**Section 340.APPENDIX B Rating Components for Foster Parent Law Annual Implementation Plan**

The following identifies the rating components that will be used in evaluating the Foster Parent Law Implementation Plans. Rating components are indicated under each foster parent right and responsibility. Unless otherwise noted, each component is worth one point. The narrative must describe how the agency or region does what each component requires in order to receive the point.

**Foster Parent Rights** (Explanation of how agency insures foster parent rights)

1. The right to be treated with dignity, respect, and consideration as a professional member of the child welfare team.

The agency or region has and implements strategies to ensure that its foster parents are treated with dignity and respect

Total – 5 points

2. The right to be given standardized pre-service training and appropriate ongoing training to meet mutually assessed needs and improve the foster parent's skills.

Minimum standardized pre-service training per 89 Ill. Adm. Code 402 (Licensing Standards for Foster Family Homes)

PRIDE or other DCFS approved training

Co-training approach (foster parent/staff)

Regular utilization of mutual assessment tool for training needs

Training commensurate with levels of care provided

Evidence of ongoing training schedule or calendar

Total – 6 points

3. The right to be informed as to how to contact the appropriate child placement agency in order to receive information and assistance to access supportive services for children in the foster parent's care.

24 hour/7 day availability of emergency support

Established method for accessing support services (e.g., SASS, placement stabilization and staff phone numbers and on-call schedules)

Total – 2 points

4. The right to receive timely financial reimbursement commensurate with the care needs of the child as specified in the service plan.

Regular board payment (attached rate schedule)

Payment for additional services, such as respite care and camp

Timely assessment and payment commensurate with levels of care provided

Method of resolving payment problems

Total – 4 points

5. The right to be provided a clear, written understanding of a placement agency's plan concerning the placement of a child in the foster parent's home. Inherent in this right is the foster parent's responsibility to support activities that will promote the child's right to relationships with his or her own family and cultural heritage.

Foster parent participation in development of the case plan

Timely notification of changes in case plan/permanency goal, including method of notification

Foster parent participation/input into visitation/ communication plan

Total – 3 points

6. The right to be provided a fair, timely, and impartial investigation of complaints concerning the foster parent's licensure, to be provided the opportunity to have a person of the foster parent's choosing present during the investigation, and to be provided due process during the investigation; the right to be provided the opportunity to request and receive mediation or an administrative review of decisions that affect licensing parameters, or both mediation and an administrative review; and the right to have decisions concerning a licensing corrective action plan specifically explained and tied to the licensing standards violated.

Policy describing the agency's investigation of alleged violations and demonstration of how the agency disseminates that information to foster parents

Person of foster parent's choosing present during the investigation

Specified time frames for investigation as required by 89 Ill. Adm. Code 383

Procedure for appealing negative results/corrective action plans (NOTE: Merely stating that DCFS procedure is followed is not sufficient.)

Total – 4 points

7. The right, at any time during which a child is placed with the foster parent, to receive additional or necessary information that is relative to the care of the child.

Caseworker training in all information to be disclosed

Description of how caseworkers are held accountable for sharing the information

Total – 2 points

8. The right to be given information concerning a child from the Department as required under Section 5 of the Children and Family Services Act and from a child welfare agency as required under Section 7.4 (c-5) of the Child Care Act of 1969.

The agency has clear rules and procedures as to what information to share and how to share it with foster parents (see Section 340.40)

Staff training in all pertinent policies and procedures

Description of how caseworkers are held accountable for sharing the information

Total − 4 points

9. The right to be notified of scheduled meetings and staffings concerning the foster child in order to actively participate in the case planning and decision-making process regarding the child, including individual service planning meetings, administrative case reviews, interdisciplinary staffings, and individual educational planning meetings; the right to be informed of decisions made by the courts or the child welfare agency concerning the child; the right to provide input concerning the plan of services for the child and to have that input given full consideration in the same manner as information presented by any other professional on the team; and the right to communicate with other professionals who work with the foster child within the context of the team, including therapists, physicians, and teachers.

Foster parents notified and encouraged to participate in all meetings and staffings about foster children in their care

Foster parents informed of decisions made by agencies and courts

Foster parents encouraged to give input into case planning and input is given full consideration

Foster parents encouraged to communicate with all child team members

Total – 4 points

10. The right to be given, in a timely and consistent manner, any information a case worker has regarding the child and the child's family which is pertinent to the care and needs of the child and to the making of a permanency plan for the child. Disclosure of information concerning the child's family shall be limited to that information that is essential for understanding the needs of and providing care to the child in order to protect the rights of the child's family. When a positive relationship exists between the foster parent and the child's family, the child's family may consent to disclosure of additional information.

A description is given to foster parents at intake, and a prescribed method of disclosing information is utilized

Ongoing sharing of information that is pertinent to the well-being and health of the child

Total – 2 points

11. The right to be given reasonable written notice of any change in a child's case plan, plans to terminate the placement of the child with the foster parent, and the reasons for the change or termination in placement. The notice shall be waived only in cases of a court order or when a child is determined to be at imminent risk of harm.

14 day notice (not applicable for movements involving imminent risk)

Notice in writing

Appeal, including emergency review process, is given to foster parent

Total – 3 points

12. The right to be notified in a timely and complete manner of all court hearings, including notice of the date and time of the court hearing, the name of the judge or hearing officer hearing the case, the location of the hearing, and the court docket number of the case; and the right to intervene in court proceedings or to seek mandamus under the Juvenile Court Act of 1987.

Method for notifying foster parents of hearings and their right to be heard

Description of how caseworkers are held accountable for notifying foster parents

Total – 2 points

13. The right to be considered as a placement option when a foster child who was formerly placed with the foster parent is to be re-entered into foster care, if that placement is consistent with the best interest of the child and other children in the foster parent's home.

Method for checking past placement records, when possible

Process for determining best interest regarding placement decision

Total – 2 points

14. The right to have timely access to the child placement agency's existing appeals process and the right to be free from acts of harassment and retaliation by any other party when exercising the right to appeal.

Documentation that an internal appeals system has been established and description of how it prohibits retaliation

Process for accessing the external DCFS appeals system, when necessary

Total – 2 points

15. The right to be informed of the Foster Parent Hotline established under Section 35.6 of the Children and Family Services Act and all of the rights accorded to foster parents concerning reports of misconduct by Department employees, service providers, or contractors, confidential handling of those reports, and investigation by the Inspector General appointed under Section 35.5 of the Children and Family Services Act.

Training/brochures available on the Foster Parent Hotline and the Office of the Inspector General

Total – 1 point

**Foster Parent Responsibilities** (Explanation of how agency makes foster parents aware of and helps to achieve or meet their responsibilities)

1. The responsibility to openly communicate and share information about the child with other members of the child welfare team.

Training on type and importance

Total – 1 point

2. The responsibility to respect the confidentiality of information concerning foster children and their families and act appropriately within applicable confidentiality laws and regulations.

Initial and ongoing training on importance of confidentiality

Laws and regulations available to foster parents

Total – 2 points

3. The responsibility to advocate for children in the foster parent's care.

Educational advocacy training available

Court training available

Service appeal brochures and training available

Encouragement to participate in staffings, Administrative Case Reviews, Placement Review Teams, case conferences and court hearings

Total – 4 points

4. The responsibility to treat children in the foster parent's care and the children's family with dignity, respect, and consideration.

Initial and ongoing training on this topic

Monitoring by staff charged with case management

Total – 4 points

5. The responsibility to recognize the foster parent's own individual and familial strengths and limitations when deciding whether to accept a child into care; and the responsibility to recognize the foster parent's own support needs and utilize appropriate supports in providing care for foster children.

Ongoing mutual assessment method

Training based on assessments

Placements based on strengths

Support needs addressed

Total – 4 points

6. The responsibility to be aware of the benefits of relying on and affiliating with other foster parents and foster parent associations in improving the quality of care and service to children and families.

Affiliations with foster parent associations are encouraged and facilitated

Internal support groups encouraged, and information provided to foster parents

Total – 2 points

7. The responsibility to assess the foster parent's ongoing individual training needs and take action to meet those needs.

Method and tool for assessing general training needs of foster parents

Process for providing for identified needs

Total – 2 points

8. The responsibility to develop and assist in implementing strategies to prevent placement disruptions, recognizing the traumatic impact of placement disruptions on a foster child and all members of the foster family; and the responsibility to provide emotional support for the foster children and members of the foster family if preventive strategies fail and placement disruptions occur.

Method of early identification of children at risk of disrupting or creating disruption in the family

Support for foster children and family members if preventive strategies fail

Training in purpose and availability of stabilization services

Total – 3 points

9. The responsibility to know the impact foster parenting has on individuals and family relationships; and the responsibility to endeavor to minimize, as much as possible, any stress that results from foster parenting.

Training/methods to recognize and minimize stress factors Respite available

"Voluntary hold" methods explained and understood

Counseling and other supports available

Total – 4 points

10. The responsibility to know the rewards and benefits to children, parents, families, and society that come from foster parenting and to promote the foster parenting experience in a positive way.

Foster parents informed of events/activities that acknowledge and support foster parents and participation is encouraged

Training in the public relations aspect of foster parenting is made available

Total – 2 points

11. The responsibility to know the roles, rights, and responsibilities of foster parents, other professionals in the child welfare system, the foster child, and the foster child's own family.

Training and co-training with staff is required

Regular meetings with other team members are held and encouraged

Foster parents have a recognized voice within the agency's management organization (3 points)

Total – 5 points

12. The responsibility to know and, as necessary, fulfill the foster parent's responsibility to serve as a mandated reporter of suspected child abuse or neglect under the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act; and the responsibility to know the child welfare agency's policy regarding allegations that foster parents have committed child abuse or neglect and applicable administrative rules and procedures governing investigations of those allegations.

Training, initial and ongoing, including Sexually Abusive Children and Youth reporting responsibility

Written foster parent acknowledgment/contract

Training involving allegations against foster parents and the applicable rules and regulations that govern the investigation of the allegations

Total – 3 points

13. The responsibility to know and receive training regarding the purpose of administrative case reviews, client service plans, and court processes, as well as any filing or time requirements associated with those proceedings; and the responsibility to actively participate in the foster parent's designated role in these proceedings.

Training on the importance of participating

Emphasis on foster parents taking an active role in planning for permanency goal through court hearings, Administrative Case Reviews, etc.

Total – 2 points

14. The responsibility to know the child welfare agency's appeal procedure for foster parents and the rights of foster parents under the procedure.

Awareness of agency's internal appeal systems and utilization

Rights of foster parents spelled out

Total – 2 points

15. The responsibility to know and understand the importance of maintaining accurate and relevant records regarding the child's history and progress; and the responsibility to be aware of and follow the procedures and regulations of the child welfare agency with which the foster parent is licensed or affiliated.

Training provided on importance of complete records

Regulations/expectations are available in writing

Agency provides folder, notebook, or case record for the storage and/or transportation of foster parent records

Total – 3 points

16. The responsibility to share information, through the child welfare team, with the subsequent caregiver (whether the child's parent or another substitute caregiver) regarding the child's adjustments in the foster parent's home.

Training on this expectation is offered

Total – 1 point

17. The responsibility to provide care and services that are respectful of and responsive to the child's cultural needs and are supportive of the relationship between the child and his or her own family; the responsibility to recognize the increased importance of maintaining a child's cultural identity when the race or culture of the foster family differs from that of the foster child; and the responsibility to take action to address these issues.

Training encouraged and made available, both initial and ongoing

Internal and external resources made accessible or available

Total – 2 points

Other Scoring Components

1. The plan contains a description of an inclusive and representative process for involving foster parents in developing the plan – 2 points

2. The plan describes how agency case managers were involved – 2 points

3. The plan contains names of foster parents who had input into the plan – 2 points

4. The plan contains sign-off approval from foster parents – 2 points

5. The public notification requirement was met – 2 points

6. Previously identified deficiencies were addressed – 2 points

7. The plan related grievance procedure has been established with input from agency foster parents, and the plan is operational – 2 points

1. Foster parents are notified of the availability of the grievance process – 2 points

(Source: Amended at 33 Ill. Reg. 2202, effective January 31, 2009)