

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY	
	Chapter 12: Foster Family Home Licensing	Effective Date: September 1, 2019
	Section 14: In-Service Training Requirements	Version: 5

STATEMENTS OF PURPOSE

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.

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. The applicant is in applied status until the effective date of their license.

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 (e.g., online trainings, books, and videos).

Note: CPR, First Aid, and Universal Precautions will **not** 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](#)

PROCEDURE

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 Resource and Adoptive Parent Training (RAPT) and Provider Assistant Deputy Director 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 RAPT and Provider Assistant Deputy Director.

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 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

Alternative Training

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 RAPT and Provider Assistant Deputy Director. All requests for additions to the [Approved Alternative In-Service Training](#) document list, including requests from LCPAs, should be sent to the RAPT and Provider Assistant Deputy Director for review and approval. The training must increase the knowledge and parenting skills of the foster parents for the population of children they serve. 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. Training hours will be rounded to the nearest 15 minute. 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.

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 on-line trainings:

1. www.fosterparents.com; and
2. [Indiana University \(IU\) CANVAS](http://Indiana University (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 worker¹ 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 Regional Foster Care Specialists (RFCS) may provide instructions to the foster parent to access IU CANVAS.

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 RAPT and Provider Assistant Deputy Director 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 and Provider Assistant Deputy Director 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 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 LCPA. To receive credit for community training opportunities, the foster parent attending them must obtain verification of

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

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. 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 documents that contact, then that time may be used as in-service training hours (i.e., being trained on medical equipment). If this is a provider training (i.e., non-medical), the training should be approved by the RAPT and Provider Assistant Deputy Director.

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 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.