	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES
	CHILD WELFARE POLICY
	Chapter 12: Foster Family Home Licensing
	Section 14: In-Service Training Requirements
	Effective Date: September 1, 2022 **Version:** 7

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POLICY OVERVIEW

Each licensee is required to complete in-service training hours, as outlined by Indiana Code and Indiana Administrative Code, in order to maintain the licensee's foster family home license.

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PROCEDURE

The in-service training requirements need to be completed by each licensee in the foster family household. Issuance of the foster family home (FFH) license demonstrates all license requirements are met and begins the annual cycle for completion of in-service training requirements.

DCS requires each licensee in the FFH to successfully complete a minimum of 15 hours of in-service training annually, which includes any specialized training to meet the needs of the children placed in the care of the licensee. DCS requires each licensee with a therapeutic certification to successfully complete a minimum of 20 hours of in-service training annually.

DCS will allow licensees to earn up to eight (8) hours through alternative trainings (e.g., online trainings, books, and videos). See Practice Guidance for more information. The remaining hours must be earned through face-to-face trainings (e.g., conferences, live conferences, and trainings through support groups). An exception for face-to-face training may be approved by the Assistant Deputy Director of Staff Development if a declared health emergency makes an in-person meeting unsafe.

> **Note:** Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), First Aid, and Universal Precautions will not count as in-service credit as they are considered mandatory licensing requirements.

DCS will allow up to five (5) in-service training hours to be counted toward the annual requirement for the next training year if the training was completed in the three (3) month period prior to the end of the current training year. The in-service training credit must not be needed to fulfill the training requirement for the current year.

The licensing worker will:
1. Maintain documentation for in-service trainings, including dates of completion, and any training requirement exceptions in the case management system and the licensing file at the DCS local office or Licensed Child Placing Agency (LCPA) office. See policy 12.22 Licensing File Requirements for additional information;

Note: Track training hours and documentation by each licensee, not by family or home.

2. Request approval from the Assistant Deputy Director of Staff Development for any alternative training requests that are not listed on the Approved Alternative In-Service Training document lists. Submit all requests to DCS RAPT email. The submission of the request should be done in a timely manner that allows for sufficient time to review the training and determine if it is approved (e.g., submitting the request the week of the training does not allow sufficient time for approval); and
3. Notify the foster parent of the decision to approve or deny the requested alternative training if the foster parent is not included in the notification of the decision by the Assistant Deputy Director of Staff Development.

The Assistant Deputy Director of Staff Development will:
1. Review any requested exceptions for face-to-face training and all requests for alternative trainings that are not listed on the Approved Alternative In-Service Training, including requests from LCPAs;
2. Determine if the requested alternative training increases the knowledge and parenting skills of the foster parent; and
3. Notify the foster parent and/or licensing worker of the decision to approve or deny the requested alternative training and/or the requested exception to face-to-face training.

RELEVANT INFORMATION

Definitions
Licensing Worker
The licensing worker refers to the DCS Regional Foster Care Specialist (RFCS) or the Licensed Child Placing Agency (LCPA) worker.

Forms and Tools
- Alternative Training Verification (SF 52643)
- Approved Alternative In-Service Training
- DCS RAPT email - DCSRAPTRegistrations@dcs.in.gov
- Indiana University (IU) CANVAS
- www.fosterparents.com

Related Policies
12.22 Licensing File Requirements

LEGAL REFERENCES

- IC 31-27-4-2: Therapeutic foster home; certificates; requirements; supervision and care limits
- 465 IAC 2-1.5: Licensing of Foster Family Homes for Children

Practice Guidance is designed to assist DCS staff with thoughtful and practical direction on how to effectively integrate tools and social work practice into daily case management in an effort to achieve positive family and child outcomes. Practice Guidance is separate from Policy.

Alternative Training
LPCAs may approve trainings provided during foster parent support groups organized by an LCPA if the training is related to the role of the foster parent in working with families and children and/or increasing the foster parent's ability to parent children. Any foster parent support groups not organized by DCS or an LCPA will require approval by the Assistant Deputy Director of Staff Development. Only the actual amount of time the training takes during the support group may be counted as training hours (e.g., a training that lasts 45 minutes during a two [2] hour foster parent support group will count as 45 minutes of training credit).

Foster parents may only be awarded training hours from training received through employment if it directly relates to increasing their ability to parent children. The types of training that may be awarded include live conference trainings, webcasts, webinars, zoom, or live podcast hours.

> **Note:** Live conferences held online (i.e., in live time) may be counted as face-to-face training credit rather than alternative training. When a foster parent is unable to watch the live version of the live conference at the time it was held, and instead watches a recording of the live conference, the conference may not be counted as face-to-face training credit.

Those who view the materials on the Approved Alternative In-Service Training document may receive in-service training credit following these established guidelines:
1. Sixty (60) minutes of a video equals one (1) hour of training credit;
2. Sixty (60) pages of written resources equals one (1) hour of training credit;
3. Time is figured in quarter hour (15 minute) increments and rounded when necessary (e.g., 53 pages rounds to 1 hour, 47 pages rounds to .75 hours);
4. Credit hours are not given for completing the Alternative Training Verification form; and
5. Each person is responsible for completing one's own verification form even if two (2) people from the same household review the same resource.

College Courses
Some college courses 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 foster parent must provide a transcript with a passing grade and 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 and provides appropriate documentation, the foster parent 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 will be determined by the Assistant

Deputy Director of Staff Development or LCPA. If the LCPA is unsure whether the specific course would count as training hours, the LCPA should contact the DCS RAPT email with any clarifying questions and to request additional review for final approval.

Community Training Opportunities
DCS and LCPA licensing staff or foster parents may become aware of training opportunities offered through local sources (e.g., schools, social service agencies, medical or mental health facilities, and court systems). It is the responsibility of the foster parent licensed through a local DCS office to submit information related to the training to the RFCS 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 the length of the actual training time. The Assistant Deputy Director of Staff Development will determine whether a training has components suitable for awarding in-service training credit for foster parents. To receive credit for approved community training opportunities, the foster parent attending them must obtain verification of completion of the training. 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. Submit all requests to the DCS RAPT email.

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 (1) in-service hour may be awarded will be made by the Assistant Deputy Director of Staff Development or LCPA after careful review of the information regarding the banquet activities. If the LCPA is unsure whether the specific training would count as training hours, the LCPA should contact the DCS RAPT email to request additional review for final approval and with any clarifying questions.

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. If the service provider is providing a training to the foster parent in a one-on-one situation that includes a curriculum or medical training that will increase the foster parent's knowledge of the population being served and the contact is documented that time may be used as in-service training hours (e.g., being trained on medical equipment). If this is a provider training (i.e., non-medical), the training should be approved by the Assistant Deputy Director of Staff Development.

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 there is documentation about the curriculum or teaching provided by the professional. This documentation should also indicate the date of the instruction, length of time spent, topic covered, the reason for the session, and the credentials of the professional providing the instruction, which may include the professional's education, experience, and/or certification. 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 the foster parent, 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 completion of the Alternative Training Verification and the training does not exceed the limit of the maximum hours) if a statement is received from that professional confirming the request.

Web Based Courses

There are currently only two (2) approved on-line training sites:
1. www.fosterparents.com; and
2. IU CANVAS.

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 for verification and documentation. Fees may be charged by the website, www.fosterparents.com, for utilizing this method. Payment of fees are the responsibility of the foster parent choosing to utilize this option. The RFCS may provide instructions to the foster parent to access IU CANVAS.