

# Department of Human Services (DHS)

## RESOURCE FAMILY BASICS

**A summary of important information for DHS resource families**

**For more information, referrals, and telephone support please  
call the Warm Line 545-1130 (Oahu) 1-866-545-0882 (toll-free)**

**DHS = Dept. of Human Services**

**GAL = Guardian Ad Litem**

**CWS = Child Welfare Services**

**CASA = Case Appointed Special Advocate**

**SW = Social Worker**

**PC = Permanent Custody**

**SSA = Social Service Assistant**

**Child = child in DHS foster or permanent custody who has been placed under your care**

TOPIC	INFORMATION
<b>Warm Line and Other Support Services</b>	<p>The Department contracts with Partners In Development Foundation-Hui Ho‘omalulu to provide recruitment, training, licensing, and support services. The support services are provided through Family Programs Hawai‘i (partner in the Hui Ho‘omalulu contract)—Support Groups, Trainings, &amp; the Warm Line.</p> <p>The <u>Warm Line</u> is a number you can call for information, referrals, &amp; telephone support. They have lists of community resources (also available on-line at <a href="http://www.FamilyProgramsHawaii.org">www.FamilyProgramsHawaii.org</a>), support groups, and training opportunities for resource families. Call 545-1130 (Oahu) or 1-866-545-0882 (Toll-free for Neighbor Islands), Mon-Fri 8:30am – 5pm or e-mail: <a href="mailto:WarmLine@FamilyProgramsHawaii.org">WarmLine@FamilyProgramsHawaii.org</a>.</p>
<b>After-Hour Calls</b>	<p>A. Call 911 first for emergencies such as medical or dangerous crisis situations.</p> <p>B. Call the Child Abuse &amp; Neglect (CAN) Hotline: 832-5300 (Oahu) 1-800-494-3991 (toll-free for Neighbor Islands) to seek consultation and for medical consent.</p> <p>C. Call 911 &amp; the CAN Hotline to report runaway incidents and report it to the child’s SW on the next working day.</p>
<b>Child Information Folder (CIF)</b>	<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 SW.</p>
<b>Clothing Allowance</b>	<p>A purchase order or reimbursements for clothing, shoes, and diapers are available up to \$600 per year, per child. Contact the child’s SSA or SW before purchasing any clothing for reimbursement. SW may also request clothing from the child’s parents.</p>
<b>Clothing for Special Events or Activities</b>	<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 SSA or SW before buying any clothing.</p>
<b>Community Clearinghouse &amp; Care to Share</b>	<p>Family Programs Hawai‘i’s statewide Care to Share project may be able to match you with a donor in your community who has items you need. Call the Warm Line for more info. (See Warm Line)</p> <p>Helping Hands Hawai‘i’s Community Clearinghouse may also be able to provide donated items, such as clothing, cribs, or beds. Ask the child’s SW to fax a request sheet so that your family can schedule an appointment with them. 440-3857. Available for Oahu families only.</p>

<b>Difficulty of Care Payments (DOC)</b>	If the child requires a higher level of care and you are able to provide the extra service/support, the child may be eligible to receive DOC, up to \$570 per month. Inquire and discuss with the child's SW.
<b>Discipline</b>	<b><u>NO physical discipline of foster children is allowed!!</u></b> Contact the child's SW, therapist, or other support services to seek assistance in appropriate discipline methods and approaches.
<b>Don't Say "NO" Before you "KNOW"</b>	These are common questions and answers for Resource Caregivers on providing normalcy for children/young people in foster care to participate equally in age or developmentally appropriate extracurricular, social, and cultural activities as their classmates and peers. These Q & A's can be found with the Normalcy Guidelines provided by your DHS licensing worker.
<b>Driver's License for PC Foster Youth</b>	DHS is to 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.
<b>Enhancement Funds and DHS Funds to promote normalcy</b>	The Department is committed to support children and young people's participation in normal activities and to have them be included in resource caregiver's family vacation Children and young people in foster care may qualify for enhancement funds (funded through Geist, Friends of Children's Justice Center) to assist the child and young person's participation in activities such as camp, sports and school functions, airfare for family vacations, etc.) Funding is limited on Enhancement funds Funding is also available through the Department of Human Services to assist children and young people's participation in travel, extracurricular, social, cultural and community activities. Please contact your child's social worker for any funding requests. Forms for Enhancement funds are available on DHS and FPH website.
<b>Federal Tax Benefits</b>	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.
<b>Financial Assistance for Child Care or Preschool</b>	Child care/preschool financial subsidies for children may be available from various programs, call the Warm Line at 545-1130 (Oahu) or 1-866-545-0882 (toll free) for information and referrals.
<b>Financial Assistance for Summer Fun &amp; Recreational Activities</b>	Resource caregivers may be reimbursed for group activity fees such as scouts, YMCA, YWCA, Boys and Girls Club, soccer or baseball. Tuition waivers for City and County Summer Fun Programs are available for those who apply. Contact the child's SSA or SW.
<b>Foster Board Payment</b>	0-5 years of age \$576 a month per child. 6-11 years of age \$650 a month per child. 12 years and older \$676 a month per child.
<b>GAL/CASA</b>	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. Know the child's GAL/CASA & his/her phone number (available from the child's SW) as he/she may be able to assist you in advocating for the child.

<p><b>Helpful Tips About Communicating With Team Members</b></p>	<p>-When leaving phone messages for a SW: leave a clear message with your name &amp; number, the child's name, what you need, and when good times to call back are.</p> <p>-If the call is regarding medical coverage, clothing or payments, contact the SSA.</p> <p>-If you need to speak to someone immediately, call the number indicated on the SW's voice mail or extension 0 and ask for the Office Duty SW on call that day. You also may ask to speak to the Unit Supervisor or your DHS licensing SW.</p> <p>-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.</p> <p>-Always ask for names and numbers and keep the list handy.</p>
<p><b>Higher Education Board Payments</b></p>	<p>A. If a youth wishes to attend an institution of higher education and qualifies: Higher Education Board payments of \$676 per month may continue through the youth's 26<sup>th</sup> year. Clothing allowance available if youth aged out of care. Discuss this with the child's SW. SEE DHS WEBSITE.</p> <p>B. Education Training Voucher (ETV): Former DHS foster youth adopted from DHS at 16 or older may be eligible to receive up to \$5,000/year to assist with cost of attendance until age 23.</p>
<p><b>Infant Care</b></p>	<p>Seek guidance from the child's SW and materials from the DHS licensing worker, child's Primary Care Physician, etc. regarding general care, critical safety measures, etc.</p> <p><b>NO SHAKING OF AN INFANT</b> (Shaken Baby Syndrome).</p>
<p><b>Keeping Records</b></p>	<p>Keep detailed documentation of the child's behaviors, eating patterns, and child's likes and dislikes. Also, record all doctor appointments, dental visits, educational milestones and difficulties, telephone contacts &amp; home visits with child welfare personnel, 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><b>Liability Insurance</b></p>	<p>Licensed DHS resource caregivers providing care for DHS foster children are included in a LIMITED liability Insurance Coverage purchased and provided by the Department. Review the brochure with your DHS licensing social worker. It is also highly recommended that all resource caregivers should purchase homeowner or renter's insurance.</p>
<p><b>Medical Insurance Coverage</b></p>	<p>Children in foster care are covered by the State's Medicaid Program. You should receive medical card information for each child. If you haven't received a medical card, if you do not know where to take the child for medical or dental services, or to inquire about changing providers, contact the child's SSA.</p>
<p><b>Mileage Reimbursement</b></p>	<p>If you transport the child for therapy appointments, interactions with birth family, school meetings, IEP meetings, etc. or you attend child-related trainings, you may be reimbursed at the current state mileage allowance rate. Call the child's SSA or SW (for child-related situations).</p>
<p><b>Newsletters</b></p>	<p>DHS provides funding for quarterly Newsletter mailouts to DHS resource caregivers: PIDF-Hui Ho'omalua's Statewide Resource Advisory Committee provides resource and support information for resource families. To request, call Hui Ho'omalua at 441-1125 (Oahu) or 1-888-879-8970 (toll free).</p>
<p><b>Normalcy For Children and Young People in Foster Care</b></p>	<p>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><b>‘Ohana Conferencing, Family Finding, and Family Connections</b></p>	<p>EPIC ‘Ohana provides Statewide ‘Ohana Conferencing 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. 838-7752 (Oahu) or 1-866-636-1644 (toll-free).</p>
<p><b>Parenting Classes</b></p>	<p>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 mailouts to the DHS resource families. For other parenting resources, call the Warm Line at 545-1130 (Oahu) or 1-866-545-0882 (toll-free).</p>
<p><b>Psychological or Therapeutic Services</b></p>	<p>Discuss with the child’s SW any concerns for therapeutic services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>--Children in foster care can access therapy through MedQuest Health Plan.</li> <li>--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 SW, the school and the Dept. of Education’s Surrogate Parent.</li> <li>--Children in foster care may also be eligible for therapeutic services through Dept. of Health-Child &amp; Adolescent Mental Health Division (CAMHD). Work with the child’s SW regarding a possible referral.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Resource Caregiver Info. Handbook</b></p>	<p>The handbook includes basic information for resource caregivers and will be provided by your DHS licensing worker at the first home visit.</p>
<p><b>Resource Family Recruitment and Licensing</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>--If you know someone who would like to become a <u>general-licensed resource caregiver</u>, please refer them to Hui Ho`omalulu at 441-1117 or toll-free 1-888-879-8970. Refer prospective general licensed resource families, and receive a \$200 gift card of your choice when they become licensed.</li> <li>--If you are a <u>child-specific resource family and interested in becoming a general-licensed resource family</u>, please call your licensing social worker.</li> <li>--<u>Child-specific training and licensing</u> for families who are either related to or have a prior relationship with the child is provided by the DHS contracted agency, Catholic Charities Hawai`i, a partner of PIDF, as referred by DHS.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Resource Library</b></p>	<p>ITAO &amp; the Warm Line have a statewide lending library of books and DVD’s on foster care available to borrow. Resource caregivers can receive training hours for reading approved books or watching approved DVD’s.</p>
<p><b>Respite Funds</b></p>	<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 babysitter is suitable to complete the job and is provided guidance of what to do in an emergency. Furthermore, disciplinary procedures and confidentiality is explained to the babysitter. Limited funds are available by fiscal year. Call the child’s SSA or SW.</p>

<p><b>Role of Resource Caregiver</b></p>	<p>A resource caregiver provides <b>temporary</b> care for children in foster care.</p> <p>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 involve at least an initial meeting with birth parents. 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 every day activities, being a person, not a label and making decisions, trying new things and sometimes making mistakes. Allowing for mistakes to be teaching moments and not used as a reason to ask the child/young person to leave.</p>
<p><b>School-Based Benefits</b></p>	<p>Check with the 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 who the social worker is and contact # so that the application will have special processing. Check on any benefits/scholarships that the school offers. At the same time, please consider the feelings of the child as some children are embarrassed by these types of “freebies” that identify them as foster children.</p>
<p><b>Summer School Scholarships</b></p>	<p>Kamehameha Schools will often offer scholarships/ financial assistance for summer school sessions for Native Hawaiian children.</p>
<p><b>Supplemental Payment for Medical Issue</b></p>	<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><b>Support Groups</b></p>	<p>Support groups are available in various geographic areas. Check <a href="http://www.FamilyProgramsHawaii.org">www.FamilyProgramsHawaii.org</a> and click on ‘Events’ for listings, or call the Warm Line for more information. (See Warm Line)</p>
<p><b>Support: Counseling &amp; Services (In addition to child’s SW &amp; therapist, DHS licensing worker)</b></p>	<p><u>Comprehensive Counseling &amp; Supportive Services (CCSS)</u>: The Department contracts with various agencies statewide to provide counseling and support services to stabilize and preserve the child’s home environment (birth or resource families). Call the child’s SSA or SW.</p>
<p><b>Trainings and Workshops</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-There is a Mandatory Ongoing Training Requirement for all licensed resource families with a minimum of six (6) training hours per family required annually or 12 hours over a two year licensing period.</li> <li>-The Department provides funding to support resource family training for DHS foster home licensure through Hui Ho‘omaluu. Ongoing training is provided by Family Programs Hawaii (Hui Ho‘omaluu).</li> <li>-An approved ongoing training list is available through your licensing worker or the Warm Line.</li> <li>-Online training is available, you may call the Warm Line to register.</li> <li>-Community workshops are listed at <a href="http://www.ittakesanohana.org">www.ittakesanohana.org</a> or you may call the Warm Line.</li> <li>-Speakers and workshops on a variety of topics of interest are available throughout the year, many at little or no cost, especially those presented by the collaborative Foster Care/Training Committees.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Transition and Youth Services</b></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"> <li>1. <u>Independent Living Program (ILP) Services</u>: helps youth (from age 12) develop knowledge, skills, and connections to make a successful transition to living on their own.</li> <li>2. <u>Ho‘ololi mua noke ola Senior Program (HSP)</u> – guides high school seniors in foster care to successfully prepare for and enter college or vocational training. East Hawaii only.</li> <li>3. <u>E Makua Ana Youth Circle</u>: provides a group process for teenagers to celebrate their emancipation from foster care and to assist them in planning for their independence/interdependence.</li> <li>4. <u>Hawai‘i Foster Youth Coalition</u>: assists youth in the foster care system by advising and advocating for a successful future, providing transitional assistance, peer mentoring, and outreach.</li> <li>5. <u>Hawai‘i Youth Opportunities Initiative and HI H.O.P.E.S Youth Leadership Board</u>: 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.</li> <li>6. <u>Imua Kakou</u>: 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 payment of \$676, reimbursement for bus passes, &amp; \$300 clothing allowance (which includes clothing &amp; diapers for any children of former foster youth) is available. Youth must participate in higher education, employment training, or be employed.</li> <li>7. <u>Mentoring Connection</u>: provides mentors for foster youth ages 13-20. On Oahu only.</li> <li>8. <u>Project Visitation</u>: brings siblings, who are living in separate foster homes, together for monthly visits. On Oahu and East Hawaii only.</li> <li>9. <u>Youth Empowerment &amp; Success (Y.E.S. Hawaii)</u>: Youth driven statewide program providing support and activities for youth 14-26.</li> <li>10. <u>Skills for Success</u>: Trainings for youth and their resource caregivers. Youth will learn soft skills to help prepare them for adulthood in the areas of social well-being, physical well-being, financial, housing, intellectual potential, and employment/career. Resource caregivers will also receive suggestions on how to support youth in the different topic areas.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Traveling With Children in Care</b></p>	<p>Parental consent is required for children in foster care to travel off-island with their resource caregivers.</p> <p><u>Voluntary cases</u>: If the parents do not consent, the child cannot travel.</p> <p><u>Court cases</u>: If the parents and the GAL/CASA consent, the Court must be informed that the parents and the GAL/CASA do not object. If the parents or the GAL/CASA object, a motion must be filed with the Court and the Court will render a decision on whether the child can travel. In situations where the parents cannot be located but the DHS &amp; the GAL/CASA do not object, the Court must be informed of the Dept.’s efforts to locate the parents &amp; that there are no objections by DHS &amp; the GAL/CASA.</p>

## Other Helpful Statewide Resources

(Call the Warm Line for more information on all resources; \* - call the child's SW to initiate a referral)

Child Care Connection Hawaii: provides qualifying families with financial subsidies to help with child care expenses. Resource families may be eligible.

Dept. of Education (DOE) Surrogate Parents: If the foster child is eligible for special education services, a surrogate parent can be assigned through talking with the child's school

\*Hawai'i Keiki Information Service (H-KISS): 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)

Learning Disabilities Association of Hawai'i (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.

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.

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.FamilyProgramsHawaii.org – Family Programs Hawai'i's website has on-line Resource Manuals with lists of agencies and programs helpful to resource families and a monthly calendar of support groups and trainings.

www.FosterParentCollege.com and 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. Family Programs Hawai'i may have free vouchers available for online courses.

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.

www.pidfoundation.org - The Partners In Development Foundation website has information on Hui Ho'omalua and other programs and projects to help the community, especially the Native Hawaiian Community.

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

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