

# AUNT MARTHA'S YOUTH SERVICE CENTER, INC.

SUBJECT: FOSTER PARENT/FOSTER HOME CRITERIA	EFFECTIVE DATE: 9-10-02
SCOPE: FOSTER CARE DIVISION	RESPONSIBLE POSITION/DEPARTMENT: Foster Care
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## **POLICY:**

It is the policy of Aunt Martha's Youth Service Center, Inc. Foster Care Division to prescribe internal agency standards for licensure as a foster parent.

## **PURPOSE:**

To ensure the adequacy and appropriateness of foster parents for youth in served this Division and to ensure safe and nurturing environments for youth.

## **PROCEDURES:**

Each foster parent must meet the following criteria that exceed general requirements of the Department of Children and Family Services 402 Licensing Standards for Foster Family Homes:

- The foster parent must have reliable means to provide for all necessary transportation needs of the youth.
- The foster parent must have a work schedule that is conducive to meeting the needs of the children serviced in the program. Overnight shifts are unacceptable unless an appropriate member of the household, who is at least 21 years-old, will serve as the care provider.
- All respite and alternate care providers should be at least 21 years old.
- The foster parent, in addition to being currently free of active alcohol or substance dependency, shall be relapse-free for at least five years. Foster parent will provide appropriate documentation reflecting compliance when requested, such as a letter from a treatment provider verifying successful participation in therapeutic services and/or a provider recommendation that the person is presently stable and capable of caring for children.
- A foster parent with mental health issues must provide, through a written recommendation from the treating psychiatrist or physician, documentation that their condition is controlled and that the foster parent is capable of appropriate parenting. The foster parent must present this documentation every four years upon license renewal, or sooner, at staff's request, if it becomes apparent that a mental health condition may be interfering with appropriate parenting.
- The foster parent must be free of uncontrolled symptoms of chronic mental illness and free of any significant impact to daily functioning, such as interference with work or family life or hospitalizations for mental illness, within the past three years. If at any time the agency suspects that a foster parent, or a member of the household, has developed a mental impairment that interferes with the ability to provide safe and appropriate care, the agency has the right to request medical documentation verifying an ability to parent and/or verifying the absence of any threat of harm to the child. Failure to provide documentation may result in the removal of children placed in the home when deemed appropriate and necessary.
- TNAF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) funds cannot be the sole source of income for foster parents.
- Foster parent shall make sure that the foster home has basic required household furnishings to meet the needs of the family, specifically, the following items: kitchen table, living room seating, adequate beds and bedding. In addition, the foster parent maybe required to provide any other furnishings deemed necessary for a child with special needs, i.e. waterproof mattress pad.

Aunt Martha's Youth Service Center employees are excluded from becoming foster parents within the Agency.

Aunt Martha's Youth Service Center does not discriminate based on race, creed, or color. Aunt Martha's does not give preferential treatment to employees or relatives. Aunt Martha's Youth Service Center has the right to deny any person who does not meet the requirements of the 402 Licensing Standards and Aunt Martha's Youth Service Center policies.

**RESPONSIBILITIES:**

The licensing worker and case manager are responsible for adhering to the policy.

The licensing supervisor and the program supervisor are responsible for implementation of and ensuring compliance with the policy.

The administrator and division manager are responsible for ensuring compliance and implementing performance improvement efforts when needed.

**REFERENCES:** DCFS Licensing Standards for Foster Family Homes-Rule 402