 Department of Children & Family Services <i>Building a Stronger Louisiana</i>	Division/Section	Child Welfare
	Chapter No./Name	6 – Foster Care (FC)
	Part No./Name	9 – Ongoing Services to Foster Care
	Section No./Name	Ongoing Services to Foster Care
	Document No./Name	6-925 Babysitting and Supervision of Children in Need of Placement or other Special Circumstance
	Effective Date	September 1, 2023

I. STATEMENT OF POLICY

It is the policy of the Department of Children and Family Services to provide payment for * and establish procedures for situations when short-term supports for supervision are needed for foster children.


II. PROCEDURES

There are situations when alternative supervision and/or “babysitting” is needed related to a foster child. This policy describes those situations, as well as requirements for those providing this care.

A. GENERAL BABYSITTING OF FOSTER ** CHILDREN ***

* Foster Caregivers should be encouraged to utilize relatives, friends and other foster caregivers in networking to provide assistance to one another, including temporary supervision needs such as babysitting and backup child care. Home Development secures and approves alternate child care plans when certifying and re-certifying foster families. Refer to [9-210, Qualifications of Foster and Adoptive Parents](#), for alternative child care plan requirements. Foster Care Workers are responsible for approving alternative child care plans for non-certified caregivers. Although there are certain situations when foster caregivers can be reimbursed for babysitting services, generally babysitting is not a reimbursable expense, unless as described in this policy. The following guidelines are provided in discussing “babysitting” with a foster caregiver:

- Non-payable child care arrangements may include persons identified in the child care plan approved by Home Development Worker or appropriate relatives or friends of foster caregivers.
- The person designated to provide child care agrees to abide by the Department’s policy regarding discipline, which prohibits the use of physical punishment, or any manner that inflicts emotional or other harm;
- The designated person must provide a safe environment, adequate care and supervision for the child.
- For foster children under the age of 13, babysitters must be at least 15 years of age. For foster children older than 13, babysitters must be at least 21 years old. (Any foster child of any age who has behavioral challenges should only be left with babysitters at least 21 years of age who are aware of the behavioral challenges, triggers for those behaviors, and the appropriate manner for handling such behaviors.)


 Department of Children & Family Services <i>Building a Stronger Louisiana</i>	Division/Section	Child Welfare
	Chapter No./Name	6 – Foster Care (FC)
	Part No./Name	9 – Ongoing Services to Foster Care
	Section No./Name	Ongoing Services to Foster Care
	Document No./Name	6-925 Babysitting and Supervision of Children in Need of Placement or other Special Circumstance
	Effective Date	September 1, 2023

- The foster caregiver must leave a telephone number where they can be reached and should periodically contact the sitter to check on the children.
- Foster children are not to be left overnight without adult supervision. If the children are left overnight, there must be a caregiver over 21 years of age present.
- Caregivers should receive approval from the Foster Care case worker prior to making any babysitting arrangements longer than 24 hours, or for which reimbursement will be requested.
- A child in DCFS custody over age 12 who has a history of responsible behavior may be left alone during the day or early evening for reasonable periods of time, provided he knows how to reach his foster caregiver or other designated adult in case of emergency. This child care plan must have the approval of the child's case worker.
- There are limited times when the use of family, friends and other foster caregivers is reimbursable. Refer to Home Development policy [9-670, In-Service Training](#) regarding reimbursement for foster parent in-service trainings; foster care policy [6-1120, Hospital Sitters and Sitters in the Foster Home for Hospitalization of a Foster Child](#) regarding reimbursement when a foster child or foster parent is hospitalized; and foster care policy [6-920, Respite Care and Alternative Child Care Plans](#) regarding the use of respite when overnight support is needed for a foster care placement.
- The Foster Care Worker should review the “Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard” from the Child Welfare Caregiver Handout with the caregivers. **

B. * BABYSITTING BY CHILDREN IN DCFS CUSTODY

The Foster Care case worker shall inform foster parents and foster children of the following conditions for a foster child to be allowed to babysit:

- A child with no history of behavioral health issues capable of supervising others may be permitted to babysit during the day or evening hours, provided he is at least 15 years old.
- Children in DCFS custody shall not be permitted to provide overnight babysitting.
- It is not appropriate for a child in DCFS custody to be left in charge of another child within three years of his age, or more than two children at a time.

 Department of Children & Family Services <i>Building a Stronger Louisiana</i>	Division/Section	Child Welfare
	Chapter No./Name	6 – Foster Care (FC)
	Part No./Name	9 – Ongoing Services to Foster Care
	Section No./Name	Ongoing Services to Foster Care
	Document No./Name	6-925 Babysitting and Supervision of Children in Need of Placement or other Special Circumstance
	Effective Date	September 1, 2023

- If he babysits other children residing in the caregiver's home and the caregiver receives reimbursement for babysitting, the money should be used to compensate the foster child. This includes those times when the caregiver receives reimbursement from DCFS for in-service training or when another foster child in the home is hospitalized.

C. **SUPERVISION AND CARE NEEDS FOR CHILDREN IN NEED OF PLACEMENT (CINOP) OR OTHER SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES**


There may be a need to secure short-term services from an agency or a certified foster parent to assist in the supervision and care of a foster child. Two such occasions include when a placement is being sought and there is no available placement; and when short-term emergency supervision assistance is needed to either maintain a placement, or supervise a child in the office due to unusual situations (i.e. child is suspended and foster parent must work and there are no alternative child care arrangements available).

Only DCFS Staff; certified foster parents; Home and Community Based Service (HCBS) providers licensed by LDH who have an agreement ([DSP-2 Agreement Between DCFS and Direct Service Provider](#)) to provide care to foster children; and Early Learning Centers licensed by LDOE who have an agreement to provide care to foster children can provide this service. Provider agency employees shall not supervise a child alone. There must be at least two adults providing supervision to a child or children at any given time. From the hours of 7:00 pm to 7:00 am, on school holidays and on weekends, at least one DCFS employee must be on site. This requirement does not apply when a child is in a hospital or other setting where the caregiver or another agency is responsible for the care of that child.

The local office Child Welfare Manager can approve this service for up to seven (7) consecutive days. The Area Director can approve up to seven (7) additional days. The Regional Administrator, in consultation with the Deputy Assistant Secretary, may approve this service beyond 14 days. The maximum rate per hour for this service is \$28.00 per hour. When a certified Foster Care provider is providing this service, a separate TIPS Vendor number must be created and used for payment. Payments may be processed using an invoice from the provider and a TIPS 212, using major/minor code 800/885, Incidental Expenses/In-Home Sitter.

Other guidelines for this service include:

- DCFS retains responsibility for providing all meals and transportation. Licensed HCBS and Early Learning Center staff are not allowed to transport or purchase meals for foster children.
- Providers are expected to provide [daily logs](#) to DCFS staff on at least a weekly basis.

	Division/Section	Child Welfare
	Chapter No./Name	6 – Foster Care (FC)
	Part No./Name	9 – Ongoing Services to Foster Care
	Section No./Name	Ongoing Services to Foster Care
	Document No./Name	6-925 Babysitting and Supervision of Children in Need of Placement or other Special Circumstance
	Effective Date	September 1, 2023

- Providers must refrain from photographing the child or appearing in photographs with children in DCFS custody.
- Providers must refrain from posting or allowing the posting of children in DCFS custody on social media platforms.
- Providers must ensure all persons assigned to provide services to children maintain confidentiality regarding the children in DCFS care and the activities of the children in DCFS care.

DCFS Worker and Supervisor Responsibilities: The DCFS worker and supervisor assigned to children needing this service, are responsible for ensuring adequate staffing is available before leaving children in the care of other providers. Once the youth has been approved for services, they case worker shall complete the [DSP-3 Direct Child Care Service Provider Agreement](#) with a representative of the Direct Service Provider. The worker is also responsible for the following:


- Reviewing the information in the DSP-3 Direct Child Care Service Provider Agreement at the time of initiating the service.
- Ensuring medication is provided and secured in a lock box.
- Providing meals, snacks, and beverages to the youth daily.
- Being available to respond to emergency calls and contacts.
- Following up with the service provider daily in person or by phone.
- Escorting the youth to the special care setting
- Reporting incidents that occur during service provision.

When there are incidents that place a child or youth at risk of harm, the following protocol should be followed:

- If abuse or neglect is suspected, the DCFS worker and service provider are to report this to Centralized Intake at 1-855-452-5437.
- The provider is responsible for submitting a Direct Service Provider Report ([DSP-1](#)) to the DCFS worker and supervisor no later than 24 hours after the incident. Refer to DSP-1 Direct Service Provider Report form and instructions for additional expectations.
- If an emergency exists or a suspected crime has occurred, report the incident to Law Enforcement.

1. **Supervision and Care by Licensed Home and Community Based Service Providers (HCBS)**

For the safety and well-being of the foster children, only Home and Community Based Service providers (HCBS) licensed by the Louisiana Department of Health who also enter into an agreement with the Louisiana Department of Children and Family

 Department of Children & Family Services <i>Building a Stronger Louisiana</i>	Division/Section	Child Welfare
	Chapter No./Name	6 – Foster Care (FC)
	Part No./Name	9 – Ongoing Services to Foster Care
	Section No./Name	Ongoing Services to Foster Care
	Document No./Name	6-925 Babysitting and Supervision of Children in Need of Placement or other Special Circumstance
	Effective Date	September 1, 2023

Services, are allowed to provide this service for foster children on an overnight basis. For DCFS purposes, the HCBS provider is referred to as a Direct Service Provider, whereas the staff providing services are referred to as Direct Service Workers (DSW).


Prior to any region utilizing a HCBS provider, the Area Director must ensure that the [DSP-2](#) agreement outlining DCFS expectations from the provider agency is understood and signed by all parties. The DCFS Area Director is to maintain a copy of the signed agreement. The agreement is to be renewed at least every three years.

As part of the agreement, the Direct Service Provider must ensure that employees assigned supervision responsibility undergo a State Central Registry Clearance and a fingerprint-based criminal records check. The State Central Registry clearance is to be conducted by a Regional Clearance Worker in the ACCESS Clearance Module and DCFS can conduct the fingerprint-based criminal records check. The provider is also to ensure that employees sign a Confidentiality form prior to being allowed to supervise any foster child. The provider agency must also agree to submit a [DSP Staff Confidentiality Agreement](#) for each Direct Service staff providing care to children in foster care, daily log, as well as [DSP-1](#) report form of any incidents/accidents.

A [DSP-3 Direct Child Care Service Provider Agreement](#) shall be completed for each youth requiring this service. This agreement is completed by the DCFS case worker prior to the agency providing the service for a given child. Upon completion of this document, the case worker shall staff the youth with the Direct Service Provider and obtain signatures documenting the food sensitivities, allergies, health, medication needs, mental health, education, supervision, and care needs of the youth were discussed. The Direct Service Provider representative must sign acknowledging they received the child specific information and they understand the needs of the youth. A copy of the completed DSP-3 Direct Child Care Service Provider Agreement shall be provided to the Direct Service Provider to place in the lock box at the special care setting. The worker is to file a copy in the child's case record and email a copy to the Direct Service Provider Agency representative. Of importance is that a HCBS cannot administer medication, but can remind youth to take medication that is stored at the placement or substitute setting. HCBS staff agree to notify DCFS if the child does not take any medication as prescribed.

2. Supervision and Care by Licensed Early Learning Center Employee

When temporary supervision is needed for a youth during traditional work hours and normal child care provided through LDOE cannot be arranged, this service can be provided. An example of this is a child suspended from school who would need to stay in the office until the foster parent gets off of work. This service is available for youth up to age fifteen (15). The rate is \$75 per day, per child with a licensed Early Childhood Center approved through State Office, Foster care Program. Regions can determine

 Department of Children & Family Services <i>Building a Stronger Louisiana</i>	Division/Section	Child Welfare
	Chapter No./Name	6 – Foster Care (FC)
	Part No./Name	9 – Ongoing Services to Foster Care
	Section No./Name	Ongoing Services to Foster Care
	Document No./Name	6-925 Babysitting and Supervision of Children in Need of Placement or other Special Circumstance
	Effective Date	September 1, 2023

with licensed Early Learning Centers if they would be interested in their employees providing this service, and the region can enter into an agreement with the provider ([427-H](#)). For example, an office may reach out to the Early Learning Center and request a staff member supervise a child in the office who is in need of emergency supervision

III. FORMS AND INSTRUCTIONS

[435](#) / [Instructions](#) Caregiver's Supplementary Expenditure Affidavit
[427-H](#) Agreement Between DCFS and Emergency Sitter Service Provider
[Direct Service Provider Daily Log](#) / [Instructions](#)
[DSP Staff Confidentiality Agreement](#)
[DSP-1](#) / [Instructions](#) Direct Service Provider Report
[DSP-2](#) Agreement Between DCFS and Direct Service Provider
[DSP-3](#) Direct Child Care Service Provider Agreement **

IV. REFERENCES

There are no references associated with this policy.