

SELF-STUDY COURSE

Allegations in the Foster Home

Revised August 2016

3.0 Training Hours

This self-study course is based on the following sources.

Safeguarding Against Allegations of Abuse. Alberta Children's Services retrieved from http://www.child.alberta.ca/home/images/fostercare/doc_fostercare_handbook.pdf

Handling Allegations against Your Resource Home. Developed by The Lake Cumberland Foster and Adoptive Parent Training Support Network. 2006

"Allegations: Prevention and Survival" Jodee Kulp and Judy Howell
<http://www.betterendings.org/justice/allegationhtm>

Abuse or Neglect Allegations Involving Foster Homes. Brochure by the Rock County Human Services Department, Janesville WI.

State of Alaska CPS Policy and Procedure Manual Statutes and Regulations regarding investigating child abuse allegations and licensing violations. Provisions quoted within.

The Alaska Resource Family Handbook Published by the State of Alaska Office of Children's Services

This self-study course was developed by Tamara Keech for the Alaska Center for Resource Families with consultation and review by Tandra Donahue, Kimberly Ford and Susan Frisby from the State of Alaska Office of Children's Services and assistance from Aileen McInnis of the Alaska Center for Resource Families.



Alaska Center for Resource Families
815 Second Avenue Suite 202
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

1-800-478-7307 ~ 907- 479-7307

www.acrf.org

Allegations in the Foster Home



INTRODUCTION

Foster care is intended to be substitute care where children are cared for and kept safe when they cannot be with their family. Children in care may have been abused in their family home or their family home may not have met the expected standards of care. When these incidents were reported to the Office of Children's Services and investigation occurred, the children were found to be a Child In Need of Aid and were placed in out of home care. Sometimes, allegations may likewise be made against foster parents. Allegations for maltreatment of children go through a screening process at the Office of Children's Services to determine if they meet criteria to be screened in for investigation or screened out. When allegations of abuse are made, and screened in on foster families, it always results in an additional investigation for violation of licensing standards as well. Having allegations made against your family and being under investigation is one of the most difficult situations in our foster care system. But because foster families are under the scrutiny of so many people including the child's family, guardians ad litem, CASA workers, and even case workers, there is a fairly high probability an allegation could be made against even the best of foster parents. Many allegations of this nature are found to be false. However, both child protection and licensing have a legal obligation to investigate them. These allegations can be difficult and sometimes families may end up feeling betrayed or mistrusted.

The purpose of this self-study is to show how taking care of relationships with social workers and the child's family, documenting incidents properly, and clarifying communication are the best ways to reduce the risk of both abuse and allegations.

This self-study hopes to help foster parents be able to do the following things:

- Understand why abuse and allegations occur in foster care.
- Identify strategies and skills to help prevent abuse and abuse allegations.
- Understand the difference between a licensing complaint and a report of child abuse.
- Understand the investigation processes for both child protection and licensing,
- Understand how to respond when under investigation.



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PART ONE: Why Are Complaints Made Against Foster Homes

When you made the commitment to become a foster or adoptive parent, you may not have considered that you might one day become the subject of a child abuse investigation. An allegation against your home, in fact against any foster home, is always a possibility. There is no guarantee your family will NOT face allegations. No one is protected from this reality in the high risk profession of caring for other people's children. Allegations of abuse and of licensing violations are taken seriously by the State of Alaska because ultimately, the State and the Office of Children's Services are responsible for the safety and well-being of every child in care. As a foster parent, you should take the time to understand this process and take time to minimize your risk. This self-study will look at how to prevent allegations of abuse in foster care when possible, how to take care of yourself so incidents of harm to children don't happen, and what you can expect if an allegation is made against your home.

Stressors that Contribute to Abuse in Foster Care

Abuse in foster care happens for many different reasons. A common reason is that foster care is a stressful job and foster parents may not be prepared for the high level of demand on them or the increase of stressors.

Some possible factors that could contribute to the abuse of children in foster care include:

- Inappropriate discipline practices resulting in failure and frustration or in over-punishment
- Lack of training and experience in caring for children that have been abused and/or have behavioral challenges resulting in unrealistic expectations or ineffective parenting skills
- Maltreatment of youth in care by the children of the foster parents
- Insufficient respite time
- Too many children/youth in the home
- Isolation (lack of friendships and support systems)
- Inappropriate matching procedures, such as a foster parent not able to say "no" to social workers offering placements which may not work for the family
- Lack of or no awareness of clinical services within the community
- Lack of awareness regarding personal limitations of self and family

*Taken out of Alberta Children's Services Foster Parent
Training: Safeguarding against Allegations of Abuse*

To prevent incidents of harm in your family or to lessen the chances that a false allegation may be made, think of how you can address the issues listed on the previous page in your family. Ask these questions: *How well do you handle stress and anger? Have you received enough training about the conditions and challenges of the children in your home? Have you set up breaks and respite for yourself so you don't get pushed to the limit? Do you know about the resources in your community that can help you deal with problems and issues as they arrive? Do you have control and supervision over all the individuals and children in the home so that mistreatment and abusive behavior is minimized between the children in the home?*

Even skilled and “good” foster families face the stressors that are listed above. All families need to set up supports, education, information and supervision to keep everyone safe at home.



Prepare as if it is going to happen to you.

Experienced foster parents know that it is almost a given that if you are a foster parent for any length of time, you can almost expect that you or a family member may be reported for suspected child maltreatment. No matter what your relationship with the agency, the report will be taken seriously. It doesn't matter what kind of reputation you have or even if you have just been named Foster Parent of the Year! Remember, it is someone's job to investigate allegations of abuse, *no matter whom the allegation involves.*

Allegation Prevention Strategies

(Taken from www.betterendings.org Allegations: Prevention and Survival)

Foster care providers are vulnerable to allegations from both the children they care for and the child's parents that have been denied custody. Allegations may also be reported to OCS by teachers, other professionals or even people who see you in the grocery store. Here are some steps you can take to minimize the possibility of allegations.

1. ***Know your limits.*** If you are not comfortable caring for children with certain backgrounds and behavioral challenges, say so. Don't set yourself up for failure by taking them into your home. Don't be afraid to say “no” to a placement. Attend training that improves your parenting skills for all types of children.
2. ***Learn all you can about each child before placement.*** OCS is required to inform you of any *known* history of any behaviors of the child that indicate a safety risk for placement. Write it down or get it in writing. Keep a separate notebook for each child. A composition notebook (one that is bound not spiral) is good because pages cannot be torn out. Invest the time to handwrite the entries, date and initial them as well. Because changes can be made easily on the computer, it is best not to use it for documentation of sensitive material. During an investigation, this will avoid having someone suggest that you might have altered records or

someone else could have changed the records. When you are contacted about a placement, ask questions about the following:

What is the reason for the child's placement? Has the child experienced physical abuse? Sexual Abuse? Neglect?

Does the child have any behavior issues? Emotional issues? Does the child have any physical issues such as bedwetting? Aggression? Sleeping or eating issues?

Does the child have any ongoing medical issues or need medical attention? Who is the current health provider? Does the child have any allergies?

Where has the child been in care? Has he/she been in any previous foster home? How many prior placements has he/she had? (Ask to speak to previous foster family)

What respite is available for you?

What school does the child attend? Are there any educational issues for the child?

What is the anticipated visitation schedule? Are there any special conditions? Anyone the child is not allowed contact with?

(NOTE: These questions are based on those listed in the Alaska Resource Family Handbook published by the State of Alaska Office of Children's Services. Consult your Handbook for further information.)

3. ***Make sure that each child placed in your home receives a medical check up within 30 days (or earlier) of placement. Keep all medical records in the child's file.***
4. ***Take precautions.*** Proactive precautions, especially at the beginning of placement, are very important for children who have been sexually abused. Put together a plan of care to keep everyone safe. ***Be crystal clear about rules for dress, privacy and touching.*** Caregivers must agree on house rules, boundaries and consequences. ***Pay close attention to supervision and safety issues.*** Make sure family members understand safety issues and follow them: seat belts are fastened, medications are locked up, and children are closely supervised.
5. ***Never use physical discipline.*** Corporal or physical discipline is not allowed in foster care. That means no spanking, hitting, pinching, grabbing, slapping or shaking. Children with a history of physical, sexual or emotional abuse often misinterpret physical discipline and it could result in an allegation of abuse. Only when there is a risk of harm to self or others is it appropriate to restrain a child until he or she regains some control. In these situations get help as soon as you can by someone else in the house or calling for assistance. Do not restrain a child if you haven't been trained in proper restraint techniques and if it isn't addressed in the child's case plan.
6. ***Document any changes in behavior in children*** including severity and length of these changes, especially after visitation and changes at school. Document all injuries, and falls the child receives at your home or elsewhere.
7. ***Document your reaction and how you responded to the behavior.***
8. ***Document any outside agencies or professionals contacted for advice*** (i.e. physicians, poison control, etc.) with the time of the contact, person's name and telephone number, and advice given as close to verbatim as possible.

9. ***Identify conflicts that may arise*** with parents, children, teachers, social workers because of differences in values. Deal with issues when they are small and build respectful relationships. This will help you deal with the bigger issues more constructively in the future.

But even if you do all these things...

The best ways to minimize both incidents of abuse and allegations of abuse are to take care of relationships with the professionals and family members you come in contact with. This includes communicating effectively and consistently with your social worker, and documenting behaviors and incidents when they happen. However, doing the right things and having the best intentions does not guarantee you will not be the subject of an allegation. People make allegations for many different reasons, including true concern for the child, a misinterpretation of what a child says, and over-vigilance or criticism of a foster home. Children may make allegations that are sometimes true, sometimes false, and sometimes misinterpreted. All allegations of suspected maltreatment in foster care must be investigated for the safety and well-being of the child. Investigations can be very stressful, especially if the person under investigation has no idea of what is going on, what is to be expected, what to do, or who to turn to. Having a clear understanding of the process for an investigation will hopefully alleviate some of the anxiety if you find yourselves in this situation.

The next section in this self-study will address what happens during an investigation of either an allegation of child maltreatment or an allegation of a licensing violation.



Allegations in the Foster Home

PART TWO: What Happens When An Allegation is Filed?

Allegations/ Complaints and Concerns

There are two types of allegations that may be made against a foster care provider. A **licensing complaint** means that a family is accused or suspected of not meeting a licensing standard set forth in statute or regulation. A licensing complaint could include actions such as not doing fire drills, lack of supervision, or withholding food as a punishment. Any action or lack of action that is non-compliant with licensing standards could result in a licensing complaint.

If there are allegations of **child abuse/neglect** in the foster home; there will be a child protection services (CPS) investigation as well as a licensing investigation. All CPS complaints are also allegations of licensing violations. (See the text box included in this self-study that lists the definitions of what is considered maltreatment by Alaska law.)

The best way to avoid allegations of abuse or neglect against a child is **to provide the best care you can for children** and **never use any form of physical punishment with a child**. The best way to avoid a licensing complaint against your home is to **know what the foster care regulations require of you and meet those requirements**. That may not avoid false allegations of abuse but it is important to fulfill your responsibilities as a foster parent.



Allegations have been made-- What should you do while you are under investigation?

Proper communication is important to the outcome of the investigation. Poor communication can make a difficult situation worse. If you are unclear by what the workers are saying, the message can often be cleared up by stating, "This is my understanding of what you mean..." Information given to the investigators needs to be concise and factual. Being too aggressive or too passive may result in an investigator being less likely to listen to you or less likely to want to approach you, which in turn will impact the results of the investigation. Cooperation is your best long term strategy.

Talk to the children. For many children, an investigator coming into the home can be a scary experience. Reassure the children, but don't interfere in the investigation. For example, you may say, "A social worker will be coming out to speak to you. Answer the questions that she asks you and don't let this stress you out. Just be honest." This is easy to say, not so easy to do!

Be cooperative. In the event of an investigation, foster parents are expected to cooperate with the investigation. Try to help, not hinder the investigation. Allow access to the children and be willing to speak to the investigators. This is in the Alaska State Statutes, Sec. 47.32.100

Turn to your supports. Talk to someone you trust and who knows you, but do not advertise the investigation. Keep it off the foster parent "grapevine." Remember you are bound to confidentiality standards, thus you may not be able to share specifics about the situation.

Do not view OCS as the "bad guys." Try to remember that if you thought a child was being abused or in an unhealthy or unsafe environment, you would call in a report. You would not want the agency to overlook your concerns simply because it was a foster home. The decision to investigate has nothing to do with your standing as a foster parent. OCS is mandated by law to investigate all reports of child maltreatment including those in foster homes and any potential licensing violations.

Learn from the experience. What triggered the allegation? Look honestly at what led up to the allegation and look for ways to never let that happen again.

Things not to do while under an investigation:

If the child is no longer in your home, don't make any effort to contact him.

If the child is in your home, reassure the child but don't talk about the investigation.

Once the allegation is made, you will have to let the entire process take its course.

Don't panic.

The following definitions constitute the basis in law (AS 47.10, AS 47.17) for the decision to accept a report for child protection investigation:

Child abuse or neglect means the physical injury or neglect, mental injury, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, or maltreatment of a child under the age of 18 by a person under circumstances that indicate that the child's health or welfare is harmed or threatened thereby.

Maltreatment means an act or omission that results in circumstances in which there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child may be a child in need of aid, as described in AS 47.10.011, except that, for purposes of this chapter, the act or omission need not have been committed by the child's parent, custodian, or guardian;

Mental injury means an injury to the emotional well-being, or intellectual or psychological capacity of a child, as evidenced by an observable and substantial impairment in the child's ability to function.

Neglect means the failure by a person responsible for the child's welfare to provide necessary food, care, clothing, shelter, or medical attention for a child.

Medical neglect of handicapped infants in a medical care facility includes instances of withholding of medically indicated treatment from disabled infants with life threatening conditions, except in those cases where reasonable medical judgment indicates that one of the following instances apply: The infant is chronically and irreversibly comatose; or the provision of such treatment would merely prolong dying, not be effective in ameliorating or correcting all of the infant's life threatening conditions, or otherwise be futile in terms of the survival of the infant; or the provision of such treatment would be virtually futile in terms of the survival of the infant and the treatment itself under such circumstances would be inhumane. The term "withholding of medically indicated treatment" means the failure to respond to the infant's life threatening conditions by providing treatment (including appropriate nutrition, hydration, and medication) which, in the treating physician's (or physicians') reasonable medical judgment, will be most likely to be effective in ameliorating or correcting all such conditions.

Sexual exploitation includes allowing, permitting, or encouraging a child to engage in prostitution prohibited by AS 11.66.100 - 11.66.150, by a person responsible for the child's welfare and allowing, permitting, encouraging, or engaging in activity prohibited by AS 11.41.455(a), by a person responsible for the child's welfare.

Person responsible for the child's welfare means the child's parent, guardian, and foster parent, a person responsible for the child's care at the time of the alleged child abuse or neglect, or a person responsible for the child's welfare in a public or private residential agency or institution.



Steps in the Investigation Process

This section outlines the basic stages in the process of investigating a report of possible child abuse against a foster home. Allegations of abuse and licensing violations are taken seriously by the State of Alaska because the Office of Children's Services is responsible for the safety and well-being of every child in care. Knowing what to generally expect during this time can help you understand why the process works the way it does.

STEP 1: An Allegation Is Made.

A report of alleged abuse or neglect regarding a foster home comes into the Office of Children's Services.

STEP 2: An Assessment Is Made.

The Intake Unit will assess the report and determine if there are immediate safety issues. If it is determined that it is not safe for the child to stay in the foster home, the child will be removed and taken to another foster home or emergency setting. A licensing representative will also be notified and possibly involved in the assessment and review of information.

STEP 3: An Investigation Is Done.

The case will be assigned to a worker in the Initial Assessment section (formerly called Investigations) who will conduct an investigation by asking the foster family and the foster children questions to determine out what happened. Other records or information related to the foster family and the abuse/neglect allegation will also be reviewed. During this period, OCS cannot share information about the status of the investigation with the foster family.

What is your role in the investigation? Foster parents are asked to cooperate in the investigation. Meet with the investigators and answer questions honestly and truthfully.

STEP 4: A Child Protection Finding Is Made As A Result Of The Investigation.

A decision will be made about the status of the placement based on what the investigation revealed, if children are safe to return or remain in the foster home, or if it was the child's actions or the foster parents' actions that precipitated the report. Based on this information, a report will be found to be either:

“Not substantiated”: This decision means that based on the available facts the child protection investigation found the allegation was not true and the report *is not substantiated*. With this finding, the investigation is closed and the child protection worker sends a letter to the foster parent informing them of the findings. OR, the report will be found to be **“Substantiated”:** This decision means that based on the available facts the child protection investigation found the allegation was true and the report *is substantiated*. With this finding, the child protection worker sends a letter to the foster parent informing them of the findings and of their right to due process.

STEP 5: A Licensing Violation Decision May Be Made As Well.

If a licensing violation was determined, your licensing worker will work with you on a variety of options that might include deciding not to take action or helping you develop a Plan of Correction or beginning the process of revoking your license.

STEP 6: The Complaint Comes To a Resolution

What happens here will vary depending on the results of the investigation. If the case is *not substantiated*, the case will be closed, but a record of the report will on file with OCS, just like all reports remain documented. If the report is *substantiated*, a decision about the children in your home will need to be made. The plan will be either for a child protection case to be open if the maltreatment was substantiated for a family's birth children or for removal of the foster children if substantiated for foster children.

If there are licensing concerns, a Report of Investigation will be written which may include some enforcement actions. This may include a recommendation for changes in your home, such as fewer children on your license, training in a specific area or in serious situations, turning in your foster care license or taking criminal action. You have a right to appeal any licensing decision if enforcement actions are taken and you will be given instructions how to do that. If there is no enforcement action on a licensing complaint, you still have a right to write a letter of explanation to be included in the file. It is important that you read all the correspondence that you receive from OCS immediately so you know what decision has been made, what options you have, and what deadlines apply.

Where is there more information about the complaint and investigation process?

OCS Correspondence: *Read everything carefully that comes from OCS including the small print on the forms and notices you receive!* The findings in the case regarding child protection allegations and information about your right to ask for an administrative hearing regarding a licensing violation will be given to you in writing. There is usually a deadline of 15 days attached to return your notice.

Your Licensing Worker: Your licensing worker may not be able to discuss specific details with you about your situation but can give you general information about the process and your rights for appeal.

State of Alaska Statutes, OCS Policies & Procedures, State of Alaska Community Care Licensing Manual: The OCS Child Protection Manual which contains Policies and Procedures is listed on the State of Alaska OCS website list of publications. While every case is unique, this manual outlines the policies and procedures that OCS uses in a variety of child protection functions. The Community Care Licensing Manual (Chapter 500: *Complaint Investigations*) also details how complaints against foster homes are handled. In addition, you can research the **Authority to Investigate** given to OCS to investigate allegations of abuse or neglect in the Alaska Statutes (Child Protection: AS 47.10 & AS 47.17 and for Foster Care Licensing in the Statutes and Regulations AS 47.32, 47.05, 7 AAC 10, and 7AAC 50).



Allegations in the Foster Home

PART THREE:

What Do You Do When An Allegation Is Made Against You?

What do you do when an allegation is made against you? Here are some ideas of how to survive an investigation.

Allegation Survival Strategies

Be prepared to be put under a microscope! It may feel as you have been rejected by the social worker and their colleagues. Try to stay positive. Document everything that occurs, meet with the people who are gathering information and behave appropriately.

If the investigator asks to meet with you, don't keep him or her waiting. Investigations are confidential and you may not be allowed to have someone other than legal counsel with you. Communicate with your partner. Know your rights to due process for both substantiated abuse/neglect or licensing violations. Know the appeal process for child abuse and neglect or licensing violations.

During this stressful process, focus on taking good care of yourself. After the investigation is over, ask for help to rebuild and move on. Give yourself some time before bringing a new child into the home.

Read carefully all the correspondence you receive from the Office of Children's Services. OCS is required to tell you about the appeal process, but there is often a clearly defined response time. For example, you have 15 days to return the paperwork that says you want to appeal. But if you miss the deadline, you may lose your right to appeal. If this is something that is not appealable, you can write a letter explaining the situation that will be placed in your file. There is no deadline on writing a letter to be included in your file.



In the Notice of Violation, a foster parent may or may not be asked to submit a plan of correction. A plan of correction is a way you plan on fixing the things that are wrong. Some examples of plans of corrections are: to have more training in a specific area, to arrange for more breaks or respite care, to take fewer children in your home, or to take fewer children with high-needs into your home.

What Can You do Once the Investigation is Completed?

There can be several results from an investigation, so your options upon completion of an investigation depend on what the investigation found. It will also depend on whether the investigation was a child protection allegation or solely a licensing violation complaint. Let's go through each of the possible results.

Possible Outcome: *There is substantiated allegation of abuse regarding the children in your home.*

If there is a substantiated allegation regarding your birth children, the outcome could result in a child protection case being opened for services (with or without custody). This means, your family will have an open case with the Office of Children's Services. Depending on the circumstances, a safety plan may be required. A safety plan is a written agreement to provide a plan for protecting a child from potential harm usually by involving other participants to help with the protection of a child.

If there is a substantiated allegation regarding your foster children, the foster children will probably be removed from your care. There is no option to put a safety plan in place for foster children in a foster home. A higher standard of safety is required for licensed foster homes.

Possible Outcome: *The allegation or reported concern of abuse was unsubstantiated and no violations of the licensing standards were found.*

If the allegation or reported concern was unsubstantiated and no violations of the licensing standards were found, a Report of Investigation (ROI) is written to close the investigation and is provided to the foster parent by certified mail. No enforcement action is taken and there is no appeal process for this finding. However, a foster parent may write a letter to be included with the ROI that presents his or her point of view on the situation.

Possible Outcome: *The reported concern, allegation, or complaint was substantiated for a licensing violation, but can be brought into compliance through an approved Plan of Correction.*

If the reported concern or complaint was substantiated for a licensing violation, but has already been corrected or can be brought into compliance through an approved Plan of Correction, then no enforcement action may be needed. In this case, the investigation is closed with a written ROI that is sent certified mail to the foster parent. No enforcement action is taken, therefore, there is no appeal for this finding. Again, even though a foster parent may not appeal, a foster parent may write a letter to be included with the ROI that presents his or her point of view on the situation.

Possible Outcome: *The reported concern, allegation, or complaint was substantiated for licensing violations and an enforcement action is taken by the Department.*

If the reported concern is substantiated for a licensing violation, the DHSS Office of Children's Services may take one of several different enforcement actions. When enforcement is taken by the Department, the foster parent (who is referred to as the respondent) is granted the right to due process. You will receive the Report of Investigation and Notice of Violation by certified mail (pay attention when this arrives in the mail and read it carefully!) In that same letter, you will also receive a form that is called the Request of Hearing form. **THIS IS IMPORTANT! If you choose to appeal the enforcement action, you must completed the Request for Hearing form and return it within 15 days of signing the receipt. A hearing date will be scheduled within 120 days of the Request for Hearing before an Administrative Judge.**

Through this process, there are opportunities to mediate the issues and perhaps come to an agreeable settlement prior to the scheduled hearing. If a settlement is reached before

the hearing, the hearing will be vacated (or cancelled). If you do not come to a settlement before the hearing and a hearing is held, the decision of the Administrative Hearing Judge goes to the Commissioner of Health and Social Services for the final approval.

The most important advice for you is this: ***Read carefully all the correspondence you receive from the Office of Children’s Services. OCS is required to tell you about the appeal process but there is often a clearly defined response time. You have 15 days after you have signed for the certified mail to return the paperwork. After that, you may lose your right to any appeal.***

What rights do foster parents have?

- This self study outlines the investigation process so you will know what paths of recourse you have available to you. In addition, the Foster Care Overview page on the OCS website states that foster parents have the right to: “a fair hearing on licensure actions in their home.” The foster care license is considered a property right, which means that it cannot be taken away from you without due process. The investigation process includes an opportunity to challenge the result of an investigation if the investigation results in a licensing action initiated by OCS against your license (such as revoking your licensed or restricting your license.) Follow the appeal process outline above.
- Foster parents also have a right to write a response to the investigation process to give their side of the incident or to respond to the manner that the investigation took place. This does not change the outcome of the investigation but it can be done regardless of whether the complaint was founded or unfounded or whether or not a licensing action was taken. This written response goes in your foster care file and becomes part of the record.

A foster parent can always obtain legal counsel if he or she feels they would benefit from legal advice or feel that their rights are being violated. Foster families are responsible for any legal costs that are incurred when obtaining legal counsel.



CONCLUSION

You Can Survive, Learn, And Even Thrive.

On airplanes, the flight attendant will tell you in case of emergency, you should put on your own oxygen mask before you put on your child’s in case of emergency. If we are not taking care of ourselves, we can’t take very good care of anyone else. Children in foster care have complex needs and require considerable time, which often leaves little energy. Taking time to take good care of yourself and to work together as a couple to support each other is not only important but essential to good self care and good foster care. Protect and keep your core family healthy to both prevent incidents happening and to keep yourself strong in case of an allegation or complaint.

**ALASKA CENTER FOR RESOURCE FAMILIES
SELF-STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FOSTER PARENTS**

SUBJECT: FOSTER CARE

COURSE: ALLEGATIONS IN THE FOSTER HOME

Revised August 2016

3.0 HOURS TRAINING CREDIT

Please read the above entitled self-study. Then complete the questionnaire found on the following pages. Try answering the questions first from your understanding of the material before referring back to the self-study packet. These questions pertain specifically to the course which you have read.

After you have answered all the questions, please **send your completed questionnaire to the Alaska Center for Resource Families, 815 Second Avenue Suite 202, Fairbanks, Alaska 99701**. We will score your answers and credit your training record with 3.0 hours. A score of 70% correct or better will entitle you to receive training hours credit. In the event your score is less than 70% correct, we will contact you to determine if you wish to review the material and retake the questionnaire. If so, the self-study will be returned to you with a new questionnaire.

If you have questions or concerns about this self-study course, please call us on our toll-free line 1-800-478-7307. If you are calling from the local Fairbanks/North Pole area dial: 479-7307; Anchorage: 279-1799.

The following section is an evaluation of the self-study materials. Please fill it out upon completion of the questionnaire, and return this page to us with the rest of the course materials. Thank you for your time and comments. It helps us provide appropriate training to meet the needs of foster parents.

*******EVALUATION OF SELF-STUDY MATERIALS*******

Please complete the following questions.

1. Did this self-study course meet with your expectations? YES NO
2. How would you rate the written presentation of information on the topic?
 Excellent Good Fair Poor
3. Did this course add to your knowledge and/or skills? YES NO
4. Comments/Concerns:

ALLEGATIONS IN THE FOSTER HOME

3.0 Hours

Revised August 2016

NAME: _____ PHONE NO.: _____

Only one person per questionnaire. Feel free to make additional copies if needed.

ADDRESS: _____
Street or Post Office City/State Zip

EMAIL: _____

YES! I would like to receive ACRF email. *(Includes Training Tracks Newsletter, training reminders and community events or training of interest for resource families)*

Are you a foster parent? YES NO If YES, what is your Foster Home License #: _____

If NO, please check one: Pending Foster Parent OCS Birth Parent Adoptive Parent

Residential Treatment Facility (License #: _____) Agency: _____

Other *(please specify)*: _____

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

Check or fill in the appropriate answer to the following questions. First try to answer from your understanding of the material before referring back to the course.

1. _____ is intended to be substitute care where children are cared for and kept safe when they cannot be with their birth family. (FILL IN THE BLANK)
2. A licensing complaint means that a family is accused or suspected of not meeting a licensing regulation.
____ a. True
____ b. False
3. If there are allegations of child abuse/neglect in the foster home; there will be a _____ as well as a licensing investigation.
4. All CPS complaints are also allegations of licensing violations.
____ a. True
____ b. False

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING
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5. There are six steps in the investigation process. Put the following steps in order by adding the numeral 1 – 6 beside the step.
- a. A child protection finding is made as a result of the investigation.
 - b. An allegation is made
 - c. An investigation is done
 - d. The complaint comes to a resolution
 - e. A licensing violation decision may be made as well.
 - f. An assessment is made.
6. What are three (3) things listed in the self-study that you should not do while under an investigation?
- a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
7. The best way to avoid allegations of abuse or neglect against a child is to: (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY).
- a. Never use any form of physical punishment for a child.
 - b. Never give them junk food.
 - c. Provide the best care you can for children
 - d. Never have fun with the child.
 - e. All of the above
8. What are some examples of plans of corrections? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY).
- a. To have more training in a specific area
 - b. To arrange for more breaks
 - c. To take fewer children in your home
 - d. To take fewer children with high needs
 - e. All of the above
9. A foster parent should carefully read all communication from the Office of Children’s Services.
- a. True
 - b. False

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING
PAGE 3 – ALLEGATIONS IN FOSTER CARE

10. What are three possible factors that are listed in the self-study that may contribute to the abuse of children in foster care?
- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
11. OCS is required to tell you about the appeal process but there is often a clearly defined response time. You may have 15 days after you have signed for the certified mail to return the paperwork. After that, you may lose your rights to an appeal.
- _____ a. True
_____ b. False
12. If the allegation of abuse is unsubstantiated and no violations of the licensing standards are found, a Report of Investigation (ROI) is written to close the investigation and is provided to the foster parent by certified mail. No enforcement action is taken and there is no appeal process for this finding.
- _____ a. True
_____ b. False
13. Every child should receive a medical check-up within _____ days (or earlier) of placement.
(FILL IN THE BLANK)
14. If you receive enforcement action and you decide to appeal the enforcement action. You must complete the Request for Hearing Form and return it within 15 days of signing the receipt for the Certified Mail.
- _____ a. True
_____ b. False
15. In the Notice of Violation, a foster parent will always be asked to submit a plan of correction.
- _____ a. True
_____ b. False

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING
PAGE 4 – ALLEGATIONS IN FOSTER CARE

16. The allegation is _____ if the available facts that the child protection investigator found were true. With this finding, the child protection worker sends a letter to the foster parent informing them of the findings and their right to due process. (FILL IN THE BLANK.)
17. The _____ is when the foster family and the foster children are being questioned to determine what happened. Other records or information related to the foster family and the abuse/neglect allegation will also be reviewed. (FILL IN THE BLANKS.)
18. _____ means an injury to the emotional well-being or intellectual or psychological capacity of a child, as evidenced by an observable and substantial impairment in the child's ability to function. (FILL IN THE BLANKS.)

FOR SCORING AND TRAINING CREDIT OF 3.0 HOURS, PLEASE RETURN THIS QUESTIONNAIRE TO:

**Alaska Center for Resource Families
815 Second Avenue Suite 202
Fairbanks, AK 99701**

OR FAX TO: 1-907-479-9666

**ALASKA CENTER FOR RESOURCE FAMILIES
SELF-STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FOSTER PARENTS**

SUBJECT: FOSTER CARE

COURSE: ALLEGATIONS IN THE FOSTER HOME

Revised August 2016

3.0 HOURS TRAINING CREDIT

Please read the above entitled self-study. Then complete the questionnaire found on the following pages. Try answering the questions first from your understanding of the material before referring back to the self-study packet. These questions pertain specifically to the course which you have read.

After you have answered all the questions, please **send your completed questionnaire to the Alaska Center for Resource Families, 815 Second Avenue Suite 202, Fairbanks, Alaska 99701**. We will score your answers and credit your training record with 3.0 hours. A score of 70% correct or better will entitle you to receive training hours credit. In the event your score is less than 70% correct, we will contact you to determine if you wish to review the material and retake the questionnaire. If so, the self-study will be returned to you with a new questionnaire.

If you have questions or concerns about this self-study course, please call us on our toll-free line 1-800-478-7307. If you are calling from the local Fairbanks/North Pole area dial: 479-7307; Anchorage: 279-1799.

The following section is an evaluation of the self-study materials. Please fill it out upon completion of the questionnaire, and return this page to us with the rest of the course materials. Thank you for your time and comments. It helps us provide appropriate training to meet the needs of foster parents.

*******EVALUATION OF SELF-STUDY MATERIALS*******

Please complete the following questions.

1. Did this self-study course meet with your expectations? YES NO
2. How would you rate the written presentation of information on the topic?
 Excellent Good Fair Poor
3. Did this course add to your knowledge and/or skills? YES NO
4. Comments/Concerns:

ALLEGATIONS IN THE FOSTER HOME

3.0 Hours

Revised August 2016

NAME: _____ PHONE NO.: _____

Only one person per questionnaire. Feel free to make additional copies if needed.

ADDRESS: _____
Street or Post Office City/State Zip

EMAIL: _____

YES! I would like to receive ACRF email. *(Includes Training Tracks Newsletter, training reminders and community events or training of interest for resource families)*

Are you a foster parent? YES NO If YES, what is your Foster Home License #: _____

If NO, please check one: Pending Foster Parent OCS Birth Parent Adoptive Parent

Residential Treatment Facility (License #: _____) Agency: _____

Other *(please specify)*: _____

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

Check or fill in the appropriate answer to the following questions. First try to answer from your understanding of the material before referring back to the course.

1. _____ is intended to be substitute care where children are cared for and kept safe when they cannot be with their birth family. (FILL IN THE BLANK)
2. A licensing complaint means that a family is accused or suspected of not meeting a licensing regulation.
____ a. True
____ b. False
3. If there are allegations of child abuse/neglect in the foster home; there will be a _____ as well as a licensing investigation.
4. All CPS complaints are also allegations of licensing violations.
____ a. True
____ b. False

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING
PAGE 2 – ALLEGATIONS IN FOSTER CARE

5. There are six steps in the investigation process. Put the following steps in order by adding the numeral 1 – 6 beside the step.
- a. A child protection finding is made as a result of the investigation.
 - b. An allegation is made
 - c. An investigation is done
 - d. The complaint comes to a resolution
 - e. A licensing violation decision may be made as well.
 - f. An assessment is made.
6. What are three (3) things listed in the self-study that you should not do while under an investigation?
- a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
7. The best way to avoid allegations of abuse or neglect against a child is to: (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY).
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PAGE 3 – ALLEGATIONS IN FOSTER CARE

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