



Every Parent  
Makes a  
Difference



MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF  
Children & Families

There are children of all ages and backgrounds from across the Commonwealth who need someone to provide a safe and nurturing home until they can return to their families. Time spent with you in a stable and secure environment gives a child a chance to heal and grow.

# Foster POSSIBILITY



The average length of time a child spends in care is 3-18 months. While your investment in the care of a foster child may be short-term, the impact is lasting. Children will benefit from your love and support for years to come.

What does a foster parent do?

- ✓ Provide a safe home to a child during a time of need
- ✓ Support the physical and emotional wellbeing of the child
- ✓ Be a safe, dependable source of temporary care and parenting
- ✓ Be a good communicator and understand that both you and the child are learning and growing
- ✓ Help the child maintain important connections in their life
- ✓ Engage in challenging and deeply gratifying work

## Foster SUPPORT

### SHORTER-TERM FOSTER CARE

DCF is also seeking caregivers who provide short but crucial care.

**Emergency or Hot-Line Foster Parents**  
Provides emergency placements for children who are immediately removed from a home.

**Respite Parents**  
Provides current foster parents time off from full-time foster parenting, with a commitment as little as ten days a year.



## How to Become a FOSTER PARENT

Being prepared to be a foster parent sets you and your foster child up for a successful experience. Support and resources are offered before and during fostering.

DCF does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, age, ancestry, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, language, disability, veteran status, or national origin.



**STEP 1**  
**CONTACT DCF TO ASK QUESTIONS AND EXPRESS YOUR INTEREST**  
Phone: (800) KIDS-508  
Web: mass.gov/dcf



**STEP 2**  
**COMPLETE AN APPLICATION FORM**  
DCF will provide a foster care application form, which you should fill out and return.



**STEP 3**  
**PASS A SAFETY CHECK**  
DCF will visit your home and conduct a physical standards check for room and safety and a background check on everyone in your home.



**STEP 4**  
**ATTEND THE MASSACHUSETTS APPROACH TO PARTNERSHIP IN PARENTING (MAPP)**  
Eligible foster parents will be registered for 30 hours of training. There are several trainings offered across the state.



**STEP 5**  
**A SOCIAL WORKER COMPLETES A LICENSE STUDY**  
A social worker will visit your home and interview you and the household members, as well as check personal references.



**STEP 6**  
**DCF APPROVES YOUR HOME FOR PLACEMENT**  
Congratulations, you are ready to foster! DCF will work to find the most suitable match between your family and a foster child.







# Foster MA

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MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF  
**Children & Families**

## REGIONAL OFFICES

### **DCF Central Office**

600 Washington Street  
Boston, MA 02111  
(617) 748-2000

### **Northern Regional Office**

280 Merrimack Street  
Lawrence, MA 01843  
(978) 557-2700

### **Boston Regional Office**

451 Blue Hill Avenue,  
Dorchester, MA 02121  
(617) 989-9200

### **Southern Regional Office**

110 Mulberry Street  
Brockton, MA 02302  
(508) 894-3700

### **Central Regional Office**

13 Sudbury Street  
Worcester, MA 01609  
(508) 929 2000

### **Western Regional Office**

140 High St.  
Springfield, MA 01105  
(413) 452-3350

1-800-KIDS-508 | [mass.gov/dcf](https://mass.gov/dcf)