

Chapter:	Placing Children and Youth	
Subject:	Kinship, Foster, and Pre-Adoptive Parent Training	Page 1 of 4
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Purpose

To outline training requirements for kin, foster, and pre-adoptive parents, and the documentation requirements for resource coordinators.

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Definitions

Kin, Foster, or Home Studied (Pre-Adoptive) Parent: Relative and non-relative caregivers who are licensed for foster care or approved for adoption.

Policy

Foundations Training for Foster and Kinship Caregivers

Training Category	Description	Timeframe
Orientation	A presentation (in person, live webinar, or via pre-recorded webinar) for individuals interested in learning more about becoming a licensed kinship or foster caregiver. Information to self-enroll in <i>Foundations Online Learning</i> is provided at <i>Orientation</i> .	In-person and live webinar options offered twice per month statewide; pre-recorded webinar available at any time online.
Foundations Online Learning	An online learning series accessible from any computer or device which helps to better prepare someone for their new role as a licensed kinship or foster parent. Contains approximately 12-15 hours of online learning. Available at http://training.vermontcwtv.org/ and DVD options available upon request if internet connectivity is a barrier.	Available immediately following <i>Orientation</i> . This content is required prior to foster care licensure.

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Foundations Learning Network	After completing the <i>Foundations Online Learning</i> , caregivers are enrolled to join their peers for three in-person training offerings to deepen learning and build skills to better prepare someone to care for a child or youth with a trauma history.	Offered approximately four times per year and held as long as eight or more caregivers are enrolled; required to be completed within one year of licensure.
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The training content included in *Orientation* and *Foundations Online Learning* meets the training requirements of the Title IV-E federal model foster care licensing standards. Any licensed foster parent who has completed these requirements is in Title IV-E compliance. Each licensed individual is required to enroll in and complete all training requirements individually. If someone is part of a couple, they must have individual accounts to complete online courses.

All licensed foster parents must complete the *Foundations Learning Network* before the end of the first year of licensure. All caregivers are required to attend *Foundations Learning Network* unless the Residential Licensing and Special Investigations (RLSI) Unit grants a variance due to unusual circumstances or approves an alternate training.

Small district offices can expect the *Foundations Learning Network* to be offered approximately twice per year. If a district is limited by enrollment numbers, they may need to look beyond district borders for timely *Foundations Learning Network* offerings.

Individuals who did not complete all sessions of the *Foundations Learning Networks* may complete the requirement by making up sessions at the next offering. If extraordinary circumstances prevent completion of this requirement, resource coordinators may request that RLSI approve an extension.

District office staff are responsible for ongoing prompts and reminders of the training requirements. RLSI will review and confirm training attendance at the time of licensing renewal. If caregivers have not completed training and there is not an adequate reason, the license may be revoked if there is no child in care in the home. If there is a child in the home, the license will be limited to that child and will be closed when the child leaves.


Advancement to Next Reimbursement Level for Foster and Kinship Caregivers

If caregivers are interested in advancing foster care reimbursement levels, district office staff should support caregivers with the development of advanced training plans and exploring areas of their training interests. Foster care reimbursement levels and the requirements to advance to the next level(s) are described in the table below.

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Foster Care Reimbursement Level	Description & Requirement
Level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of <i>Orientation, Foundations Online Learning, Foundations Learning Network</i>, or their equivalent required in the past
Level 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be licensed for at least two years with evidence of actively caring for children/youth during that time; and • Must complete 40 hours of additional training following the foundational content which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The requirement of RPC+; and ○ A combination of CWTP Advanced Trainings, other formal training, workshops, relevant conferences, reading books, or viewing videos. <p>*Hours do not include meetings that are not focused on care related issues or knowledge creation.</p>
Level 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be licensed for at least four years with evidence of actively caring for children/youth during that time; and • Must complete 40 hours of additional training beyond the foundational content and Level 2 expectations. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The requirement of 20 hours from CWTP Advanced Trainings (in person and online); and ○ A combination of other CWTP offerings, other formal training, workshops, relevant conferences, reading books, or viewing videos. <p>*Hours do not include meetings that are not focused on care related issues or knowledge creation.</p>
Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no expectations for ongoing maintenance of training hours once a foster/kinship parent has met the requirements for a level. The division strongly encourages caregivers to remain open to learning and remain knowledgeable of emerging best practices. • Ongoing training may be recommended by district office staff or RLSI.
Downgrading of Level(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulatory violation can be grounds for downgrading a level if it is determined that the nature of the violation indicates non-adherence to expected care norms/training content.

*** Foster care reimbursement levels established according to prior policy will be honored and carry forward. From 12/11/2020 forward, the above requirements apply to levels. ***

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In certain circumstances, licensing variances related to advanced training may be requested and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis by RLSI.

Training will be documented in foster care files held by RLSI. District office staff will ensure that leveling documentation is provided to RLSI prior to the initiation of a new rate.

Advanced Training for Foster and Kinship Caregivers

Completion of advanced training for foster and kinship caregivers is always encouraged. Advanced training completion is also associated with advancement of reimbursement levels as described in the section above.

For a current list of all advanced trainings available online, refer to the Vermont CWTP training site at training.vermontcwtp.org.

Regional in-person advanced trainings are offered throughout each year. Topics may change by year in response to emerging needs and evolving practices.

District offices may require other training necessary to provide appropriate care for children in placement. Families providing specialized care may also have additional requirements depending on the responsibilities of the kinship caregiver or foster parent to meet a child’s specific needs. Training requirements for families providing specialized care should be outlined on the [Caregiver Responsibilities Form \(CRF\) \(FS-268\)](#).

Pre-Adoptive Training Requirements

Any family who signs an *Intent to Adopt Form* signifying their intention to adopt a child or youth in DCF custody or in a conditional custody order (CCO) must complete the Fostering to Forever Training (or Families Forever for CCO custodians) before the adoption is finalized. Fostering to Forever and Families Forever are a one-session trainings in-person or online delivered by the University of Vermont’s Child Welfare Training Partnership. A certificate of completion must accompany the application for adoption assistance.

Families who can show good cause to not take this class may request a waiver (either approved or denied by the Family Services Division Deputy Commissioner).