

**Georgia Division of Family and Children Services**  
**Babysitting & Overnight Guidelines**

The “reasonable and prudent parent standard” (RPPS) applies to both babysitting and overnights for children and youth. The foster caregiver may approve babysitting and overnight stays without prior approval from the agency as long as it meets the guidelines below.

The RPPS standard characterized is by **careful and sensible** parental decisions that **maintain the health, safety, and best interests of a child** while at the same time **encouraging the emotional and developmental** growth of the child, that a caregiver shall use when determining whether to allow a child in foster care under the responsibility of the State to participate in extracurricular, enrichment, cultural, and social activities.

**Babysitter Guidelines**

- Make a reasonable and prudent decision regarding the babysitter.

A babysitter:

- Must be at least 18 years old, reliable and competent to provide care needed.
- Prepared and able to meet the needs of children placed in their temporary care.
- Explained the DFCS discipline policy and provided with behavior management instructions.
- Provide information regarding care needs as well as emergency contact information.

**Note:** Babysitters are classified as either routine or occasional. Routine babysitters must be screened<sup>1</sup> and approved by the agency. **Routine care** means care provided more than once a week, usually at designated times. These individuals must be screened by DFCS case manager. **Occasional care** means care provided once a week or less with no more than three occurrences. Upon completion of the third occurrence, the occasional provider is considered “routine” and is subject to the same screening requirements. Contact the agency to ensure that screenings are conducted before an occasional caregiver becomes routine.

**Overnight/Sleepovers Guidelines**

- Make a reasonable and prudent decision regarding the overnight/sleep over request.
- May not exceed two nights without permission of the agency.
- Caregiver must be able to meet the needs of children placed in their temporary care.
- Explained the DFCS discipline policy and provided with behavior management instructions.
- Out of state travel regardless of length must be pre-approved by DFCS and the court.
- Provide information regarding care needs as well as emergency contact information.

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<sup>1</sup> -Screenings must include DFCS CPS records (DFCS foster homes only), Sexual Offender’s Registry, Board of Pardons and Parole and Department of Corrections.