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## Frequently Asked Questions

### Q: What is foster care?

A: Foster care is a system of temporary care for children and adolescents. The first goal of foster care is to reunify the family.

### Q: What is therapeutic foster care?

A: Therapeutic foster care is for children that need extra support, including greater structure and intensity of therapeutic services, due to trauma histories.

### Q: Who does TLC serve?

A: TLC serves children ages 0-21. This includes teenagers, medically complex children, sibling groups, children with emotional and behavioral disorders, pregnant or parenting teens, and children with developmental delays.

### Q: What is the most common age for foster children?

A: The most typical referral age is 6 years old and up. This is because this is the age that children usually enter the school system. During this time, they have more contact with other adults (instead of just their parents), and therefore, problems in the home are more likely to be noticed and reported.

### Q: Are there a lot of babies available for fostering?

A: Typically, if you are looking to foster or adopt a baby, we suggest fostering through the State. We do serve children ages 0-21 and receive referrals for infants. However, when we receive referrals for babies, they're usually part of a sibling group or are medically complex.

### Q: How does fostering-to-adopt work?

A: When a child first enters the foster care system, their initial goal is reunification—meaning returning back to their family of origin. However, the court may decide it's in the child's best interest to terminate parental rights, also referred to as TPR. Once TPR occurs, the child's goal may be changed from reunification to adoption. The adoption process would then continue from there. Typically, if you are caring for a foster child whose goal is changed to adoption, you will most likely be the first choice for the adoptive family. The length of the fostering-to-adopt process depends on several factors, including but not limited to whether or not this is the child's first time in the foster care system, the length of time the child has been in the foster care system, whether or not the children's parents are following their plan for reunification, etc.

### Q: What is the difference between fostering through a private agency versus the state?

A: The State provides services to basic children (children who are not therapeutically leveled). Another difference is that the State doesn't provide therapeutic services to families, 24/7 crisis services, or ongoing support services. This is outsourced, if needed, to the CMHC.

**Q: Do foster parents receive free childcare?**

A: Our program does not pay for childcare fees. However, our high per diem rates may help offset this cost.

**Q: What is the per diem amount?**

A:

- Basic Level 1/2: \$26.45 daily per child
- Level 3: \$45 daily per child
- Level 4: \$50 daily per child
- Level 5: \$55 daily per child

**Q: Why choose Therapeutic Loving Foster Care?**

A: Our Louisville campus has the Open Arms Children’s Health clinic, which is available to all of our foster children. Open Arms offers the following specialties: medical, dental, vision, psychiatry, audiology, and radiology. This is a great way for foster parents to schedule various appointments as a “one stop shop.” As foster parents through TLC, it is much easier and quicker to get a foster child scheduled for an appointment at Open Arms rather than scheduling an appointment with a physician within the community, which can take several months before a child may be seen. Our Louisville office also has the Village Pharmacy, which is located right next door to Open Arms Children’s Health. Prescriptions can be picked up immediately after your child’s visit at Open Arms. Other benefits of choosing TLC include:

- 24/7 on-call support
- Competitive financial rates (in terms of per diem and referral incentives)
- Monthly support groups (childcare and food provided!)
- Our very own therapists, family consultants, and psychiatrists

**Q: Can I foster if I am single?**

A: Absolutely! Applicants are considered individually.

**Q: Can I foster with TLC if I don’t live in Kentucky?**

A: Unfortunately, no. We can only license parents who live in Kentucky.

**Q: What are the requirements for becoming a foster parent?**

A: At a minimum, applicants must:

- be 21 years of age or older;
- have adequate living space (more than a 1 bedroom home);
- be financially stable;
- be in reasonably good health;
- have access to reliable transportation;
- pass a criminal background check;
- show proof of home owner's/renter's and car insurance, as well as car registration;
- complete all training requirements; and
- pass a home/car safety inspection.

**Q: What if I have a criminal record?**

A: If you have a criminal record, it is important to be upfront and honest about it. The agency will run a criminal background check and the agency will determine whether or not the charges permit or prohibit an individual from fostering. That being said, if you have any criminal record of child abuse, neglect, or abandonment, you will not be licensed as a foster parent.

**Q: How do I become a foster parent?**

A: The first step is to contact one of our recruiters. You can do this by filling out the online form or by calling 502-596-1313. The recruiter will then schedule an orientation meeting with you to give you an overview of the program and explain the application packet. From there, you will join the next available pre-service training session. This is a free 9-week training program that is required in order to be licensed. The classes will typically meet once a week for three hours—the day/time will vary depending on the session. Throughout the 9 weeks, you will work on completing your application packet and the additional online training modules (PCCTS). After completing the pre-service training, you will attend a free CPR/First Aid/AED training held by your recruiter. Finally, the recruiter will then visit your home for a home study, which includes extensive interviews with all household members and a home/car safety inspection.

**Q: I am currently licensed as a foster parent at another agency. Can I transfer to TLC? How do I do this?**

A: Yes, we are more than happy to help you transfer to TLC. The first step is to contact one of our recruiters (either by filling out the online form or by calling 502-596-1313). You will then need to sign a Release of Information form, so that our recruiter can retrieve your records from your current agency. After that, the recruiter will determine what trainings and paperwork you still need to complete. Finally, the recruiter will then visit your home for a home study, which includes extensive interviews with all household members and a home/car safety inspection.

**Q: How long are pre-service classes?**

A: The class meets once a week for three hours for a total of nine weeks (or 27 hours).

**Q: What days and times are pre-service classes held?**

A: Classes are scheduled to meet the needs of our parents. Therefore, the day/time changes each session. Please refer to our calendar for information on the current sessions.

**Q: *Can I join in on classes if they've already begun?***

A: Latecomers are welcome to join up until the third class. After the third class has passed, we ask prospective parents to wait until the next round of pre-service classes is offered to join.

**Q: *How are referrals sent out at TLC?***

A: Referrals are notifications that inform foster parents about foster children who are in need of a home (i.e., a placement). Here at TLC, we send out referrals via email. Our placement specialist will also call you directly if she thinks the child might be a good fit in your home.

**Q: *What responsibilities will I have after I am licensed?***

A: Foster parents will be required to complete documentation during placements (such as behavior logs, medication administration logs, etc.) and annual training requirements, along with regular parental duties (e.g., taking kids to appointments, etc.).

**Q: *What are the annual training requirements after licensure?***

A:

- Within 2 years of licensure (30 hours total)
  - Trauma-Informed Care
  - Child Sexual Abuse
  - Verbal De-Escalation
  - Psychotropic Medications (online)
- Every year
  - 22 hours
- Every 2 years (from certification date)
  - First Aid/CPR/AED
- Every 5 years
  - Pediatric Abusive Head Trauma (online)

**Q: *What special trainings do medically complex foster parents need?***

A:

- Pre-Licensure
  - All regular pre-licensure training requirements
  - 12 hours of Cabinet-provided medically complex training
- Post-Licensure
  - All regular post-licensure training requirements
  - 12 hours of Cabinet-provided ongoing training or professional continuing education related to pediatrics, if approved, every year