

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY	
	Chapter 12: Foster Family Home Licensing	Effective Date: April 1, 2020
	Section 14: In-Service Training Requirements	Version: 6

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.

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.

DCS requires each licensee in the foster family home to successfully complete 15 hours of in-service training annually, which includes any 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.

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). The remaining hours must be earned through face-to-face trainings (e.g., conferences, live conferences, and trainings through support groups).

Note: 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, which were 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. Rationale for exceptions to in-service training requirements must be documented and maintained in an individual file at each licensing agency.

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

[REVISED] Each licensee will:

1. Complete required in-service training hours for licensure annually; and
2. Seek approval for alternative trainings (if applicable) by:
 - a. Verifying alternative training activities are on [Approved Alternative In-Service Training](#) document lists,
 - b. Submitting a summary of the non-approved training activity, which may include an agenda, a PowerPoint, a speaker biography, or an outline of the training to DCSRAPTRRegistrations@dcs.in.gov to request approval of the non-approved training activities by the RAPT and Provider Assistant Deputy Director. The submission of the request should be done in a timely manner that allows for sufficient time for the RAPT and Provider Assistant Deputy Director 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
 - c. Completing the [Alternative Training Verification \(SF52643\)](#) if the training is approved, and
 - d. Submitting to the licensing worker¹.

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 licensee, not by family or home;
4. Request approval from the RAPT and Provider Assistant Deputy Director for any alternative training requests that are not listed on the [Approved Alternative In-Service Training](#) document lists. Submit all requests to DCSRAPTRRegistrations@dcs.in.gov. The submission of the request should be done in a timely manner that allows for sufficient time for the RAPT and Provider Assistant Deputy Director 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
5. 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 RAPT and Provider Assistant Deputy Director.

The RAPT and Provider Assistant Deputy Director will:

1. Review all requests for approval of 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 licensing worker of the decision to approve or deny the requested alternative training.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

N/A

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

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. Submit all requests to DCSRAPTRegistrations@dcs.in.gov. The training must increase the knowledge and parenting skills of the foster parents for the population of children they serve.

Note: LCPAs may approve trainings provided during Foster Parent support groups organized by an LCPA as long as 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 RAPT and Provider Assistant Deputy Director. 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.

Training hours will be rounded to the nearest 15 minute. Only materials written or produced by credentialed authorities which are available to all foster 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 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 Regional Foster Care Specialists (RFCS) may provide instructions to the foster parent to access IU CANVAS.

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; 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. If the LCPA is unsure whether the specific course would count as training hours, the LCPA should contact DCSRAPTRegistrations@dcs.in.gov with any clarifying questions and to request additional review for final approval.

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 RAPT and Provider Assistant Deputy Director 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 DCSRAPTRegistrations@dcs.in.gov to request additional review for final approval and with any clarifying questions.

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 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 length of actual training time. The RAPT and Provider Assistant Deputy Director 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 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. Submit all requests to DCSRAPTRegistrations@dcs.in.gov.

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 (1-on-1) 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 (e.g., 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 completion of the [Alternative Training Verification \(SF52643\)](#), and the training does not exceed the limit of the maximum hours) if a statement is received from that professional confirming the request.