

Babysitting for Children in Resource & Kinship Care

As a resource parent, it is your responsibility to ensure that the children in your home receive adequate care and appropriate supervision while living with you. As specified in the Manual of Requirements for Resource Family Parents:

1. The resource or kinship family parent will ensure the supervision of each child in placement, as appropriate to the child's age and particular needs, at all times.
2. The resource or kinship family parent will be reachable by telephone in the event of an emergency or illness when the child in care or resource or kinship family is not in the home.

What if I have to run an errand and can't take the children with me?

At times when it is necessary for you to be absent from the home, appropriate babysitting arrangements must be made for your own children and your children in care.

What is babysitting?

Babysitting is considered short term care and supervision of a child for less than 24 hours that occurs on an occasional basis.

Hiring a babysitter

Hiring a babysitter takes planning on your part. You should use the same good judgment in determining if a person is appropriate to babysit your child in care that you would use in considering someone to watch your own child. When hiring a babysitter it is important to consider your child's age,

physical, developmental and social needs. The provider you choose must be an appropriate caregiver capable of meeting your child's needs.

Do I need to notify CP&P when hiring a babysitter?

It is a good practice to inform the child's caseworker when hiring a babysitter.

Can a youth (your own child, relative, or neighbor) be a babysitter?

Anyone who you know to be sufficiently reliable and mature may babysit for your children in care, including your biological child, a relative or neighbor. The length of babysitting time depends on the maturity and needs of your child and the maturity of the babysitter.

Can a youth in care be a babysitter?

You are encouraged to provide normal experiences for your children in care, as you would for your own children. Children in care are permitted to babysit for other children in care and/or your own children, or other children, upon the agreement of the child providing the care.

Basic guidelines to consider before hiring a babysitter

- Meet the sitter and check references and training in advance.
- Be sure the sitter is mature enough to handle common emergencies and provide first aid.
- Have the sitter spend time with you before babysitting to meet the children and learn their routines.
- Show the sitter around the house. Point out fire escape routes and

potential problem areas. Instruct the sitter to leave the house with the children right away in case of a fire and to call the fire department from a neighbor's house.

- Discuss the children's feeding, bathing and sleeping arrangements
- Tell your sitter about any allergies or specific needs your children have.
- Have emergency supplies available including a flashlight, first aid chart and first aid supplies.
- Tell the sitter where you will be and when you will return.
- Post your address, phone number and emergency numbers near the phone, and provide the phone number of a neighbor, or someone else who can assist in an emergency, if you cannot be reached right away.
- Be certain that the sitter is aware they should never leave the child alone unattended in the house or car - even for a minute.
- Establish rules for the sitter, especially if a teenager, such as no visitors while they are babysitting.

Can I be reimbursed for babysitting expenses?

Reimbursement requires the Local Office Manager or designee's approval. There are deadlines for filing for reimbursement, so confirm with CP&P. Payment is a flat rate of \$8.35 per hour. Babysitting expenses are not reimbursed for your personal activities but are given when the reason for your absence from the home is an activity directly related to fostering. Some examples are attendance at Child Placement Reviews, court hearings, school conferences, CP&P meetings, medical appointments, etc.