



SAFEGUARDS FOR CHILDREN/YOUTH LIVING IN FOSTER CARE

If you are living in foster care, you are entitled to a number of protections to keep you safe.

These safeguards may be limited to reasonable times of day. They may also be limited to fit the routines of your foster home.

These safeguards do not apply to those in Division of Youth Services Facilities or a state hospital due to mental illness.

COMMUNICATION SAFEGUARDS

You have the freedom to **contact the people who are working to help you**. This would include your attorney, caseworkers, court appointed special advocate (CASA), and probation officer.

You are allowed, as appropriate, to **make and receive private phone calls and send or receive unopened mail**. These things must fit your permanency goals.

As appropriate, you have the freedom to have **contact with people outside of foster care** in ways that fit your permanency goals.

You have the freedom to **contact the child protection ombudsman, your local department, or the state department** with questions, concerns or violations of the protections on this document.

FAMILY SAFEGUARDS

You'll **live with your family** unless it would cause danger to you, or the public. A court will decide **as soon as possible** the best place for you to live.

You will be able to **live or visit with** your siblings.



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INDEPENDENCE SAFEGUARDS

You have permission to maintain a **bank account** for when you leave the system and managing your income, if allowed by your case plan.

You have the freedom to **work and develop job skills** that fit your permanency goals, as appropriate.

You have the freedom to attend independent living classes, if you meet the requirements.

If you are 16+, you will have access to **information about available education choices**.

CASE SAFEGUARDS

People will communicate in a way that fits your age.

As fits your age and level, you will have **help writing and reviewing** your case plan. If you are 12+ , you'll **receive information** about where you live, your case plan, and any changes.

Your court records will be **confidential**, as required by law.

You'll have **fair and equal access** to available services, places to live, treatment, and benefits based on your treatment plan. You will **not be discriminated against or harassed**.

There will be **successful handling** of your case.

There will be **planning** aimed at your safe return to your family or move to another forever home.

If you are 12+ you will be **involved in meetings** where decisions are made about your future. The department will bring **your family and other supports together when plans for your future are decided**.

If you are 0-11, you will have an attorney **guardian ad litem (GAL)** who fights for what they decide is best for you. If you are 12+ you will have a **Counsel For Youth (CFY)** arguing for what you want.

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YOUR CARE

You'll receive appropriate and reasonable **adult guidance, support, and supervision in a safe, healthy and comfortable place**. You'll be treated with **respect and dignity**.

You have the freedom from **physical punishment and all types of abuse**.

You'll receive enough healthy **food, clothing, and allowance**. You'll also receive needed **medical, dental, vision, and mental health care**.

You have the freedom from having to take **medicine or other chemicals**, except as approved by a doctor.

You **will not be punished or threatened for making complaints**.

You have the freedom to attend **religious services and activities**.

You **will not be abandoned or locked in a room**.

You will stay in the **school you went to before foster care**, unless it is not in your best interests.

You will receive appropriate **education, have access to transportation, and participate in school and other activities** that fit your age and level.

You will have a **safe space** to store your things.

You will live in a place with a **caregiver who knows and understands** your history, if it is important to your case.

You will live in the **least limiting** place that fits your needs.