

Foster Parent Resources

The success of DFCS largely depends on the quality of its partnerships with foster parents (DFCS and Private Agency), community partners and advocates. Listed below are contacts, for community, state and local resources.

Foster Parent Resources

Georgia Network of Children's Advocacy Centers:

<http://www.cacga.org>

Georgia Center for Adoption Resources & Support:

<http://www.gaadoptionresources.org>
1-866-A-Parent

Local County DFCS Offices -

<http://dfcs.dhr.georgia.gov>
(click on County Offices)

DHR/Division of Family and Children Services Foster Parents

<http://dfcs.dhr.georgia.gov/fosterparents>

United Way of Atlanta's Help book online:

<http://www.unitedway atl.org>

National Foster Parents Association

www.fosterparents.com

Prospective Foster Parent Intake Line

1-877-229-2038

Babies Can't Wait Early Intervention Services

1-800-229-2038

<http://health.state.ga.us>

Health Check Providers

www.ghp.georgia.gov

Georgia Association of Homes and Services for Children

www.gahsc.org
404-572-6170

The Foster Parents Bill of Rights and Grievance Procedures- Private Agency Foster Homes

Strengthening families, protecting children from abuse and neglect, and assuring that every child has a permanent family.



Georgia Department of Human Resources

Division of Family and Children Services
2 Peachtree Street, N.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-3142

Foster Care

Georgia Department of Human Resources Division of Family and Children Services
"Working Together with Private Agency Foster Homes"

The Foster Parents Bill of Rights

AFPAG Advocates

Grievance Procedures



Foster parents play a vital role in Georgia's efforts to care for children, central to these efforts is the partnership between the Department of Family and Children Services and foster parents. The Foster Parents Bill of Rights, which was signed into law by Governor Sonny Perdue on May 5, 2004 during Georgia's recognition of National Foster Care Month, strengthens this partnership and supports the work of foster parents. Georgia's bill is a trailblazer; Georgia is one of only nine states with a codified Bill of Rights for its foster parents. Georgia's Bill of Rights officially became law on July 1, 2004. The twenty-three rights include issues such as non-discrimination, distribution and disclosure of information, financial reimbursement and the right to have input into case planning for children. You can read the complete Bill at www.legis.state.ga.us (request HB 1580) or by contacting your local county DFCS office.

When circumstances warrant taking the measure to file a complaint regarding the Foster Parent Bill of Rights, foster parents should never feel alone in the process. Foster parents are provided support throughout the grievance process via the grievance procedure. The Georgia Association of Homes and Services for Children will provide a trained pool of advocates to assist and support foster parents throughout the process. Foster parents can contact the Georgia Association of Homes and Services for Children at 404-572-6170 or www.gahsc.org to make an advocate request.

NOTE: Foster parents may choose not to have a GAHSC advocate, but rather a personal support person of their choosing. These individuals are not provided the same access to confidential information, and will be limited to portions of the grievance process which does not violate confidentiality laws.

(CPS investigation timeframes are not delayed by the presence or absence of a requested advocate.)

This grievance procedure relates only to grievances foster parents serving with licensed Child Placing Agencies may have against their private agency as related to the Bill of Rights, O.C.G.A. § 49-5-281. This grievance procedure applies to foster parents who are approved by a licensed Child Placing Agency to care for children in DHR custody and relates only to the provisions of the Foster Parents Bill of Rights. This process is not intended for providers of residential care.

General Guidelines:

A formal grievance procedure has been established to address any violations of the rights of foster parents serving with Licensed Child Placing Agencies.

STEP ONE: Informal Level

Foster parents should try to communicate directly with the agency staff person involved in the situation in an attempt to resolve the matter. This should occur within a reasonable amount of time.

STEPTWO: Supervisory Level

If step one does not resolve the situation, the matter should then be brought to the attention of the staff person's immediate supervisor who will get involved to try to resolve the matter. This should occur within a reasonable amount of time.

STEP THREE: Executive Director/CEO Level

If step two does not resolve the situation, then the aggrieved foster parents are to present the problem in writing to the licensed Child Placing Agency's Executive Director/CEO explaining: (a) the issue/problem; (b) a summary of the efforts that have been taken to resolve the problem; and (c) why those efforts have not been sufficient to satisfactorily resolve the situation. The Executive Director/CEO will then attempt to resolve the situation. This should occur within a reasonable amount of time.

STEP FOUR: The Board of Director Level

If step three does not resolve the situation, then the aggrieved foster parents are to present the problem in writing to the Board Chairperson with a copy given to the Executive Director/CEO explaining: (a) the issue/problem; (b) a summary of the efforts that have been taken to resolve the problem; and (c) why those efforts have not been sufficient to satisfactorily resolve the situation. The Board Chairperson will address the issue with the Board to provide the Board's resolution of the situation.

Final Decision:

The decision of the licensed Child Placing Agency's Board of Directors is final and determinative on all issues in regards to any grievance.

Reports to State DFCS

Grievances reaching Level Four within a licensed Child Placing Agency shall be reported to the State DFCS Division Director providing a summary of the process, including what occurred at each step. The report shall include a summary written by the foster parents providing a perspective of why they are not satisfied with the decision of the Board. This should occur within a reasonable amount of time.