



# healing homes

foster care program  
nightlight christian adoptions





## Am I Eligible to Foster or Adopt Through Healing Homes?

In order to become a foster parent, applicants must meet the following criteria.

<b>AGE/HEALTH:</b>	Parents must be at least 21 years old. It is recommended that the youngest parent not be more than 45 years older than the child they are fostering. Exceptions are sometimes made for parents interested in fostering teens. Foster parents must be in good physical and mental health to provide for the needs of the child/youth.
<b>MARRIAGE:</b>	Foster parents can be single, married, or divorced. If married, parents must be married for a minimum of two years prior to applying. Single applicants must be 2 years from a divorce finalization to apply.
<b>LIVING SPACE:</b>	Must be able to provide sufficient beds and space for additional children. You can rent or own your home and still foster. Parents must meet the state licensing requirements for an appropriate home. Additionally, it is preferred that foster parents have no more than six minor children in the home, including foster children.
<b>FINANCES:</b>	Must be able to provide a financially stable home, which will be verified during the home study. This is demonstrated by having sufficient income to support an additional child without relying on the foster subsidy.
<b>ONGOING EDUCATION:</b>	Must be willing to actively work with a team of professionals making difficult decisions about the best interests of the child. This will include a willingness to complete trauma training and yearly educational requirements.
<b>COMPLETE A HOME STUDY:</b>	Be able to complete and pass a home study as per state regulations. This will include trauma training, CPR/First Aid certification, in person interviews, and passing child abuse and criminal background checks.
<b>RESPONSIBILITIES:</b>	As a foster parent, you will be responsible for taking children to court ordered treatment (i.e., therapy, doctors' appointments, etc.), working with the team, and sometimes biological parents to support reunification. You will also be responsible for taking children to school, providing housing, food, and emotional support.
<b>COMMITMENT TO STABILITY:</b>	We require Healing Homes families to commit to being the last placement their child ever has until a permanency plan is reached, whether that be through reunification with the bio family, kinship permanency, or adoption.
<b>DRUG HISTORY</b>	Free of substance abuse (alcohol, prescription drugs, any THC products and marijuana, or illicit drugs) for 5 years. Note that if you use CBD oil containing THC, and your state requires drug testing, it will show as positive.

## Healing Homes parents receive personalized care to help support them through their journey fostering. We will be your advocate as you bring children into your home from foster care.

Children are placed into care through no fault of their own, but are removed when unsafe situations threaten their physical, mental, or emotional safety. The goal of the foster system is to provide services to the children and their biological parents or original guardian with the goal of a safe reunification, and to prevent future instances of abuse. A child abuse or neglect case will be filed, and the child will move to live with either extended family members (kin), a foster family, a group home, or a residential care facility. During this time, a caseworker, Guardian At-Litem (GAL) and judge will work together to make important decisions for the child and regarding the case. Often, the biological parents can follow their safety/treatment plan and gain back custody of the child, or a permanent kinship option can be found. Over time, reunification may become unlikely and the child's team may move towards Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) and to focus on permanency for the child through adoption. Becoming a foster parent is a powerful way to support children and families in your community, whether the end result is reunification or adoption.

Healing Homes is committed to provide caring and professional services to their foster parents, recognizing their unique needs and backgrounds, while advocating for the children who need the love and stability of a family during one of the most difficult times in their lives. We walk parents through the foster care certification process, advocate for matches between children and our foster homes, along with helping families navigate requirements from the state. We are



dedicated to placement stability and supporting foster families as they commit to children until they achieve permanency. We offer trauma-focused coaching and emotional support along the way. Through Healing Homes, you will find opportunities to meet other foster parents in the area while developing additional support through foster care events and meet-ups at coffee shops. It takes a village to raise a child, and we would love to be a part of your village.

## Children in Foster Care

- The average age of a child in foster care is 8 years' old. That means that there is a huge need for families willing to foster children over the age of 8 years old.
- Sibling groups are often split up through foster care. County Caseworkers are often looking for homes willing to take sibling groups to help minimize their emotional loss during removal.
- Children with special needs, which can include medical, developmental, or trauma based emotional special needs.



## How does the foster subsidy work?

Foster parents will receive a foster care subsidy payment for every day you have a foster child in your care, or a monthly rate in CA. This payment is based on a state-approved, flat rate for every child, regardless of the child's age or needs.

You will receive this payment monthly via direct deposit or by check depending on your state of residence. This money is tax-free and is meant to help compensate the additional expenses incurred from having a child in your home.

## Are there other benefits available to support children in foster care?

Children under the age of 5 who are in foster care also qualify for the WIC program (Women, Infants, and Children). Children between the ages of 3 and 5 could be eligible for Head Start programs and some areas may have options for Early Head Start programs for children younger than 3 years old. Often school-age foster children automatically qualify for the free lunch program offered at their local school, and often qualify for after school programs at no cost. Children in foster care are covered by Medicaid for their medical, dental, and therapeutic needs. Our Healing Homes program also maintains connections with local organizations that support children in foster care and foster parents in regional areas.

## How is foster care through Healing Homes different from working with the county?

Your foster care journey will be one of the biggest and toughest adventures you will embark on. We want to be your advocate in the process! Counties will often need placement in times of emergency, and it can feel difficult to say no. We provide a buffer in those times of stress and look at the situation with experience and a knowledge of what you feel capable of, while keeping the best interests of your entire family in mind. While foster care is unpredictable, and we cannot know everything about each individual case, we take time to ask caseworkers thorough questions to help your family make educated decisions and advocate for the needs of the children entering your home.





*It is our priority to maintain small caseloads to provide quality care between you and your foster care advocate.*

We are focused on equipping our families with trauma training and guidance for their journey. We provide 24/7 crisis intervention services, and service coordination by connecting you to local therapists, support groups, and other important resources. We strongly recommend Trust Based Relational Intervention (TBRI) parenting tools for every foster parent that is considering working with children who have experienced trauma. We strongly recommend that parents find individual therapists they can work with while they transition into becoming foster parents, for additional emotional supports.

### Will there be visits with biological parents while I am fostering?

The majority of children in foster care will have visits with their biological parents. The amount and duration of visits each week differ for each individual case. These visits will not occur in your home, but most often will be supervised at the county building or supervised out in the community. Many foster parents grow to care deeply for their child’s biological family and pray often for their health and future stability. This is a significant area of ministry for our parents, who are given an opportunity to support and build up biological parents that likely have been involved in foster care through their entire lives. This program is all about restoration and second chances for those who need it most.



Along with visits with biological family, you should expect a required monthly visit with your child’s caseworkers and your Healing Homes Foster Care Advocate to review progress, check in on your family unit, brainstorm for your child’s success and to keep you updated on the Dependency and Neglect (D&N) case. In the beginning of a child’s placement in your home, these visits can be more frequent than once a month but will gradually slow down to monthly visits based on the stability of the placement (unless state regulations require more frequent visits). D&N cases take time and are a legal process with the focus of giving biological family opportunities to succeed and to fail while trying to help children towards reunification.

## Nightlight Christian Adoptions Foster Care Program Fees and Estimated Expenses

Expenses	Costs	Notes
CPR/First Aid (Adult and Pediatric)	\$65-\$100 per couple	Updated annually
Other Parent Education/Training	\$0-\$100	Ongoing
TBRI Training	\$20	Required for all Nightlight foster parents
DMV Records	\$0-9	Varies by state
Criminal background check/FBI fingerprints	\$0-\$100	Varies by state
PREPARE/ENRICH survey	\$35 per couple	Required for all Nightlight foster parents
Child Abuse Clearance	\$0-35	Required for any state you have resided in within the past 5 years
Colorado Courts/Denver Court Records	\$10	<i>This expense is only needed in CO</i>
Adoption/Foster Care Core Training	\$50 per couple	<i>This expense is only needed in CO</i>
AOC Background	\$25	<i>This expense is only needed in KY</i>
Live Scan Clearances	\$90	<i>This expense is only needed in CA</i>
Universal Precautions Course	\$35 to \$70 per couple	<i>This expense is only needed in IN</i>
<b>Total Estimated Expenses</b>	<b>\$120 - \$399</b>	

\*As an agency, there is a significant amount of time and work that goes into helping families complete their home study and supporting them after a child is placed in their home. We ask families to commit to working with Nightlight for a minimum of one year from the point of certification. If you decide to switch to another agency before your year expires, you will be charged \$1,000 to cover some of the costs of your home study.

Please sign this page that you have received a copy of this list of fees and estimated costs and agree to the terms above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Foster Mother Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Foster Father Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date