

Foster Care (Group Foster Care)

At A Glance

As per the Model Guidelines for Foster Care, 2016 notified by the Government of India, Ministry of Women & Child Development on 11 November 2016 with strength derived from the Juvenile Justice (Care & Protection of Children) Act 2015, the Juvenile Justice (Care & Protection of Children) Rules, 2016 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989, ratified by India in 1992)



"safer and stronger families"

Dear Colleagues,

The document is offered to you as an **At-A-Glance Overview the Concept of Group Foster Care** as per the Model Guidelines for Foster Care, 2016 notified by the Government of India, Ministry of Women & Child Development on 11 November 2016.

The information below is interpreted and reproduced for the benefit of all stakeholders who are involved with child protection. It is not a government-approved summary.

We are open to any feedback and honoured to help the country think through the roll-out of these landmark guidelines with the best interest of the child and foster parents at the center of all we do.

Please write to Ian Anand Forber Pratt at if0216@CERIkids.org with any questions or comments.

Kind regards,

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What is Group Foster Care?

Group foster care is defined as a family like care in a fit facility for children in need of care and protection who are without parental care. The aim is to provide personalised care and a sense of belonging, identity and emotional security.

Licensing

Group Foster Homes must be registered as fit facility under the Juvenile Justice (Care & Protection of Children) Act 2015 (Act) and the placement of children in group foster care is to be as per the orders of Child Welfare Committee (CWC).

Essentially, it is two processes; registered as a Child Care Institution (CCI) under the Act through the Department of Women & Child Development and then work with the District Child Protection Unit (DCPU) for the formalities to get 'recognized' for providing group foster care home by the Child Welfare Committee (CWC) .

Children Eligible for Group Foster Care

Children in the age group of 6-18 years who have been staying in child care institutions and have not been declared legally free may be placed in foster care based on their individual care plan developed in the institution;

Children whose parents are terminally ill and have submitted a request to the Committee (CWC) or the District Child Protection Unit for taking care of their child as they are unable to take care of their child;

Such children may be preferably placed in group foster care in a fit facility;

- Children identified by DCPU such as those
 - whose parents are mentally ill and are unable to take care of the child;
 - whose one or both parents are in jail;
 - who are victims of physical, emotional or sexual abuse, natural /manmade disasters, agrarian distress and domestic violence etc.

Financial Support

Wherever financial support is requested for the care of a child, after due approval, the foster parents will be given financial support of not less than Rs. 2000 per month per child.

Matching of Child with care givers of the fit facility

Based on the inspection of the fit facility, the Child Study Report of the child, and the compatibility of the child with the care givers of the fit facility, the District Child Protection Unit shall recommend the placement of the child in group foster care in a fit facility.

Requirements

- The accommodation shall be sufficiently spacious with proper amenities for a group of children (maximum 08 children) to reside; could have children from both genders, hence adequate space to ensure privacy;
- The care givers shall be without criminal conviction or indictment;
- Should have an in-house kitchen and separate toilets and bathroom. There should be at least 1 toilet for every 4 children;
- Should preferably have the look and feel of a house providing a family environment, rather than an institutional setting;
- These fit facilities for group foster care shall be located within an existing neighbourhood to encourage local interaction;
- Recruitment procedures of care givers should in accordance with the qualifications as may be prescribed by State Government;
- Pre-service training should be provided for each foster care giver in the fit facility for group foster care;
- Should have retirement policy for care givers and a Child Protection Policy;
- Registration as NGO on the NITI Aayog website;
- Medical reports of all the care givers of the fit facility should be obtained including checks on Human Immuno Deficiency Virus (HIV), Tuberculosis (TB) and Hepatitis B, any other communicable disease, cancer etc to determine that they are medically fit;

Identification of fit facility by DCPU

The District Child Protection Unit (DCPU) shall identify fit facilities willing to take children into group foster care by placing advertisement in local newspapers calling for applications;

Similarly, the DCPU shall interview the office bearers of the organisation maintaining the fit facility and its care givers for group foster care thereby making an assessment of the facilities and care givers;

The District Child Protection Unit will also verify two references from individuals of good standing from the community that are provided by every fit facility for group foster care;

The DCPU shall cross check the registration of the organisation under the Act, its recognition, child protection policy, medical reports of the care givers, police verification etc as prescribed in para 10.2 of these guidelines;

Also check registration on Niti Aayog portal if applicable; FCRA registration in case in receipt of foreign funds.

For more information

The Center of Excellence in Alternative Care of Children promotes, educates and builds the capacity of stakeholders in the implementation of alternative care.

We offer training to government and non- governmental organizations to start, promote and implement foster care and other forms of alternative care.

We also specialize in providing technical assistance in drafting of state level foster care guidelines.

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