



RESOURCE FAMILY BASICS

A summary of important information for DHS Child Welfare Services Resource Caregivers

*DHS - Dept. of Human Services	*SW-Social Worker	*GAL-Guardian Ad Litem	*FC- Foster Custody
*SSA - Social Service Assistant	*CWS-Child Welfare Services	*CASA- Court Appointed Special Advocate	*PC = Permanent Custody
*Child - Child in DHS foster or permanent custody who has been placed under your care			*CA/N Child Abuse & Neglect
*RCG - Resource Caregiver			

Topic	Information
<p>Warm Line – Support Services and Information for Resource Caregivers, Adoptive Parents, Guardianship Parents, ICPC Families, and Hale Malama Caregivers</p> <p>7-days a week 8:30 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.</p>	<p>The Warm Line is a number you can call for information, referrals, & telephone support. You can find more information about support groups schedules, trainings and other resources by visiting the DHS informational website for all Hawaii resource caregivers at: http://rcg.hawaii.gov</p> <p>Call (808) 545-1130 (Oahu) or 1-866-545-0882 (Toll-free for Neighbor Islands)</p> <p>E-mail: WarmLine@CatholicCharitiesHawaii.org</p>
<p>After-Hour Calls</p>	<p><u>911 (Police/Fire/Ambulance):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Emergencies such as medical or dangerous crisis situations ▪ Report runaway incidents <p><u>Child Abuse & Neglect Hotline: (808) 832-5300 (Oahu) or 1-888-380-3088 (toll-free)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To report child abuse/neglect ▪ To notify DHS that child is seeking Emergency Room services ▪ Seek consultation on medical concerns and to have DHS provide medical consent on behalf of the child/youth in order for them to receive medical treatment/services <p><u>Human Trafficking Reporting Line: 1-888-398-1188 or toll-free fax: 1-888-988-6688</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If you suspect a minor is a victim of human trafficking <p><u>Adult Mental Health Division (AMHD) Crisis Line of Hawaii: 1-800-753-6879</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Help from trained professionals during a mental health crisis
<p>Role of Resource Caregiver</p>	<p>A resource caregiver provides temporary care for children in foster care. It is therefore essential to work with DHS to support reunification or to transition the child to appropriate relatives for permanency. Dependent upon the situation, it may</p>

	<p>involve at least an initial meeting with the birth parent(s). Some resource caregivers may even feel comfortable to mentor the birth parents. It may involve transporting or supervising and supporting interactions between the birth parents and child or between siblings. Also, it will involve facilitating and participating in services to support the child’s well-being (cultural, ethnic, mental and physical health, education, spiritual, etc.).</p> <p>The role of the resource caregiver is to provide normalcy for children in foster care. “Normalcy” as defined by young people in foster care, means being a part of a caring and supportive family, developing and cultivating friendships, engaging in extracurricular and everyday activities, being a person, not a label and making decisions, trying new things and sometimes making mistakes. Allowing for mistakes to be teachable moments and not used as a reason to ask the child/young person to leave.</p>
<p>Foster Board Reimbursement</p>	<p>Resource Caregivers receive monthly Foster Board Reimbursement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 0-5 years of age \$649 a month per child. ▪ 6-11 years of age \$742 a month per child. ▪ 12 years and older \$776 a month per child.
<p>Child Care or Preschool Financial Assistance</p>	<p>Childcare/preschool financial subsidies for children may be available from various programs, including Childcare Connections, Preschool Open Doors, and Keiki O Ka Aina (KOKA) Family Learning Centers (for Native Hawaiian and American Indian children).</p> <p>Call the Warm Line at 545-1130 (Oahu) or 1-866-545-0882 (toll free) for information and referrals.</p>
<p>Child Information Folder (CIF)</p>	<p>Every child in foster care has a CIF. The folder contains all health/medical, psychological, social, and educational documents that are available to DHS at the time of the child’s placement. The CIF is to be provided to the resource family within 30 days of a child’s placement. It is also used to file additional information and case plans provided to the resource family during the placement. If the child moves from the resource home, the complete CIF must be returned to the Social Worker.</p>
<p>Clothing Allowance</p>	<p>A purchase order or reimbursements for clothing (including school T-shirts and uniforms), shoes, and diapers are available per child per year up to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$810 for children aged 0-5 ▪ \$822 for children aged 6-11 ▪ \$1,026 for children aged 12 and older

	<p>Contact the child’s Social Services Aide or Social Worker before purchasing any clothing for reimbursement (original receipts are needed for reimbursement). Social Worker may also request clothing from the child’s parent(s).</p> <p>Clothing allowance applies to children in foster care, children receiving permanency assistance, young adults in Imua Kakou, and young adults receiving Higher Education Payments.</p>
Clothing for Special Events or Activities	<p>Reimbursement for sports uniforms and assistance on purchasing clothing for proms, etc. (up to \$125 per child per year) is also available. Contact the child’s Social Services Aide or Social Worker before buying any clothing for reimbursement.</p>
Helping Hands Hawaii’s Community Clearinghouse & Family Programs Hawaii’s Care to Share Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping Hands Hawaii’s Community Clearinghouse may also be able to provide donated items, such as clothing, cribs, or beds. Ask the child’s Social Worker to fax a request sheet so that your family can schedule an appointment with them. (808) 440-3857. Available for Oahu families only. • Family Programs Hawaii’s statewide Care to Share project may be able to match you with a donor in your community who has items you need. Call (808) 521-9531 for more information.
Confidentiality	<p>All information that you receive from the Department of Human Services or service providers about the child and the child’s family is confidential and <u>should not be shared with anyone.</u> The information is for your use only so you can understand the child and provide the best care for them.</p> <p>(HRS §350-1.4 Confidentiality; HRS §346-10 Protection of records; divulging confidential information prohibited)</p>
Difficulty of Care (DOC) Reimbursements	<p>If the child requires a higher level of care and you can provide the extra service/support, the child may be eligible to receive DOC reimbursements, up to \$570 per month. Inquire and discuss with the child’s Social Worker.</p>
<u>NO</u> Physical Discipline	<p><u>NO</u> physical discipline of foster children is allowed. Contact the child’s Social Worker, therapist, Warm Line, or other support services to seek assistance in appropriate discipline methods and approaches.</p>
Normalcy for Children and Young People in Foster Care Don’t Say “NO” Before you “KNOW”	<p>Refer to the <i>Normalcy Guidelines</i> to review common questions and answers for Resource Caregivers on providing normalcy for children/young people in foster care.</p> <p>Information provided on participating equally in age or developmentally appropriate extra-curricular, social, and cultural activities, as their classmates and peers. These guidelines are for Resource Caregivers on the Prudent Parent Standards and will be provided by your DHS licensing worker at your first visit.</p>

<p>Driver’s License for Young Person</p>	<p>DHS must sign the driver’s license application for any youth for whom DHS has permanent custody and who is qualified to apply for a driver’s license. Consult your auto insurance agent regarding appropriate coverage & liability issues before you allow a foster youth to drive your car. Refer to the Don’t Say “NO” Before you “KNOW” guide, section on Preparation for Adulthood, for more information.</p>
<p>Enhancement Funds and DHS Funds to Promote Normalcy</p>	<p>DHS is committed to support children and young people’s participation in normalcy activities and to have them be included in resource caregiver’s family vacation. Children and young people in foster care may qualify for private enhancement funds, which are available from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Friends of Children’s Justice Center of East Hawaii and Maui ▪ Family Programs Hawaii (FPH) for Oahu and Kauai ▪ Kids Matter-Friends of the Children’s Justice Center of West Hawaii <p>The funds may be used to assist the child and young person’s participation in extra-curricular and family activities such as camp, sports and school functions, airfare for family vacations, etc. Funding is limited on Enhancement funds to \$500 per child per year.</p> <p>Funding is also available through DHS to assist children and youth with extra-curricular, social, cultural, and community activities.</p> <p>Please contact your child’s Social Worker for any funding requests.</p> <p>Forms for Enhancement Funds are available on DHS (rcg.hawaii.gov) and Family Programs Hawaii (FamilyProgramsHawaii.org) website.</p>
<p>Federal Tax Benefits</p>	<p>Certain foster care payments are excludable (non-taxable) from gross income. Resource caregivers may also be able to take advantage of the dependent exemption. Resource caregivers should contact the Internal Revenue Services, State of Hawaii Department of Taxation, or a tax accountant for more information and assistance regarding such tax matters. Children in foster care must be in resource caregiver’s placement for at least 6-months in order to take advantage of the dependent exemption benefit.</p>
<p>Financial Assistance for Summer Fun & Recreational Activities</p>	<p>Resource caregivers may be reimbursed for group activity fees such as scouts, YMCA, YWCA, Boys & Girls Club, soccer, or baseball. Tuition waivers for City and County Summer Fun Programs are available for those who apply. Contact the child’s Social Services Aide or Social Worker for assistance.</p>

<p>GAL/CASA</p>	<p>A Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) or a Guardian Ad Litem (GAL) is appointed by the Family Court to advocate in the best interest of the child in foster care. Get to know the child's GAL/CASA & his/her phone number (available from the child's Social Worker) as he/she may be able to assist you in advocating for the child.</p>
<p>Helpful Tips About Communicating With Team Members</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone messages for Social Worker or service provider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Speak clearly, provide your name & number, the child's name, what your call is about, and good times to call you back ▪ If the call is regarding medical coverage, clothing or payments, contact the Social Services Assistant ▪ If you need to speak to someone immediately from DHS, call the number indicated on the Social Worker's voice mail or press extension 0 and ask for the Office Duty Social Worker who is on-call that day. You also may ask to speak to the Unit Supervisor or Section Administrator. ▪ Text messaging is an alternate way to contact CWS Staff and Providers ▪ Email the Social Worker and if no response, follow up with an email to include the Social Worker Supervisor • Contact your CWS Licensing Worker through phone or email • Other helpful people to call are the GAL or CASA for information or advocacy, or the child's therapist for help on dealing with some of the child's behavioral/emotional challenges. • The child's therapist should have after-hour emergency contact numbers. Always ask for names and numbers and keep the list handy.
<p>Higher Education Board Payments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a youth wishes to attend an institution of higher education and qualifies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Higher Education Board payments of \$776 per month may continue until age 26. Additionally, there is a clothing allowance which applies to children in foster care, children receiving permanency assistance, young adults in Imua Kakou, and young adults receiving Higher Education Payments. Discuss this with the child's SW. Please visit the DHS website: http://humanservices.hawaii.gov/ • Education Training Voucher (ETV): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Former DHS foster youth who aged out of foster care at 18 or older, adopted from DHS at 16 or older, in Legal Guardianship to a Relative at age 16 or older may be eligible to receive up to \$5,000/year to assist with expenses related to Higher Education until their 26th birthday.

<p>Infant Care</p>	<p>Seek guidance from the child’s Social Worker and resources from the DHS Licensing Worker, child’s Primary Care Physician, etc. regarding general care, critical safety measures, etc. Infants and toddlers may be eligible for Home Visiting Services or Early Intervention Services, inquire with the infant/toddler’s Social Worker.</p> <p>Children up to age 5 may be eligible for Women Infant Children (WIC) services, which provides formula and nutritional foods for the child in foster care.</p> <p>For information on developmental milestones, safe sleep, making your home safe for infants/toddlers, visit: https://rcg.hawaii.com/resources</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>NEVER</u> shake an INFANT or child (Shaken Baby Syndrome)</p>
<p>Keeping Records</p>	<p>Keep detailed documentation of the child’s behaviors, eating patterns, and child’s likes/dislikes, visitations, medical care, and other significant notes in the Child Information Folder. Document all doctor appointments, dental visits, educational milestones and difficulties, telephone contacts, visits with the Social Worker, GAL/CASA and interactions with biological family. Maintain a list of all people who are involved in the child’s life, including their name, agency, and phone number.</p>
<p>Liability Insurance</p>	<p>Licensed DHS resource caregivers providing care for DHS foster children are included in a LIMITED liability Insurance Coverage purchased and provided by DHS. Review the brochure with your DHS Licensing worker. It is also highly recommended that all resource caregivers purchase homeowner or renter’s insurance to cover items that the DHS insurance coverage does not cover. You can obtain the current insurance brochure by visiting: https://rcg.hawaii.gov/resources and look for the “Resource Caregiver Insurance Brochure.”</p>
<p>Medical Insurance Coverage</p>	<p>Children in foster care are covered by the State’s Medicaid Program. You will be provided with each child’s medical card about 30 days after child enters foster care. If you haven’t received a medical card, do not know where to take the child for medical or dental services, or to inquire about changing providers, contact the child’s Social Services Assistant.</p>
<p>Mileage Reimbursement</p>	<p>If you transport the child for therapy appointments, interactions with birth family, school meetings, or you attend child-related trainings, your mileage may be reimbursed at the current state mileage allowance rate. Call the child’s Social Services Aide or Social Worker for more information on specific situations that qualify for this reimbursement.</p>
<p>Newsletters</p>	<p>DHS provides funding for quarterly newsletter mail-outs to all DHS resource caregivers. Please provide your email address to your assigned CWS Licensing Worker to begin receiving the newsletter and other information/resources from DHS and community</p>

	<p>providers. Please contact the Warm Line to request a newsletter and request to have your name added to the mailing list.</p>
<p>‘Ohana Conference, Family Finding, & Family Connections</p>	<p>EPIC ‘Ohana, Inc. provides statewide ‘Ohana Conferences to bring together the extended family members of children who are involved in the CWS system to thoughtfully and carefully plan for the protection and safety and permanency of the children. Resource caregivers can also request an ‘Ohana Conference and are strongly encouraged to attend these valuable meetings. EPIC ‘Ohana also provides Family Finding and Family Connection services to youth in foster care. Contact (808) 838-7752 (Oahu) or 1-866-636-1644 (toll-free).</p>
<p>Parenting Classes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PATCH offers a variety of free and low-cost services to educate parents, etc. Parenting classes are available to resource families through a Department contract. PATCH will do direct mail-outs to the DHS resource families. For other parenting resources, call the Warm Line at (808) 545-1130 (Oahu) or 1-866-545-0882 (toll-free). • Fosterparentcollege.com is an online resource that is available, call the Warm Line to obtain free access.
<p>Therapeutic or Psychological Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children in foster care can access therapy through their MedQuest Health Plan. • Children in foster care may also be eligible for therapeutic services through their school, if the child is certified for these services and if it is included in the child’s IEP. Work with the child’s Social Worker, the school and the Dept. of Education’s Surrogate Parent. • Children in foster care may also be eligible for therapeutic services through Dept. of Health-Child & Adolescent Mental Health Division (CAMHD). Work with the child’s Social Worker regarding a possible referral. • Discuss with the child’s Social Worker any concerns for therapeutic services that you feel may be needed or that the child is receiving.
<p>Resource Caregiver Information Handbook</p>	<p>The handbook includes basic information for resource caregivers and is available at https://rcg.hawaii.gov/resources</p>
<p>Resource Family Recruitment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you know someone who would like to become a general-licensed resource caregiver, please refer them to Project Pilina (a program of Partners in Development Foundation) at (808) 282-8377 or by visiting: https://rcg.hawaii.gov/contact. You can also use your smartphone and scan the following QR code to be taken directly to the beginning of the online licensing application:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you are a child-specific resource caregiver and interested in becoming a general-licensed resource caregiver after the child you was licensed for achieves permanency, contact your CWS Licensing Worker.
Respite Funds	<p>If you need a break or are going on vacation, respite funds can help pay for someone to care for the child. It is the resource caregiver’s responsibility to find a respite provider. The Resource Caregiver is responsible to ensure the respite provider is suitable for childcare. The resource caregiver will provide guidance of what to do in an emergency. In addition, the resource caregiver will explain DHS disciplinary rules and confidentiality. Limited funds are available each state fiscal year. Contact your CWS Licensing Worker for more information.</p> <p>(On-Call RCG-Emergency Shelter Homes and Shelters are not eligible for respite funds)</p>
School-Based Benefits	<p>Check with the child’s school on applications for free or reduced-rates on school lunches, bus passes, After-School Plus (A+) Programs, & summer school tuition waivers (summer school waivers based on available funding) for children in foster care. If the child does not receive a free bus pass, check with the SSA or SW about reimbursement or purchase order procedures for bus passes. Remember to note on the applications that the child is in foster care and name & contact number of the SW so that the application will have special processing.</p> <p>Check for any additional benefits/scholarships that the school offers.</p> <p>*Note: please consider the feelings of the child as some children are embarrassed by situations that identify them as foster children.</p>
Summer School Scholarships	<p>Kamehameha Schools will often offer scholarships/ financial assistance for summer school sessions for Native Hawaiian children in care. To determine Native Hawaiian ancestry, 3 generations of ancestry is needed. Contact the Ho’oulu data center to initiate the process.</p>
Social Media	<p>All resource caregivers are prohibited from posting the child in foster care pictures or other information on any social media site.</p>
Supplemental Payment for Medical Concerns	<p>Medical treatments or medication for the resource caregivers or members of the home may be provided up to \$500 per incident or \$500 per person, depending upon a doctor’s recommendations for a child’s physical condition, such as Hepatitis B, etc. The need for cleaning supplies for the home or family must be established by the SW. The need for those treatments, medications, or supplies must be related to the physical condition of the child in foster care.</p>

<p>Support Groups</p>	<p>Support groups are available in various geographic areas and have topic specific groups available, please visit https://rcg.hawaii.gov and click on ‘Support Groups’ for listings or call the Warm Line for more information.</p>
<p>Additional Counseling Support Services</p>	<p>The Department contracts with various agencies statewide to provide Comprehensive Counseling & Supportive Services (CCSS) to stabilize and preserve the child’s home environment (for birth or resource families). Call the child’s SSA or SW for more information on how to access these services.</p>
<p>Trainings and Workshops</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective January 1, 2023 the mandatory ongoing training requirement for all licensed resource caregivers will be thirteen (13) training hours for <u>each</u> licensed resource caregiver required, annually. • Ongoing trainings are provided through the Resource Caregiver Support Services contract. • Download the “Hawaii Foster Care Connections” mobile app developed for resource caregivers. There you can access online training videos and other resources that are available to you. • An approved on-going training list is available through your licensing worker, the Warm Line and at https://rcg.hawaii.gov/trainings • Online training is available through online providers that DHS has approved. Call the Warm Line, register at https://rcg.hawaii.gov/trainings, or through the “Hawaii Foster Care Connections” mobile app. • There are many webinars, workshops and training opportunities available throughout the year; call the Warm Line to get on the mailing list so you can always receive the most current trainings specific to foster care.
<p>Transition and Youth Services</p>	<p>Talk to your child’s Social Worker regarding referrals to the following programs for youth or call the Warm Line for more information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Independent Living Program (ILP) Services: helps youth (from age 12) develop knowledge, skills, and connections to make a successful transition to living on their own. 2. E Makua Ana Youth Circle (YC): provides a group process for teenagers to celebrate their emancipation from foster care and to assist them in planning for their independence/interdependence. 3. Hawai’i Foster Youth Coalition: assists youth in two major areas of focus. One is an annual trip to Kaho’olawe to connect with a culturally grounded healing process. The other area of activity is a work development project called HI Rising.

	<p>4. Hawai'i Youth Opportunities Initiative and HI H.O.P.E.S Youth Leadership Board: helps youth (14-26 years old) by working with public and private partners to improve policies and practices, promote youth engagement, apply evaluation and research, and create community partnerships.</p> <p>5. Imua Kakou (IK): a voluntary program to help young adults between the ages of 18-21 who age out of foster care, successfully transition into adulthood. Foster board reimbursement of \$776, reimbursement for bus passes, & \$1,026 clothing allowance (which includes clothing & diapers for any children of former foster youth) is available. Youth must participate in eligible activities such as higher education, employment or job training, etc.</p> <p>6. Project Visitation: brings siblings, who are living in separate foster homes, together for monthly visits. (Oahu only)</p> <p>7. Foster Hope Hawaii App: A tool to connect and support foster youth with community support services and resources for healthy living, housing, education, finance and employment. (Available on iPhone and Android phones).</p>
<p>Traveling Procedures</p>	<p><i>Children in foster care are NOT allowed to travel off-island without court approval.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental consent is required for children in foster care to travel off-island with their resource caregivers. • If the parents and the GAL/CASA agree and consent to the youth traveling, the Court must be informed that the parents and the GAL/CASA do not object. If the parents or the GAL/CASA do not agree (object), a motion must be filed with the Court by the Social Worker and the Court will render a decision on whether the child can travel. In situations where the parents cannot be located but the DHS & the GAL/CASA do not object, the Court must be informed of the DHS' efforts to locate the parents & that there are no objections by DHS & the GAL/CASA.
<p align="center">Other Helpful Statewide Resources <i>(Call the Warm Line for more information on all resources or the child's Social Worker to initiate a referral)</i></p>	
<p>Child Care Connection Hawaii: provides resource caregivers with financial subsidies to help with childcare expenses. Locations: Oahu-Honolulu 566-2600; Oahu-Waipahu 356-5577; Hilo 961-6807; Kauai 245-2193; Kona 334-6101; Maui County (including Molokai & Lanai) 249-2461</p>	
<p>Department of Education (DOE) Surrogate Parents: If the foster child is eligible for special education services, a surrogate parent should be assigned, talk with the child's school</p>	
<p>Early intervention Referral Line: The initial point of contact for questions or resource information for children with developmental delays (0-3 years old) or those in need of information on how to access special education preschool (3-5 yrs. old). Call on Oahu: 808-594-0066 or 1-800-235-5477 (toll free)</p>	

Learning Disabilities Association of Hawaii (LDAH): provides information and has advocates who can advise you or possibly attend the Special Education-IEP with the caregiver
Public Health Nurses (PHN): valuable assistance especially for caregivers for newborns – 3 years of age, wealth of resources, educating new parents, safety tips, assessing the child’s health and development, can assist in making referrals for developmental evaluations, etc.
Women Infant Children (WIC) Program: Children in foster care who are less than 5 years of age may qualify for nutritious food, health care referrals, nutrition education, etc.

Helpful Internet Websites

www.humanservices.hawaii.gov - The Department of Human Services of Hawai‘i’s website provides information on different programs, resources and policies within their department.
https://rcg.hawaii.gov – DHS informational website and licensing portal for all resource caregivers. All resource caregivers have an account to access their licensing information. All training and support group schedules along with other foster care resources are provided on the website.
www.auw211.org – Aloha United Way’s 211 website allows people to search their database online for different agencies and programs available within the state.
www.cwla.org – Child Welfare League of America’s website has information about programs, publications, and national conferences and trainings.
www.FosterParentCollege.com & www.fosterparents.com – Foster Parent College and Foster Care & Adoptive Community’s websites provide online training specific for resource families and common issues they face. Resource caregivers can receive training hours for online courses. Contact the Warm Line to access free online courses for resource caregivers.
www.ittakesanohana.org – It Takes an ‘Ohana’s website has updated information about legislative action, child welfare laws, training, resources, and articles for resource and adoptive families in Hawai‘i.
www.nfpainc.org – The National Foster Parent Association’s website provides information on foster parenting, programs, training & education, scholarships, references and links to other sites.

Compiled by Department of Human Services staff and Family Programs Hawaii, incorporating information from It Takes an Ohana (ITAO) and other resources.

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RESOURCE FAMILY BASICS

Resource Caregiver *Signature* Page

By signing my name below, I acknowledge that a DHS Licensing Worker thoroughly reviewed the Resource Family Basics with me on this date _____.

Date (MM/DD/YY)

Signature of Resource Caregiver 1

Print full name of Resource Caregiver 1

Signature of Resource Caregiver 2

Print full name of Resource Caregiver 2