responsible for completing their own verification form even if two (2) people from the same household review the same resource.

### **Web Based Courses**

There are currently only two (2) approved websites for on-line trainings:

1. [www.fosterparents.com](http://www.fosterparents.com)
2. [www.fosterparentcollege.com](http://www.fosterparentcollege.com)

These sites offer training on issues directly related to fostering and foster children. When tests are required by the website, a score of at least 80% is needed to earn in-service training credit. A printed certificate will be provided by the website. This certificate must be submitted to the licensing worker<sup>1</sup> for verification and documentation. Fees may be charged by the website, [www.fosterparents.com](http://www.fosterparents.com), for utilizing this method. Payment of fees are the responsibility of the foster parent choosing to utilize this option. DCS will pay for four (4) out of the eight (8) alternative training hours for DCS foster parents through [www.fosterparentcollege.com](http://www.fosterparentcollege.com). These fees are directly billed to DCS if foster parents choose to take the additional on-line training. LCPAs are responsible for all fees related to on-line training.

### **College Courses**

Some college course may be approved for in-service training credit hours. These courses must be directly related to children, the care of children, meeting the special needs of children, child welfare, or social services related to foster care or children. Examples of approvable courses include child development, childcare, psychology, and sociology.

To receive credit for a college course, the resource parent must provide a transcript with a passing grade, a syllabus, and/or course schedule. Credit may be given for the completion of appropriate college courses with the number of college credit hours being doubled upon receiving the required documentation. (For example: If a foster parent attends a three (3) hour college course; with appropriate documentation, they could receive six (6) hours of in-service credit.) Partial credit may be given when only portions of the course are applicable. This would be done on a percentage basis and be determined by the Resource and Adoptive Parent Training (RAPT) Supervisor or LCPA.

### **Foster Parent Recognition Banquets**

Foster parent recognition banquets are social in nature, commonly involving networking, door prizes, and a meal, with a limited training component. One (1) hour of in-service training credit may be given when a speaker presents an approved program. Training credit may only be given for one (1) banquet per training year. The determination as to whether one in-service hour may be awarded will be made by the RAPT Supervisor or LCPA after careful review of the information regarding the banquet activities.

### **Community Training Opportunities**

DCS and LCPA licensing staff or foster parents may become aware of training opportunities offered through local sources such as schools, social service agencies, medical or mental health facilities, court systems, etc. It is the responsibility of the resource parent licensed through a local DCS office to submit information related to the training to the RFCS or RAPT Supervisor to determine if there is a training component suitable for awarding in-service training credit. Suitability will be determined based upon the training topic, its relevance to the role of the foster care provider or foster children, and the credentials of the presenter. Credit will be awarded based upon length of actual training time. LCPA staff will determine whether a training has components suitable for awarding in-service training credit for foster parents licensed by the

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<sup>1</sup> The licensing worker refers to the DCS Regional Foster Care Specialist (RFCS) or the Licensed Child Placing Agency worker

LCPA. To receive credit for community training opportunities, the foster parent attending them must obtain verification of completion. This can be in the form of a certificate, a training credit form, a written statement from the sponsoring agency, or a copy of the sign-in sheet.

### **Individual Instruction Opportunities**

When service providers come to a foster parent's home to work with a child, this time cannot be used as in-service training hours for the foster parents. However, if the provider is training the foster parent in a one-on-one situation and documents that contact, then that time can be used as in-service training hours (i.e. being trained on medical equipment).

If a foster parent is trained by a medical or mental health professional on issues related to a specific child in the foster parent's care, in-service training credit may be awarded if a statement is received from that professional indicating the date, length of time spent, topic covered, and the reason for the session. This may be on letterhead or a prescription pad. Credit for this method of instruction would be the same as a classroom session, minute for minute. This time would be considered as classroom training and not alternative training.

If a foster parent is told by a medical or mental health professional to read a specific resource that will assist them in understanding and dealing with the issues related to the care of a specific child placed with them, and that resource is not on the state approved list, in-service training credit may still be awarded for the review of this material (following the Alternative Training Guidelines including the verification form and limit of maximum hours) if a statement is received from that professional confirming the request.