

Foster Parent – Frequently Asked Questions

Rate Approval and Licensing

What is the difference between a licensing agency and a third-party managing organization?

Foster home licenses are issued by a mandated Child and Family Services (CFS) agency. Only mandated CFS agencies can issue a foster home license. It is the responsibility of the licensing agency to ensure the foster home meets regulations. All CFS agencies can issue foster home licenses.

A third-party managing organization provides foster home management and support on behalf of a CFS agency or the Department of Families. A third-party provider cannot issue a foster home license. A third-party provider charges an administration fee to the CFS agency or the Department of Families for services such as completing home studies, ongoing foster home management and support, and coordination of family visits. The foster home license is issued by a mandated CFS agency that coordinates with the third-party provider to ensure that all requirements are met.

The majority of foster homes are directly licensed and managed by a CFS agency.

What is a placing agency?

A placing agency is the CFS agency that has guardianship of a child in care. This is the agency that is responsible for the child's case plan. This agency makes decisions in the best interest of the child related to family visits and reunification planning. This is the child's CFS agency.

What is changing with rates?

The approval process required for foster care per diem rates is changing.

Currently, rates over \$130/day and those for children assessed with Level 5 needs require final approval by the Child and Youth Services Division.

Each of the four CFS Authorities (Southern First Nations Network of Care, Northern Authority, Metis Authority and the General Authority) will obtain the ability to approve these rates on behalf of their CFS agencies. Effective immediately, these rates can be approved by the General Authority for their CFS agencies (Winnipeg CFS, Interlake/Eastman CFS, Western CFS, Central CFS, and Jewish CFS).

What does this mean?

Rates should be approved in a more timely manner and those with direct knowledge and connection to the child will be approving rates.

How is the rate for a child in my home determined?

Per diem rates are based on the needs of the child and the additional care needed over what would be developmentally appropriate.

Agency workers will complete a Child Assessment Format tool to determine what level of care needs a child has. Rates are based off the level of care required. The Child Assessment Format takes into account the following:

Food (Feeding)	Food (Emotional)	
Health (Personal Care)	Health (Medical)	Health (Mental)
Boundaries	Nurturing	Belonging
Socialization	Family Involvement	School/Day Program

What is included in the rate?

The main three components of any per diem rate are: Fee for Service, Support and Respite.

Fee for Service – this is the amount paid directly to a foster parent for the additional effort and skills required to manage the child within your home.

Support – this funding is to provide services (staff) that work alongside the foster parent or work one-on-one with a child. Support needs should be addressed in the child's care plan.

Respite – allows the primary caregiver intervals of time away from the day-to-day care of the child/youth placed in their home.

Additionally, administration or program fees can be included for the management of the foster home by the Community Care Provider.

What does the Fee for Service cover?

Fee for service payments are made in addition to the basic maintenance per diem when an assessment shows that the needs of the child are beyond what is typically age appropriate. Additionally, the foster parent must demonstrate the skills and abilities to meet those needs.

A higher fee for service indicates a higher level of skill or effort is required. Activities that could warrant a fee of service include: therapy support, meeting additional medical needs, addressing behavioural challenges, supporting family visits and participation in reunification planning.

How is respite managed?

Respite is intended to allow caregivers intervals of time away from their day-to-day care of children placed in their home. The respite worker assumed the parenting role while the primary caregiver takes a break.

Total amounts of respite paid to the caregiver for all children placed in the home must be considered when determining any child-specific respites. Respite is a 'billable' expense and is reimbursed based on actual costs. Respite cannot be saved or 'banked' for later use.

Are rates set or can they change?

Rates can change based on the needs of the child. If a child displays increased needs, the rate may increase to provide additional supports or services. If a child displays decreased needs or stabilizes, the rate may decrease to reflect lessened need for additional supports.

Who approves the rate for my home?

The CFS guardian agency completes the rate assessment for their child in care. Depending on the level of funding required, the rate can be approved at agency level or may need further approvals at the CFS Authority or Department level.

Who will support foster parents in rate assessments? Is there a process for negotiating?

Your home will have a foster care worker from your managing organization. This worker will be responsible for supporting your home and will work with you during the rate assessment process. This will be a collaborative process between yourself, your worker and the CFS guardian agency. The goal is to ensure that the needs of the child are being met and the appropriate level funding is provided to support the child.