

House Republican Press Release

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Press Office: 860-240-8700

State Marks Foster Care Month



In a press release published last week, I noted that May is National Foster Care month. There is a serious need in our state for foster parents. According to the state Department of Children and Families (DCF), all families providing foster care and pre-adoptive care for children in Connecticut are licensed or approved according to the department's regulations. The first step to becoming a foster parent is attending an open house offered by one of DCF's 14 area offices.

At the open houses, DCF staff provide an overview of the agency's mission, foster care, the licensing process and requirements. Staff will conduct an assessment of you, your family and your home and write a home study. The home study process includes attendance at classes and home visits by a social worker.

Requirements include: a statement from a medical doctor that each household member is in good health and free from communicable disease; FBI, state and local police checks, including fingerprints, to verify that no household member or substitute care provider has been convicted of or is awaiting trial on charges that make them unsuitable for foster parenting.

Also, a protective services check verifying no substantiation of abuse or neglect, or that no child has been removed from the care of the applicants due to abuse or neglect will be conducted, positive references are needed and participation (by all members of the household who will be in a parenting role) in all the pre-licensing assessment group sessions.

The timeframe to adopt a child varies, based on the needs of the waiting child and the type of child you are willing to consider. After placement, the average length of time from placement to finalization is six months to a year for those children who are legally free. DCF is making an effort to shorten the timeframe in individual situations when appropriate. Supportive services are available during the pre-adoptive time period to ensure that the best plan is in place for the child and the adoptive family.

Any family adopting a special needs child in Connecticut may be eligible to receive a medical and/or financial subsidy for their child. Children who have special needs include children with physical, intellectual or emotional disabilities, sibling groups, older children, children with complex medical needs and children of color of all ages. DCF also has a College Assistance Program that contributes to the cost of college tuition for all children adopted from DCF's legal custody who attend an accredited college, university, or post secondary program.

DCF will hold the following Foster Care and Special Needs Open Houses in the coming months at the agency's Danbury office, located at 131 West Street: June 6 at 6 p.m., July 10 at 6 p.m. and August 6 at 6 p.m. To learn more about foster care, contact DCF at 1-888-KID-HERO.