

Respite payments

There are three ways to receive payment for respite care. Each respite placement may be different, so you will need to discuss with the foster parent which method will be used prior to accepting placement.

- **Department of Human Services (DHS) respite vouchers**

The foster parent will apply for the voucher. After respite service has been rendered, the voucher needs to be completed by the respite provider and submitted to DHS finance. The address is located at the bottom of the voucher. Vouchers are valid for 90 days after issuance and payment is usually issued within 10 days of receipt. Please be sure to review the following training on how to obtain a DHS respite voucher and rules around DHS respite vouchers: okbridgefamilies.com/video/training/how-to-accessing-respite-services.

- **TFI payment**

Upon completion of the respite placement, the foster parent and the respite provider need to sign a Verification of Respite form. The foster parent will obtain this form and bring it to the provider when the child is placed into respite. The respite provider is responsible for submitting this form, along with their W-4 if not a TFI home, to the foster parent's TFI worker for payment.

- **Foster parent payment**

The foster parent's TFI worker will facilitate a conversation with the respite provider to confirm the amount of payment and when and how the payment will occur.

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Learn how you can make a difference in the life of a child as a TFI alternate care provider by calling us today.

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RESPITE CARE *provider*



Respite care is when one foster family cares for another family's foster children for a short amount of time. This allows for the children's original foster parents and their children to have a break and helps prevent burnout. Respite care is very beneficial when foster children have difficult to manage behaviors or when the foster parent is going through a very stressful time. Foster parents have alternate care providers who are always the first source of respite, but when these caregivers are not available, foster parents look to respite care providers for assistance.

Some foster homes become approved specifically to provide respite. They may not have the time to provide full-time care for a child, but are available on occasions. Being a respite provider can also help determine if fostering full time is right for your family. If you are anxious or nervous about becoming a foster home, experiencing foster care as a respite home is a good way to see if it is a good fit. Respite care is usually over a weekend and the respite care providers choose when they are available to take in children, so it's very flexible. You will also learn what types of behaviors you can handle and get an idea of what works best in your home for when you are ready to take in a child long term.

TFI Family Connections 

Tips for a successful respite weekend

Get to know the foster child. Try to arrange a visit with the child ahead of time to avoid further trauma. Even a phone call can help a child feel more comfortable with going to a respite home. While sometimes this is not possible, notably in emergency cases, it is strongly encouraged, especially for children with attachment issues.

Contact the foster family. Discuss each of the following:

- Clarify drop off and pick up dates and times to prevent misunderstandings about the schedule.
- Identify any appointments, including visits. If you are unable to make these appointments, the home may need to choose another provider or speak with the child's DHS worker about rescheduling the appointments. If conflicting schedules mean visits may be missed, it's in the birth family's best interest for another provider to be considered. If this is impossible, the foster family will contact the child's DHS worker to reschedule immediately.
- Discuss the child's needs and routines. This includes information regarding medical needs, like prescriptions and known allergies. The child's foster parents will provide you with a Respite Foster Care Information Sheet at drop off to ensure you have all necessary information.
- Confirm a payment plan. Ask the foster family if they are using DHS respite vouchers, TFI paid respite, self-pay or unpaid respite.

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When the child arrives, ensure you have the child's respite care packet and double check if there are any last minute updates before the foster parents leave.

- Place the child's medication in a secured location.
- As age appropriate, tell the child about the family rules and what the weekend (or daily) schedule looks like.
- Review the Respite Foster Care Information Sheet in the child's packet.



Ensure the child's safety and provide for their needs. Notify the foster parents if the child experiences an accident, health problem or changes in appearance or behavior.

- Contact emergency services as needed.
- In the event there is concern for the child's safety or the child experiences a serious incident, call the foster care worker or TFI hotline at 877-921-4114 to report the incident or concern and obtain support.
- If abuse or neglect is suspected, call the Oklahoma DHS abuse hotline at 800-522-3511, write down the report ID number and then call the TFI hotline at 877-921-4114.
- Only release a child to his or her foster parents, other people approved by the foster parents or DHS.

When the child leaves, ensure all of the child's belongings are packed.

- Place all of the child's medication in the respite packet.
- Make sure all necessary forms are signed, including the DHS voucher or TFI verification form as needed.
- Complete page 2 of the Respite Foster Care Information Sheet. TFI policy indicates this form must be completed.
- Return the respite packet to the foster parent.