



DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY SERVICES FOSTER CARE RATES POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

The Department of Family Services is committed to supporting foster parents in Nunavut through the provision of per diems. Given the high cost of living in Nunavut, this Policy is intended to recruit and retain foster parents, by working to reduce financial barriers associated with fostering.

1. PRINCIPLES

This Policy is based on the following principles:

- (a) The Department is committed to Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit concepts of *Pijitsirniq* (serving and providing for family and/or community), *Aajiiqatigiingniq* (decision-making through discussion and consensus), and *Havaqatigiingniq* (working together for a common cause).
- (b) Foster care in Nunavut will support *Inuuqatigiitsiarniq* (respecting others, relationships, and caring for people) by facilitating relationships between children and foster families, and where possible, prioritizing familial relationships in foster care.
- (c) The Department will work in close cooperation with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, as described in Article 32 of the Nunavut Agreement, and in accordance with *Iqqanaijaqatigiit*.
- (d) Programs and services for foster children must be holistic and uphold cultural values and traditions, language and Inuit knowledge. The entitlements under this Policy are intended to support not only the basic needs of children in care, but maintain the cultural identifies of children in care.
- (e) All roles and responsibilities associated with foster care entitlements are clearly defined, and the process is open and transparent to the public.
- (f) Foster care will operate in a way that is accountable, sustainable, and responsive to the needs of Nunavummiut.
- (g) All efforts must be made by the Department of Family Services to identify other coverage available to support children in care with high and/or complex needs. This includes items that would be covered by Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) or Canada's Child First Initiative.

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2. APPLICATION

The *Child and Family Services Act* provides overall direction on foster parent eligibility, selection and obligations.

This Policy applies to:

- Approved foster parents and/or kinship caregivers with children in their care;
- Children under a Voluntary Support Agreement with the Department of Family Services;
- Children under any Court Order including a Supervision Order, Temporary Custody Order, or Permanent Custody Order;

3. DEFINITIONS

Court Order

Court Orders are utilized when a child is at significant risk, accessed when there are persistent and ongoing child protection concerns. There are 3 types of Court Orders, including a Supervision Order, Temporary Custody Order, and Permanent Custody Order.

Child

A Nunavut resident between 2-15 years of age.

Child in Care

A child who is in the care or custody of the Director of Child and Family Services through Service Agreements (Voluntary Support Agreement, Support Services Agreement, Extended Support Agreement) or through Court Orders (Supervision Order, Temporary Custody Order, Permanent Custody Order).

Client

A resident of Nunavut who has entered into a Service Agreement with the Department of Family Services, or is involved with the Department through a Court Order. For the purposes of this Policy, reference to a client can mean a child, youth, young adult, or the approved foster parents.

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Community Social Service Worker (CSSW)

A Community Social Service Worker (CSSW) is responsible for overseeing the client's file and coordinating service provision.

Director of Family Wellness

The Director designated under the *Child and Family Services Act* or their designate.

Foster Parents

Approved caregivers for children in the care of the Director of Child and Family Services.

Infant

A Nunavut resident of less than 2 years of age.

Kinship Caregivers

An extended family home that's approved to care for a child or youth in care. The caregiver must have a family relationship or significant connection to the child – for example, grandparent, aunt or close family friend. Supports for kinship care are the same as the supports provided to a child and caregivers in foster care.

Per-Diems

For foster parents: A daily allowance, which covers the added costs incurred by foster parents. Per-diem amounts shall not exceed those set out in the Foster Care Per-Diem Table in Schedule A-1.

Permanent Custody Order

A Court Order that places a child in the permanent custody of the Director of Child and Family Services to age 16, extendable to 19 if the youth consents or if ordered by the court.

Placement Planning Review Committee (PPRC)

Provides support and direction to Family Wellness staff in placing children, youth and young adults in care and/or support service agreements. The Committee membership consists of the Executive Director for Family Wellness, the designated CSSW/Case Manager, the appropriate Territorial Specialist, and other appropriate Service provider as needed (Mental Health, School, RCMP, etc)

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Supervision Order

A Court Order that directs a CSSW to supervise the home of a child according to the terms and conditions of the court. The order cannot be for a period exceeding one year.

Supervisor

A Supervisor of Child and Family Services, or their designate.

Temporary Custody Order

A Court Order that directs that the child be placed in the custody of the Director for a specified period.

4. AUTHORITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Executive Council

The Executive Council shall approve program provisions and any exceptions to this Policy.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Minister

- (a) The Minister of Family Services is accountable to the Executive Council for the implementation of this Policy.

Deputy Minister

- (a) The Deputy Minister of Family Services is accountable to the Minister for the administration of this Policy;

Director of Family Wellness

- (a) The Director of Family Wellness or designate is responsible for oversight and administrative compliance with the terms of this Policy.

Placement Planning Review Committee (PPRC)

The PPRC is responsible for development and oversight of the plan of care for each child in care of the Department. The PPRC shall review and approve the levels of special rates provided for children placed in foster homes.

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6. PROVISIONS

Eligibility

Eligibility for this Policy is restricted to:

- Approved foster parents and approved kinship caregivers with children in care;
- Children under a Voluntary Support Agreement with the Department of Family Services;
- Children under any Court Order including a Supervision Order, Temporary Custody Order, or Permanent Custody Order;

Per Diems

Foster Care Per Diems are provided to approved foster parents in Nunavut. Foster Care Per Diems vary depending on the community, to reflect the varying levels of living costs across the territory.

(a) Basic Allowance

Foster Care Per Diems (A-1) cover the daily costs of caring for a child or youth including:

- a) Food;
- b) Shelter;
- c) Clothing;
- d) Routine household wear and tear;
- e) Personal hygiene items;
- f) Routine community travel (eg: friend's house, community centre, etc.);
- g) Fees for lessons and programming (eg: swimming, art, music)
- h) Regular family activities (eg: movie night)
- i) Routine babysitting (eg: foster parents going to a movie or their own medical appointment)
- j) Non-prescription medications;
- k) School supplies;
- l) Regular field trips;
- m) Haircuts;
- n) Birthday parties; and
- o) Gifts.

(b) Infant Care Costs

Caregivers will receive monthly reimbursements, based on submitted receipts, to compensate for the costs of formula, diapers and basic baby supplies.

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Method of Payment

Payments are made to foster families on a bi-weekly basis.

Term

For the period a child is in the care of the approved foster parent/kinship caregiver.

Training for Foster Parents

The Department of Family Services will cover the costs associated with foster parent training, foster parent association meetings, etc.

General Conditions

- (a) Foster parents are responsible for the management of monies issued on behalf of the child in their care, and for ensuring that the daily needs of the child are met.
- (b) Foster parents cannot claim any expenses claimed under this Policy on their Income Tax Return submitted to Canada Revenue Agency.

Financial Considerations

- (a) All relevant provisions contained in the *Financial Administration Act* and the Government of Nunavut's Financial Administration Manual shall apply to the financial administration of all funds issued by the Department of Family Services under this Policy.

7. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Financial resources required under this Policy are conditional on the approval of the Main Estimates by the Legislative Assembly and on the availability of funds in the appropriate annual budget.

8. RELATED LEGISLATION AND POLICIES

Child and Family Services Act

Support Services/Extended Support Agreement Policy

Foster Care Special Entitlements Policy

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9. PREROGATIVE OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Nothing in this Policy shall in any way be construed to limit the prerogative of the Executive Council to make decisions or take action respecting the entitlements for foster parents outside the provisions of this Policy.

10. SUNSET CLAUSE

This Policy shall be in effect from the date of the signature until March 31, 2025.

Premier

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A-1: Foster Care Per Diems

Foster Care Per Diems are intended to support children in care and their foster families, to assist with the daily costs associated with childrearing including food, clothing, personal care, general household costs, etc. Per Diems vary depending on the community, to reflect the varying levels of living costs across the territory.

Table 2: Community Foster Care Per Diems

Communities	Basic Per Diem Rate
<u>Zone 1:</u> Arviat, Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet	\$58
<u>Zone 2:</u> Arctic Bay, Baker Lake, Cambridge Bay, Chesterfield Inlet, Gjoa Haven, Hall Beach, Igloolik, Kugluktuk, Nauyasat, Whale Cove	\$60
<u>Zone 3:</u> Cape Dorset, Kimmirut, Pangnirtung, Sanikiluaq, Taloyoak	\$62
<u>Zone 4:</u> Clyde River, Coral Harbour, Grise Fiord, Kugaaruk, Pond Inlet, Qikiqtarjuaq, Resolute Bay	\$65

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