
Rights vs. Responsibilities

As a resource or kinship parent, the line between your **rights** vs. your **responsibilities** can sometimes become blurred. Understanding how the two work together will give you more insight into your role as your child in care's primary caregiver and will empower you to be a stronger advocate for them.

Information

You have the **right** to full disclosure as per the Division of Child Protection and Permanency's (CP&P) policy. Before the child enters your home, you should receive all information necessary to provide the appropriate care and supervision for them. If you do not have what you need, contact his Family Service Specialist (FSS) - also known as the child's caseworker. It is your **right** to ask questions as it relates to full disclosure as this information will help you best care for the child.

It is your **responsibility** to maintain the confidentiality of all information provided to you about the child. For example, sharing details about them on social media is prohibited. Revealing the child's identity can put them at risk of being bullied or inappropriately contacted.

Documentation

You have the **right** to document the actions of everyone involved with the child's case; you also have a right to document the child's behaviors.

It is your **responsibility** to obtain your own notebooks to document information about the child. Having the proper documentation will not only be helpful to the child if you have to provide evidence that they need specific services (e.g., therapy) but can also protect you if an allegation arises. Documenting behaviors of the child as well as reporting injury and illness will also help to protect against allegations.

Identification

You have the **right** to ask for identification from everyone who comes into your home concerning the child. Obtaining identification will keep you informed of who enters your home and make all of your guests aware of how important the child's safety is to you and your family.

It is your **responsibility** to know your caseworker, also known as the Resource Family Support Worker (RFSW), the child's Family Service Specialist (FSS) and everyone involved with the child's case, as well as their contact information. Having their information, as well as the information for caseworkers chain of command on hand will help you address time sensitive issues, such as medical emergencies, immediately.

Advocacy

Even though you are not a part of the child's case, you have the **right** to be heard in court.

You are able to attend certain court hearings, but you can also write letters to the caseworkers and judge to express your voice. You are a [Family Support Advocate](#) can assist you as you write letters to ensure your voice is heard.

It is your **responsibility** to voice your concerns to caseworkers, law guardians and judges. Since the child lives with you, you have first hand knowledge of what will help them thrive.

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Resources

You have the **right** to advocate for yourself and the child by requesting services. Knowing what resources are available and how to access them will help you to provide the child with what they specifically need (e.g., tutoring). You also have the **right** to seek help, support and mentoring from your [Family Advocates](#) (FAs).

It is your **responsibility** to advise the caseworkers of the child's needs, as well as the needs of your family. Making your caseworkers aware will allow them to give you and your family the support you need. Caseworkers have many other families to help, so it's important to ensure the needs of the child and your family stay on their minds.

Biological Family

You have the **right** to bond with the child's biological family. Establishing a strong connection may allow you to assist the child and encourage the family.

You have the **responsibility** to build a positive relationship with the biological family. CP&P's goal is to reunite the child with their relatives if possible. Showing the biological family how you care for the child and encouraging their

efforts to do their best parenting can make reunification easier for everyone.

Visitation

You have the **right** to be included in negotiations to determine the child's visitation schedule with their biological family. Since you may be taking them to visits, your input ensures that you are able to keep each appointment or advise the Worker that CP&P transportation assistance is needed

You have the **responsibility** to adhere to the visitation schedule that is set in place. Structure and stability are important for the child. Not only do they need to see their biological family on a regular basis, but they also need your support and encouragement.

Exercise your **rights** and uphold your **responsibilities**. Being heard is essential for you to get the results you, your child in care and their family deserve. Your area [Family Support Advocate](#) can assist you by covering all rights and responsibilities as a caregiver. Do not hesitate to reach out to them for support and guidance.

