

**UNDERSTANDING THE REGULATIONS:
What Alaskan Foster Parents Need to Know
TOPIC: #6 Foster Parent Training**

7 AAC 67.130 Orientation and Training

This series is a guide to the regulations, but not a substitute. In all differences between the information in this series and the regulations, the regulations are the final authority. Contact your licensing worker for a complete copy of the regulations.

Why Do I Need Training? I Already Know How To Raise Children!

The children that are coming into foster care are affected more and more with complex behaviors, trauma, delinquency, and pre-natal exposure to drugs and alcohol. Foster children often times have more difficult behaviors than your own children may have had and training keeps foster parents up to date with skills to address these difficult behaviors. It is also recognized that foster parents are playing more of a professional role than they have in the past. You are often more than a just a parent -- you are a counselor, a team player and case manager. Being a foster parent is more than just knowing how to raise children. You need to know how to work with caseworkers, mental health professionals, doctors, and guardian's ad litem. The training requirement is similar to the continuing education required of teachers, nurses, social workers and doctors.

WHAT DO THE REGULATIONS SAY...

About Orientation and Training?



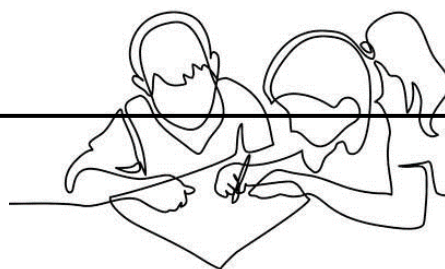
All licensed foster homes in Alaska are required to have training each year. But beginning July 1, 2022, the State of Alaska is moving away from required number of hours to an **Individualized Training Plan (ITP)** for each foster home specific to the needs of the children in their homes for all new homes licensed or relicensed in 2022. The ITP will begin when licensed families come up for renewal or beginning of their foster care license.

Foster parents in the state of Alaska will work with their licensing worker as well as caseworkers for the children placed in their home to determine training needs. When a foster home is issued a license, the licensing worker will discuss with the family **what training is needed to meet the needs of the child or children in the home**. These needs will be determined through a conversation with the family, the caseworker and the licensing worker. Then, an **Individualized Training Plan (ITP)** will be developed for each foster family. This ITP is designed to recognize the strengths and training foster families may already have, while building on and encouraging further education and training to meet the specialized needs of the children in their home. The

foster family will complete this training before the end of that licensing year in order to comply with licensing requirements.

For the first year of licensure, foster parents will be asked to complete Core Training for Resource Families or for relatives, Core Training for Relative Caregivers. This will be specified in the foster family's ITP. Each following year of licensure a new ITP will be developed with the family's training needs in mind and will be based on the foster parent's previous experience and training. The Individual Training Plan is a specific form that is used to plan, document, and track completion of training.

All training must be documented and needs to include the date, subject material, duration, and the name of the presenter/facilitator. This training should be submitted to the Alaska Center for Resource Families (ACRF) who keeps the database of completed training for licensed foster parents in Alaska. Licensing workers will check with ACRF to determine if this licensing requirement has been met when the renewal for licensure comes around each year. See the form at the end of this self-study for a sample of the Individual Training Plan Form.



SUMMARY OF ITP PROCESS FOR FAMILIES

1. At licensing renewal or home visit, talk with Licensing Worker about needs of youth and children in your home.
2. Develop Individual Training Plan (ITP) with worker. Use the ITP form making sure both of you sign the ITP.
3. Licensing worker will secure ITP approved by Supervisor. ITP gets sent to Alaska Center for Resource Families if Appropriate or is included in File.
4. ACRF contacts family to get the training done, OR
5. If training is done through another agency, foster parent will send certification or documentation of completion to ACRF.
6. Licensing checks with ACRF to make sure ITP is completed.

COMPLETING TRAINING

Once the topics related to the special needs of the children in the homes are identified, foster parents can get their training in many ways. The Alaska Center for Resource Families will offer assistance to families to help plan specific training based on the recommendations in the ITP. Training can be obtained from classes sponsored/taught by the Alaska Center for Resource Families, or attending classes taught by the Office of Children's Services, or attending classes sponsored by other agencies. You can meet training hours by participating in individualized training around a child's special needs, attending parent education classes offered by schools, attending support or education groups, or self-study training with the Alaska Center for Resource Families. However you meet your yearly training requirement, you must document it and submit it to the Alaska Center for Resource Families. When your ITP is complete, ACRF will contact your licensing worker with your completed ITP. ***Remember that these trainings must match the identified topics on the ITP to count toward your licensure requirements.***

Foster parents may also undergo informal training such as material covered at meetings, watching a video, reading a book, or individual training with Infant Learning Program staff. These informal trainings must be documented in writing. Documentation should include the date, subject, method of training and the name of the person who conducted the training and some kind of documentation for completion. If books are read or a video is viewed, foster parents can get credit by filling out a report sheet available through the Alaska Center for Resource Families. Training forms and additional training opportunities can be found on the website for the Alaska Center for Resource Families at www.acrf.org.

Training completed must match the agreed upon topics in the Individual Training Plan to count toward the training requirement. Plans can be modified through discussion with licensing worker.

Foster parents should document their training for review with their licensing worker. You can always request a full copy of your training report by calling the Alaska Center for Resource Families at 1-800-478-7307 or emailing acrf@nwresource.org. Licensing workers can also request a copy of your training record from ACRF at the time of your licensing renewal.



ASSISTANCE WITH TRAINING

The Alaska Center for Resource Families (ACRF) is here to help foster parents obtain training that will help with the particular needs of their foster children. ACRF has a self-study library, which includes books, courses, and videos. ACRF also sponsors classroom training. The Alaska Center for Resource Families has a library of hundreds of hours of self-study materials that can be mailed free of charge. To get the self-study catalog of available materials or to set up training that is right for you, contact ACRF at 1-800-478-7307. There is also training available on the ACRF website to assist you in web based self-study training. Go to www.acrf.org for access to printed, web based and audio training opportunities.

Foster parents are responsible for reporting all training to the Alaska Center for Resource Families (ACRF). This includes any OCS training. Training and self-study done through ACRF is automatically recorded. Contact ACRF to report any training from sources other than the Alaska Center for Resource Families. A form to report training is included in this self-study. ACRF reports all completed training to your licensing representative on a quarterly basis.

ACRF can send you a copy of all the training that you have reported to them. If you would like a copy of your training record, call ACRF at 1-800-478-7307. The Alaska Center for Resource Families has three regional offices in the state. These include:

Northern Regional Office

815 Second Avenue, Suite 202
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
1-907-479-7307 or
1-800-478-7307
FAX: 1-907-479-9666
acrff@nwresource.org

Anchorage Regional Office

840 K Street, Suite 101
Anchorage, Alaska 99501
1-907-279-1799 or
1-866-478-7307
FAX: 1-907-279-1520
acrffc@nwresource.org

Mat Su Regional Office

Physical: 5050 Dunbar Street, Suite A2
Mailing: PO Box 876844,
Wasilla, Alaska 99687
1-907-376-4678
FAX: 1-907-376-4638
acrffc@nwresource.org

For more information about the **UNDERSTANDING THE REGULATIONS: *What Alaskan Foster Parents Need to Know*** series, contact the Alaskan Center for Resource Families at 1-800-478-7307.

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