



Requirement Checklist for Babysitter Certification:

Thank you for supporting foster care parents by providing short-term childcare! You are so very valuable to our families and kids. There are several documents that you need to secure before the training day, and we are committed to helping you get each document ready to go. Please let us know if you have any questions at all. You can contact Pamela Bassham at pamela@thefosteringcollective.org. All documents must be collected for **EACH individual** who is becoming certified.

TO DO:	DATE COMPLETED
<input type="checkbox"/> Register for class- \$10	
<input type="checkbox"/> Register for CPR/First Aid (if needed) \$50	
<input type="checkbox"/> Complete Short Term Provider Application* *Valid Driver's License and Social Security Card attached w/application	
<input type="checkbox"/> Fingerprinting appointment made- if needed \$39.05	
WATCH FOR:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Approval email received from Agency of background check	
<input type="checkbox"/> Instructions Received if fingerprinting is needed	
COMPLETE:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Online Psych Med Training	
<input type="checkbox"/> Online Trauma Informed Care Training	
<input type="checkbox"/> Watch Safe Sleep Video	
<input type="checkbox"/> Reach out to 3 references for letters *see attached for example	
UPLOAD into FOLDER:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Short Term Provider Application	
<input type="checkbox"/> Copy of Current Driver's License	
<input type="checkbox"/> Copy of Social Security Card	
<input type="checkbox"/> Copy of CPR/First Aid card	
<input type="checkbox"/> Certificate - Psych Med	
<input type="checkbox"/> Certificate - Trauma Informed Training	
<input type="checkbox"/> Auto Insurance Card (must be current)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Copy of THREE Letters of References	
<input type="checkbox"/> Total of Four (4) Pictures of home - front view, back view, kitchen, & only one bedroom is needed	
<input type="checkbox"/> Copy of signed Discipline Acknowledgement	
<input type="checkbox"/> Copy of signed Environmental Checklist - items marked on checklist	
<input type="checkbox"/> Receipt of fingerprinting - if applicable	

Reference Letter Template: PLEASE PROVIDE 3 References- NOT RELATED TO YOU.

Letters may be written for a couple if both are getting certified.

Date:

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is a character reference for _____ . I have known this person for _____ years.

- Describe the Context in which you have known this person or couple.
- Describe 2-3 positive character qualities in this person.
- Describe why this person/couple can be trusted and responsible with babysitting children.
- List anything else that you may want to add which would qualify this person as a babysitter.

Your Name

Title or Relationship with person you are writing about

Physical address

Email Address

Phone Number

The How, Where, and Why:

FBI Fingerprints:

This appointment will take approximately 15-20 minutes and cost around \$40.

Once the joint certification application is submitted to the ONE primary agency you choose and the background check has been approved, that agency will send a letter and email with the instructions to complete the fingerprinting portion. Once you get your fingerprints complete, other agencies you choose will be able to access these prints and run a background check.

Additional background checks must be completed if you have lived outside of Texas in the past 5 years.

Photo of your home:

Please upload these into your folder:

- Kitchen (as much as possible in your camera angle)
- A bedroom (that the child might sleep in if napping or staying overnight)
- Front of house from street view
- Back of house

If you live in an apartment, take a photo of the front and back of the floor you live on with a view of the front door and back patio/door/windows of the apartment home.

CPR and 1st AID:

If you already have your CPR/1st aid training and it does not expire in the next 12 months, you do NOT have to take it again on the training day. Upload your certificate into your folder.

If you do plan on taking the CPR/1st AID course, you will receive a copy of your card after both the online and hands on portion have been completed.

Online Training

Please go online and complete all 3 of the online training PRIOR TO TRAINING DAY and upload certificates of course completion into your folder. If you have not completed these ahead of time, they MUST be completed, and proof provided before you will be approved as a childcare provider.

Discipline Policy

Please read and review the Foster Care and Adoption Discipline and acknowledgement paperwork (included in this packet) prior to training day. Please sign and upload it to your folder.

Environmental Checklist

Please read and review the environmental checklist prior to training day. (included in this packet) While these are not requirements, they are highly recommended and good practice for a safe environment. Please sign and upload it to your folder.

Auto Insurance card

Please upload an updated copy of your auto insurance card to your folder as you will be approved to transport children in your care.

Training Day

Class will last about 3 hours, and the hands-on portion of CPR/First Aid will take place either before or after class. **You will have 6 weeks after the class date to upload all paperwork.** The deadline will be announced on training day.

YOU WILL NOT BE AN APPROVED SITTER UNTIL ALL PAPERWORK HAS BEEN SUBMITTED AND YOU HAVE COMPLETED THE FINGERPRINTING IF NEEDED.

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING FAMILIES AND CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE!

Foster Family Short-term Childcare Environmental Checklist

Check here:	Please make a check by each entry indicating you have read and taken appropriate action to address each safety concern.
	Any weapons, explosives, projectiles, and/or ammunition will be stored in a locked, child proof container and never made available to a foster child.
	All medication including prescriptions and over the counter, will be stored completely out of reach and out of sight of a foster child.
	All chemicals and cleaning supplies will be stored in a locked cabinet or out of reach of a child
	A foster child who is allowed near or in a swimming pool or natural body of water will be under constant visual supervision. A foster child who has not proven to be a strong swimmer will never be out of an adult's reach when in or near a swimming pool or natural body of water. The respite provider will utilize life saving devices, such as floaties and life jackets. If in a boat, a foster child will always wear a life jacket.
	A foster child may jump on a trampoline, but constant visual supervision is required and only one person may jump at a time. Trampolines must have secure padding over the springs.
	Home and grounds are kept clean and free of hazards to children
	Kitchen and all food preparation, storage, and serving areas are kept clean
	Perishable food is refrigerated or safely stored in other ways.
	Home has an adequate supply of water that meets the standards for drinking water of the Texas Department of Health. If a private well is used, the Texas Department of Health or local health department must be consulted if any problems arise.
	Home has an adequate, safe sewage disposal system. If a private sewage disposal system is used, the Texas Department must be consulted if any problems arise.
	Plumbing appears to be in good working condition.
	Home has hot and cold running water
	There is at least one toilet, lavatory, and bathtub or shower inside the home.
	Bathrooms are kept clean.
	Soap and toilet paper are available in the bathrooms at all times
	Each child has a clean towel available, or paper towels available.
	Garbage is removed at least once a week.
	Garbage is kept in metal or plastic containers with tight fitting lids in any area away from the children
	The home is kept free of insects, mice and rats
	The yard is well drained, with no standing water
	The yard is kept free of garbage and trash
	The house is adequately ventilated and free from bad odors
	Windows and outside doors kept open for ventilation are screened
	Accessible electric outlets in rooms used by children under the age of 8 and children for whom these outlets might present an unusual danger are safety outlets or have child proof covers
	Electric fans are securely mounted where children under the age of 8 or children for whom these items might present unusual danger cannot reach them or have guards which keep children from touching the fan blades.
	Outdoor steps are not slippery. Porches, railings, playhouses, and other wooden structures do not have splinters
	Indoor floors and steps are not slippery and are kept dry when children are using them. Wood surfaces and objects do not have splinters.
	Glass doors are marked at a child's eye level to prevent accidents.

Signature: _____ Print Name: _____

One page and signature needed for each household.



FOSTER CARE AND ADOPTION DISCIPLINE **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES (CPS) – PLACEMENT, ICPC, AND FAD

Purpose: This form guides caregivers in methods used for discipline of children in foster care or adoptive placement prior to consummation.

Instructions: All foster parents, pre-consummated adoptive parents, potential foster/adoptive parents, other adults living in the home, and intermittent alternate care (IAC) providers must agree to the DFPS discipline policies and procedures. This form must be signed during the screening process,

INTRODUCTION

DFPS requires the agency's foster caregivers and pre-consummated adoptive parents to treat children in DFPS conservatorship with respect and dignity. The primary purpose of discipline must be to encourage, model, and help children to practice appropriate behaviors, not to punish the child. Discipline must suit the particular needs and circumstances of each child, and take into account the child's:

- age;
- developmental level;
- specific misbehavior,
- previous reaction to discipline; and
- trauma history, including any history of physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect, drug and alcohol exposure, prenatal trauma, early hospitalization or other traumatic events in the child's history.

No child in DFPS managing conservatorship may be deprived of basic necessities or subjected to cruel, harsh, unusual, or unnecessary punishment.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR DISCIPLINE

Discipline must be constructive and educational in nature. Correction must be fair, reasonable, consistent, and related to the specific misbehavior. Foster and pre-consummated adoptive parents must communicate to the child, in a manner that the child understands:

- what the child has done wrong;
- why the discipline must occur;
- the full extent of the discipline (how long the discipline is in effect and what has to occur to end the discipline period); and
- what is considered to be appropriate behavior (this should be done in the form of discussion with the child and helping the child to practice the appropriate behavior).

Discipline should be individualized and related to the child's specific misbehavior, age, developmental level, previous experiences, reactions to previous discipline, and any other relevant factors. Foster and pre-consummated adoptive parents are encouraged to use discipline techniques that promote connection for the child within the family.

The foster and pre-consummated adoptive parents and CPS staff will develop appropriate discipline methods for each child placed in the foster/adoptive home.

ALLOWABLE FORMS OF DISCIPLINE

Discipline must suit the child's age, circumstances, and developmental needs. Methods of discipline may include:

- establishing routines;
- setting reasonable limits;
- modeling appropriate behavior;
- offering two acceptable choices;
- offering compromises;
- offering a "redo";
- scripting;
- repeating the behavior correctly with the adult;
- giving the child time to settle down in a way that feels safe to him or her;
- speaking slowly to the child;
- giving time for the child to process the request or instruction (count to five slowly in your head);
- repeating instructions;
- taking "time-out*" or a "time-in";
- enforcing or permitting logical or natural consequences;
- catching the behavior while it is still minor;
- using a low, slow, moderated voice;
- praise and recognition of desirable behaviors; and reinforcing desired behavior.

*Time-out separates the child from the family, discourages connection, and may be correlated with dissociative tendencies in traumatized children. They should be used very sparingly, if ever. When used, timeouts must have reasonable time periods and be supervised by an adult. Reasonable time-out periods consist of one minute for every year of the child's age.

Additional strategies for managing the child's behavior, if needed, should be listed in the child's service plan.

FORMS OF DISCIPLINE REQUIRING CPS APPROVAL

Restrictions of a child's activities, such as grounding a child from an activity, which will be imposed on a child for **more than 30 days**, must be reviewed by the appropriate Child Protective Services staff member *before or within 24 hours* of imposing the restriction (see below).

Restrictions to a particular room or building that will be imposed on a child for **more than 24 hours** must have approval from the appropriate Child Protective Services staff member *before or within 24 hours* of imposing the restriction (see below). Restrictions that constitute seclusion are not allowed.

RESTRICTION APPROVAL: In order to gain approval for these restrictions, foster parents must call the child's caseworker *before or within 24 hours* of imposing the restriction. The child's caseworker will contact the appropriate management for approval or denial regarding the restriction. The caseworker or other designated staff member will contact the foster parent with a determination of whether the restriction will be allowed.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN SCHOOLS

Foster and pre-consummated adoptive parents and CPS staff must **not** give permission to any person or entity (including schools) to discipline a foster or pre-consummated adoptive child in ways that are not consistent with the Department's discipline policy. A school cannot be prevented from using corporal punishment, but, if asked to consent to a school policy that includes corporal punishment, a foster or pre-consummated adoptive parent must refuse. If a caregiver becomes aware that a school intends to use corporal punishment to discipline a child in CPS conservatorship, the caseworker should be notified, so that CPS can attempt to intervene and convey the compelling reasons against this form of punishment with respect to this population of children.

INFANTS

Foster and pre-consummated adoptive parents who care for infants must understand discipline of any type is not appropriate or permitted for infants. Infant is defined as a child from birth to 17 months. Infants do not have the cognitive ability to understand verbal direction and modify their behavior accordingly. Nothing can substitute for adult supervision and interaction. For example, if a 14-month-old is wandering toward the street, a caregiver can say "Stop! I need you to stay close to me," but this cannot substitute for physically preventing the child from entering the street. The caregiver cannot expect the child to stop and cannot expect the infant to not repeat this behavior.

This does not mean that an infant should not experience natural consequences for their behavior, but rather that the caregiver should not expect any cognitive learning or behavior modification to result. For example, if a 15-month-old bites someone, the caregiver should separate the biting infant and show empathy for the biting victim, but you cannot expect any consequences that the infant experiences to affect future biting behavior.

While an infant should experience natural, non-punitive consequences (e.g. being moved away from a hot stove), any expectation that an infant learn and modify his behavior could lead to unrealistic expectations, decreased supervision necessary to prevent dangerous situations, and frustration on the part of the caregiver.

PROHIBITED FORMS OF DISCIPLINE AND THERAPEUTIC INTERVENTIONS

Physical discipline (such as spanking) **must not** be used on a child in any DFPS foster home or pre-consummated adoptive home. Any form of discipline used **may not** violate any of the specific prohibitions in *Minimum Standards for Child-Placing Agencies*. Discipline of children must not result in bruises, welts, burns, fractures, sprains, exposure, poisoning, or other types of injuries.

The child has the right to be free from any harsh, cruel, unusual, unnecessary, demeaning, or humiliating punishment which includes, but not limited to:

- shaking the child;
- subjecting the child to corporal punishment;
- threatening the child with corporal punishment; and
- any unproductive work that serves no purpose except to demean the child, such as moving rocks from one pile to another or digging a hole and then filling it in.

Discipline may not consist of withholding food, shelter, visitation, supervision, medical or educational care, other necessities, mail, or special items such as Christmas gifts, or birthday gifts. Threatening the child with loss of placement, name calling or labeling the child, and embarrassing or degrading the child are not acceptable forms of discipline. Additionally, one child in care may not discipline or punish another child in care, except when babysitting, as allowed by Minimum Standards for Child-Placing Agencies.

Holding Intervention is prohibited. Holding intervention is sometimes used as a therapeutic approach to promote the child's ability to bond with others and is not used to hold or restrain a child from harming himself or others. This form of therapy is considered a restraint used in non-emergency situations and, therefore, may not be used as a therapeutic approach with children in DFPS foster or pre-consummated homes, even if recommended by a licensed psychologist or psychiatrist.

Restraints and seclusion are never allowed as a form of discipline and they are prohibited for all purposes for any child placed in a DFPS foster or adoptive home, subject only to a very limited exception for "short personal restraints" as provided below.

The definitions below are adapted from the *Minimum Standards for Child-Placing Agencies*

RESTRAINT is defined as the use of physical force alone, the use of a device, or the use of emergency medication in order to assist a child in regaining control. This includes personal restraint, mechanical restraint, and emergency medication.

- **CHEMICAL RESTRAINT** is defined as the use of any chemical, including pharmaceuticals, through topical application, oral administration, injection, or other means, solely for the purpose of immobilizing a child or sedating a child as a mechanism of control. Chemical restraints are prohibited.
- **MECHANICAL RESTRAINT** is defined as the application of a device for the purpose of restricting the free movement of the whole or a portion of a child's body in order to control physical activity. Mechanical restraints are prohibited.

- **PERSONAL RESTRAINT** is the application of physical force, including escorting, without the use of any device for the purpose of restricting the free movement of the whole or a portion of a child's body in order to control physical activity. **Personal restraints are prohibited**, with the limited exception that short personal restraints may be used to protect a child of any age from imminent danger or to control a tantrum in a public place of a child who is under the age of five. The restraint must be ended as soon as the danger or behavior subsides, or at the end of 60 seconds, whichever occurs first.

- **SHORT PERSONAL RESTRAINT** is a personal restraint that does not last longer than one minute before the child is released. For example, blocking a child from entering a busy street.

SECLUSION is defined as the placement of a child, for any period of time, in a room or other area where the child is alone and is physically prevented from leaving by a locked or barricaded entryway. An intervention that restricts a child to a room that involves a caregiver placing his or her body between the child and the exit from that area (for example, standing in the doorway of a room) is not seclusion because the child is not alone. If a caregiver uses physical force or a physical barrier to restrain a child or prevent a child from leaving, the intervention becomes a personal restraint or seclusion as defined by Minimum Standards for Child-Placing Agencies. **Seclusions are prohibited.**

REQUIRED NOTIFICATIONS TO THE CHILD

- **Allowable Discipline Practices.** At the time of placement, a foster or pre-consummated adoptive parent must provide each child with a copy of the discipline practices allowed in the home.
- **Use of Restraints.** Age-appropriate explanations regarding the prohibitions against the use of restraints must be provided to each child at time of placement.
- **Right to Provide Comments.** Children must be notified of their right to voluntarily provide comments if a restraint is performed on them or another child in a DFPS foster/adoptive home. The notification must include an explanation of the process for submitting such comments. The process must be easily understood and accessible.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I have read, understand, and agree to abide by the DFPS Discipline Policy for foster and adoptive children in my care. Signing this form signifies understanding of the policy and agreement to adhere to the DFPS discipline policies and procedures. Failure to adhere to the DFPS discipline policies and procedures may result in adverse action against my home and affect the placement of children in my home.

SIGNATURES

Applicant Signature:

Date Signed:

PRINT Name: