



## **2025 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

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## **FOSTER PARENT RIGHTS**

- 1) The right to be treated with dignity, respect and consideration as a professional member of the child welfare team.*

Camelot Care Centers views foster parents as the primary change agent in the lives of children served in the Specialized Foster Care Program. Foster parents are to be treated as professional peers with dignity, respect, consideration and professionalism in the same manner as other professionals with whom Camelot staff comes into contact. Camelot developed customer service standards to ensure all staff treat everyone with dignity and respect. Our customer service standards are reviewed with staff during New Hire Orientation, Quarterly Staff Meetings, and during individual supervision. The customer service standards include mission, respect, safety, compassion, and power/authority.

### **Mission**

We believe in our mission of inspiring personal growth, health, and wellness.  
We communicate, seek collaboration, and strive to include all of those we serve.  
We create and maintain an environment that is open and welcoming to all.

### **Respect**

We are solution-focused and respectful to all internal and external customers.  
We act with professionalism and use appropriate communication.  
All members of the team seek to follow through with commitments and meet timelines out of respect for each other's time.

### **Safety**

To ensure the safety and well-being of our staff, the clients, and the families we serve, we prioritize following policy and procedure.

### **Compassion**

All family, child, and staff members are treated with respect and compassion; we acknowledge feelings, listen to others and are honest.

### **Authority and Power**

Members of the team will continually examine their use of power, use of self, and personal biases to respect all roles in the team, both internal and external.

Camelot also attempts to treat and include Foster parents as a Member of the Professional Team in the following ways:

- a. **Matching Child and Family:** Foster parents are contacted by the Clinical Director, Regional Director and/or other members of the Intake Committee with a preliminary description of the child's functioning and status, i.e., age, history, medical, academic and behavioral functioning. Whenever possible, prior to placement of a child in the foster home for pre-placement visits, the in-home therapist provides a Behavior Identification/Disclosure Form to the foster parents identifying all of the known current and historical behavioral issues exhibited by the child. If the child being placed doesn't have an assigned in-home therapist then the Behavior Identification/Disclosure Form should be completed by the child's caseworker. The case manager is responsible for providing the foster parents with a Behavior Identification/Disclosure Form. Foster parents sign the document indicating their awareness of these issues and acknowledging they have been given the opportunity to review documentation in the case file and discuss concerns with staff. Foster parents are encouraged to seek clarifying information. If the foster parents have additional questions, the Clinical Director, Regional Director, or Case Management Supervisor are responsible for gathering additional information and provide this information to the prospective foster parents. Camelot will make every effort to conduct pre-placement visit to ensure the family is able to meet the needs of the youth.
- b. **Admission/ Mental Health Assessment and Individualized Treatment Plan:** In an effort to familiarize the family with placement stabilization upon admission of a child into a specialized foster home, a comprehensive mental health assessment is completed by Clinical Staff within 30 days following the first face to face meeting with the child or adolescent and an individualized treatment plan is completed within 60 days to address presenting problems. In addition, Case Managers provide written documentation of child's known behaviors, medical conditions, dietary restrictions, service plans, visitation plan, case history, and educational needs per DCFS Policy and Procedure 2007.14. On a case by case basis, a child specific crisis plan will be incorporated into placement documentation that more thoroughly identifies behavioral de-escalation recommendations and supportive interventions (i.e. responding to behavioral "triggers"). Every foster parent is provided with the necessary information to call contact staff for after-hour emergencies.
- c. **Foster Parent Manual:** Each foster parent is provided with a manual that the Licensing Specialist reviews with the family during the training and licensing process. The manual is provided again during renewal process as well as when it is updated. This manual includes an introduction and explanation to Camelot's Specialized Foster Care Program, all policies and procedures, a copy of safety expectations for the home and child, foster parent documentation requirements, major incident reporting, emergency numbers and procedures related to the safety and welfare of both children and families, copy of the Foster Parent Code and current Camelot Foster Parent Law Implementation Plan, copy

of the Child Care Act, and a copy of Part 402, Licensing Standards for Foster Family Homes. Additional copies of Camelot's Foster Parent Manual as well as the Resource Handbook are also available upon request.

- d. **Child and Family Team Meetings (CFTMs):** Foster parents are an integral part of the youth's team therefore; Camelot staff recognizes the importance of including foster parents in CFTMs. The foster parents are encouraged to attend all Child and Family Team meetings, and are required to if the child has a goal other than return home. Camelot staff will incorporate pertinent information from these meetings into the children's service and/or therapeutic treatment plan. Camelot will make every effort to accommodate the foster parent's schedule. If foster parent unable to attend then Camelot will ask the foster parent for an update regarding the youth's functioning at school and in the home to share during the meeting. The Child and Family Team Meetings are held in-person in a family setting whenever possible. These meetings are can also be held via zoom if this is preferred by majority of the participants. Each child case is reviewed quarterly as required by policy. The meetings may include the foster child, foster parent, biological family, case manager, in-home therapist, case management supervisor, clinical director, regional director, and services providers as well as any other client identified supports as appropriate for each case.
- e. **Foster Parent Support:** Camelot offers training for foster parents via Zoom to help accommodate foster parent's busy schedules. Camelot developed and maintains a quarterly Newsletter to keep families informed of important information as well as recognize a Foster Parent of the Quarter. Camelot solicits suggestions from foster parents to further enhance on-going training and foster parent support activities through customer satisfaction surveys. Camelot is in the process of developing a training schedule for 2025 based on the results of the surveys.
- f. **Appreciation Events/Activities:** In 2024, all Camelot offices held a foster parent/family event to show appreciation for the work, cooperation and continuing commitment to our foster children. Whenever possible, celebrations or small gifts are provided in recognition of foster parents' commitment in May during Foster Parent Appreciation Month.
- g. **Satisfaction Surveys:** Camelot Care Centers conducts satisfaction surveys of all foster parents. The information gathered is used to ensure the quality of the program and make enhancements to the services. Random phone surveys are now used to gather real-time feedback directly from foster parents.
- h. **Administrative Reviews:** When issues arise, Ronica Patel, State Executive Director, may meet with the families to develop a plan of correction based on the specific needs. The

plan is monitored by the individual office regional director and local leadership to ensure effectiveness and timely implementation.

- i. Special Meetings: Camelot staff will convene a staffing/foster parent meeting upon the request of the foster parent, supervising agency or other case involved individuals to address any issues or concerns present in a case.
- j. Office Visits: Foster families were encouraged to visit the offices whenever possible. Camelot encourages foster families to make an appointment prior to coming to the office in order to ensure the safety of our staff and foster families. Additionally, Camelot supervisors arrange to meet with foster families, as needed, at their home to provide support and assistance.
- k. Advisory Board: Camelot Care Centers, LLC. advisory board was designed to advise and make recommendations to the state administration team on issues that affects the foster family homes, their rights and the continuation of quality service to the children. Since 2008, Regional Directors were asked to elicit suggestions and ideas from foster parents regarding statewide representation. Efforts to obtain local participation have not been successful in all regions. Ongoing efforts of board development continue to be a primary state focus to achieve the goal of advisory committees and statewide foster parent participation.
- l. Advocacy Organizations: Camelot Care Centers, LLC. supports our foster families in their participation in the activities of the Illinois Foster Parent Association and local foster care alliances where available. Camelot will pay the cost of foster parent membership in the Illinois Foster Parent Association. Camelot will make space available for the meetings and all resources to support their work.

2) *The right to be given standardized pre-service training and appropriate ongoing training to meet mutually assessed needs and improves the foster parent's skills.*

- a. PRIDE training and Pre-Service training: All non-related and related Foster parents must complete the Adopt PRIDE/Foster PRIDE trainings to become a licensed foster parent. In addition, Camelot provides specialized, pre-service training for foster families working with children and adolescents with emotional and behavioral problems. Camelot Care Centers supports our foster families in becoming PRIDE co-trainers. PRIDE trained foster parents are welcomed to co-facilitate trainings with Camelot staff in regional offices.
- b. Training: Camelot makes every effort to meet the needs of our families by offering trainings within the agency. The minimum number of hours required has been established by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services and may include



additional specific training hours and topics as may be determined by Camelot Care Centers, LLC. Specialized and Adolescent Foster Parents must complete a minimum of 64 hours (16 hours per year) for renewal of their license every 4 years. Traditional Foster Parent must complete a minimum of 16 hours (4 hours per year) for renewal of their license every 4 years. Foster parents are required to attend DCFS Educational Advocacy training prior to their first renewal as well as the new DCFS LGBTQ training. Camelot requires all foster parents have CPR/First Aid training and renewal CPR/First Aid training every two years while the family is licensed. Foster parents are strongly encouraged to attend Camelot trainings. Foster parents are also able to access ongoing training opportunities available in the community, through DCFS or online. Camelot training is tailored to meet the specific needs of the clients served as well as provide ongoing support to foster parents in handling the behaviors specialized and adolescent clients present. In addition, outside speakers may be used to provide additional information to foster parents and have included former youth-in-care, local regional representatives, school administrators, and former foster parents. Camelot implores some standard curriculum items that include approaches focusing on the impact of trauma and aiding foster parents in their understanding of psychotropic medication and the importance of maintaining and monitoring usage.

- c. Camelot continues to provide training and education opportunities that were designed to address the complexities of youth in specialized foster care and offer more guidance and greater understanding about the impact of trauma on the children we served by both the agency staff as well as the foster parents. Foster parent input is regularly sought to determine additional training needs or topics through continuing discussions among staff and foster parents about:
- Understanding critical importance of permanency planning and Camelot’s philosophy of promoting a team or collaborative approach to family reunification
  - Understanding the need to support positive relationships between youth and their families and how to work more closely with biological families with or without reunification goals
  - Foster parent active participation in support groups, DCFS foster parent advisory board, and/or other foster parent committees.
  - Foster parent active contribution to development and implementation of and accessing services.
  - Foster parent active participation in treatment plans creating a greater understanding of the child’s emotional needs and behaviors.
  - Advocating for the children in their care in the community and school settings
  - Continued trainings on the impact of trauma through Attachment, Regulation, & Competency (ARC) training

Quality assurance activities are also utilized to identify training needs based on placement stability trends or from meetings conducted between foster parents and staff following a service issue or crisis. Whenever possible, foster parents are asked to

identify areas in which they feel comfortable to participate as co-trainers or lead trainers in monthly foster parent meetings. Attachment, Regulation, & Competency (ARC) is a trauma training for foster parents as well as a therapeutic modality that Camelot in-home therapists utilize.

- d. **Weekly Administrative/Treatment Meeting:** The In-Home Therapists and foster parents consult regularly regarding appropriate interventions to address emotional needs of children. The foster families are provided with ongoing information regarding the special needs of the child during the pre-placement of the child, admission of the child, and while the child is in the home.
  - e. **Experiential Training Opportunities:** When indicated, initial foster parent training may consist of experiential opportunities such as providing weekend respite for other foster parents in order to provide new caregivers with an increased understanding of the daily impact of fostering youth and to identify any aspects they feel they would like additional training before a child is placed in their home. Camelot's Central Region (Springfield and Peoria offices) continue to utilize foster parent mentoring program which include training opportunities for the mentees. This continues to be successful in this region as it allows veteran foster parents to provide additional support for new foster parents which also help increase foster parents' skills to maintain child placement. Licensing Specialists in our other regions have paired up new foster parents with seasoned foster parents on a case by case base.
  - f. **Additional Resource Material:** As a supplement to existing training documents provided at orientation, additional material may be distributed to foster parents that consists of instructions on form completion, relevant policies and procedures and regionally-specific resource information that is an easily accessible reference that will further promote training needs identification and collaboration with Camelot staff.
- 3) *The right to be informed as to how to contact the appropriate child placement agency in order to receive information and assistance to access supportive services for children in the foster parent's care.*
- a. Upon placement of a child in a foster home, the foster family is provided with the phone number of the Camelot Office and the name of their Case Manager, In-Home Therapist and Supervisors. If it is determined that a youth's clinical needs should be service should be provided by an outside provider then the appropriate referrals for an outside provide will be made. The name and phone number for all outside service providers, medical doctors, psychiatrist, and psychologist will be provided to the foster family. This same contact information will also be given to foster families who provide temporary respite services.

- b. Crisis intervention is available 24-hours a day, seven days a week. A site-specific on-call number is given to the foster parent to call for needed assistance and/or additional supportive services. The voice mail message in each Camelot office contains the on-call number as part of the message in case foster parents or others do not have the emergency number immediately available.
- c. The foster parents are provided with a Disaster/Emergency Communications Plan with a listing of individuals and phone numbers to contact. This information is provided in the Foster Parent Manual under Emergency Procedures, and includes the organizational chart chain of command, and grievance process. These plans also include detailed information and instructions to help foster parents during various types of emergency situations.
- d. During the licensing process, licensing specialist discuss with families the importance of a support network with others to understand the complexities of being foster parents. When licensing specialists learn of new support resources or groups then the information is provided to both licensed families and families in-process of becoming licensed. Foster parents can be provided a list of the other Camelot foster parents licensed in their service area that have agreed to the release of their names and phone numbers for support.

4) *The right to receive timely financial reimbursement commensurate with the care and needs of the child as specified in the service plan.*

Camelot foster parents receive regular monthly board and respite payments on the 13th and 28<sup>th</sup> of the month. In the event that the dates fall on a Saturday weekend or holiday payment is made on previous Friday. When the date falls on Sunday or on a holiday, payment is made on Monday or the next business day. Foster parent payments are mailed directly to their home address or they may elect to receive payments via direct deposit. The amount of the reimbursement is based upon the level of care of the child as determined by DCFS. Any problems or delays in the foster parents receiving their payments timely will be immediately addressed by the Regional Director upon notification of a problem.

For all other expenses, (such as property damage repairs, reimbursement for supervising sibling visitations, or extraordinary items the child required, etc.) the foster parent submits a completed expense report to the Regional director and once approved, reimbursement follows within 15 to 30 days. On a case-by-case basis, some payments on behalf of the child may be paid directly to the vendor by Camelot rather than having the foster parent be reimbursed. If there are any questions regarding payment amounts, the foster parents may

contact the respective Regional Director who will promptly attend to and resolve the problem. Direct service staff receive training on how to address financial concerns with foster parents and increase the foster parents understanding of the process.

Foster parents with youth that are classified as traditional level of care can request respite, which will be paid out of their monthly foster parent reimbursement. Foster parents with youth that are classified as specialized or adolescent level of care receive one day of respite per month per child starting on the date of placement. Respite days operate on a rolling calendar which means foster parents do not accumulate more than 12 days and would not be at zero days unless all days available in their respite bank were used. Additional respite can be requested and approved at any time when the foster parent and treatment team determine it may be in the best interest of either the foster parent or the child or both. Foster parents are not penalized “accrued” respite days for these situations. Foster parents are strongly encouraged to work with Camelot staff to individualize how to utilize their respective respite service that will best meet their own needs as well as the youth placed in their care. Foster Parents work with staff to develop additional respite strategies such as more frequent and incremental respite hours to better support foster parents, such as providing daytime or afterschool respite. Foster parents are expected to directly transport the youth to the respite provider in order to ensure communication among both foster parents regarding the needs of the child. If a foster parent is unable to transport to or from respite than Camelot staff may assist with transportation.

- 5) *The right to be provided a clear, written understanding of a placement agency’s plan concerning the placement of a child in the foster parent’s home. Inherent in this right is the foster parent’s responsibility to support activities that will promote the child’s right to relationships with his or her own family and cultural heritage.*

All policies of Camelot’s specialized foster home program are reviewed with the foster parents during the pre-service training period in order to provide a clear understanding of Camelot’s program, practices, and mission in working with children.

A comprehensive mental health assessment is completed within 30 days of admission of the child or adolescent into Camelot’s clinical service program and a strength-based individualized treatment plan is developed within 60 days of admission. Preliminary needs are identified and services provided immediately upon the child entering the foster family’s home. In addition, the case manager provides information on family and cultural heritage, parent and sibling visitation, the permanency outcome goals of the child, treatment services, specialized services necessary for the child to achieve permanency and treatment goals, discharge planning, and educational services. A copy of treatment plan and the

initial or current service plan is provided to the foster parent. Foster parents are typically not involved in the development of initial plans because of their lack of prior involvement. The in-home therapist and case managers seek and incorporate input from foster parents for revision and development of subsequent treatment and service plans. This helps ensure there is appropriate modifications to visitation, treatment, and service plans are made when needed.

Inclusion of foster parents is critical in determining how health, safety, well-being, and permanency will be met in addition to supporting the child's biological family ties. Foster parents receive a copy of the Treatment Plan, Service Plan, Visitation Plan and other relevant documents to facilitate and encourage their involvement and awareness of the services provided to the child in their care. The assigned case manager reviews the above documents with the foster parents periodically during home visits. Foster parents are only provided with the child's portion of the visitation plan and service plan, which follows DCFS policy and procedures. Foster parents are encouraged to provide feedback to the in-home therapist and/or case manager following sibling and parent visits to assist staff in working with children toward successful reintegration.

Treatment and service plans are encouraged to be reviewed each time Camelot staff serving the child is in the home. Treatment and service plans are formally reviewed every quarter, which is typically done during the Child and Family Team meeting. Additionally, service plans are reviewed every six month during the DCFS Administrative Case Review. Foster parents are included in Child and Family Team Meetings in order to obtain input regarding child's progress on goal achievement and in developing new goals. Discharge planning is adjusted based on the outcomes of treatment goals and is part of the treatment planning process.

Foster parents are provided notice within 30 days of any planned court hearing, Administrative Case Review (ACR), treatment plan review, or other formal review in order to participate in person or provide input by other means. Also, case managers are encouraged to remind foster parents of any upcoming meetings during their monthly home visits. Notification are typically provided by Juvenile Court, DCFS, or Camelot Staff. In the event of an emergency or unplanned meeting, notification is provided as quickly as possible via phone calls, emails, or in-person to foster parents. Foster parents are strongly encouraged to attend all meetings relevant to the care of the child and successful achievement of treatment, service, and permanency goals. If foster parents are unable to attend meetings in-person, they are encouraged to participate in the meeting via telephone.

Parent-child and/or sibling visitation plans are required unless otherwise prohibited by court order. Visitation plans are shared with foster parents whose input is sought to facilitate visits, assist in transportation and/or supervision, minimize disruption in the foster

home, and provide valuable feedback to treatment and case management staff. Foster parents are able to witness immediate positive and negative results of visiting and other communication between children and parents and with siblings, and provide positive role-modeling/mentoring to child and biological family. Their feedback is important to structuring service delivery.

- 6) *The right to be provided a fair, timely and impartial investigation of complaints concerning the foster parent's licensure, to be provided the opportunity to have a person of the foster parent's choosing present during the investigation, and to be provided due process during the investigation; and the right to be provided the opportunity to request and receive mediation or an administrative review of decisions that affect licensing parameters, or both mediation and an administrative review; and the right to have decisions concerning a licensing corrective action specifically explained and tied to the licensing standards violated.*

All caregivers' foster parents attend Camelot pre-service training during which they are provided training and copies of Camelot policy documents related to investigation procedures regarding alleged licensing violations. Camelot provides foster parents copies of Department Rule 402 (Licensing Standards for Foster Family Homes) and Department Rule 383 (Licensing Enforcement) upon request. Additional documents include Foster Parent Manual, Foster Parent Independent Contract, "Grievance Policy" and "Foster Parent Rights". Information regarding the Grievance Procedure for Foster parents is reviewed annually during the review of the Foster Parent Law Implementation Plan. Foster Parents are given a copy of the Grievance Policy annually with the updated Foster Parent Implementation Plan. If the grievance procedures are revised, foster parents would be provided with an updated version of the grievance procedures. Foster parents are encouraged to request a copy of the Agency's Grievance Procedure as needed. Foster parents are also distributed a copy of the Foster Parent Law (Public Act 89.19). The law is reviewed annually in conjunction with the Foster Parent Implementation Plan.

As part of the pre-screening process all foster parents are informed of the appeals process and are given the name of a contact person and phone numbers who will assist in any investigations; Darcy Bielema (630) 548-0248, Attorney at Law, who specializes in intervening for foster parents; Foster Parent Helpline (866-368-5204); and the Illinois DCFS Advocacy Office (217) 524-2029 or (800) 232-3798 or at the **DCFS website at <https://www2.illinois.gov/dcfs/Pages/default.aspx>**.

The foster parent is provided due process at the time of an investigation including the right to have an attorney, or any other person of their choosing, present to advocate for them. Foster parents are informed of this right at the time of licensure and again at the beginning of any alleged licensing complaints/investigations. Foster parents are given information that includes the investigative timeframes as well as the procedures and steps they may go

through to appeal negative results and/or corrective action plans. Per DCFS policy, stand-alone investigation should be completed within 30 days of receiving the complaint but extension can be given if more information is needed. Per DCFS policy, concurrent investigation (in conjunction with DCFS) should be completed within 60 days of receiving a complaint but extensions are given when DCFS hasn't completed their investigation. Upon request, a copy of Department Rule 383, Licensing Enforcement will be given to foster parents. DCFS Rule 383, Licensing Enforcement, can be viewed on DCFS website. Camelot follows all Department Standards and Regulations.

The Licensing Specialists are also responsible for conducting any required licensing investigations following other investigations by either the department or other enforcement authorities. The Camelot Licensing Specialists work with the foster parents in helping them to understand their rights during a licensing investigation. When a report of child abuse/neglect or a licensing violation complaint is made, Camelot will complete a licensing investigation on the licensed foster home. If a licensing investigation occurs, Camelot staff will assist the foster parent wherever possible to understand the process. Foster parents can also contact the Regional Director of their assigned office to discuss any questions or concerns they may have as it relates to the investigation. Whenever possible, foster parents are notified of an investigation within two working days of the agency receiving the complaint. This notification can be announced and/or an unannounced visit to the home. Foster Parents are sent investigation extension letters every 30 days until the investigation is completed. Upon completion, Foster parents are provided with written notification for the outcome of the investigation. If a foster parent is found to have violated a licensing standard, they are provided with a written copy of this finding. The Licensing Specialist and their supervisor will determine if a corrective plan is necessary to correct the violation. If a corrective plan is developed then the foster parent is provided with a written copy of that plan. Foster parents are provided with information to request a supervisory review if they have questions or concerns about the outcome of the investigation. Per DCFS policy, foster parents are given 10 days from the date of the letter to request a supervisory review.

Every effort is made to ensure that all foster parents are informed in a timely manner of all decisions regarding the placement, or continuing placement, of a child in their home or any other decision on the part of either Camelot or the Department which impacts upon their ability to foster or their license as a foster parent. When decisions are delayed for any reason, Camelot staff will communicate the nature of the delay and when necessary, advocate for a timelier resolution.

Camelot Care Centers has specific and detailed information posted on its website at [www.camelotcarecenters.com](http://www.camelotcarecenters.com) regarding Camelot Care Center Programs, additional community supports and resources, Employment Opportunities, the Foster Parent Law Implementation Plan, website links to informational and training resources for Foster parents, and other information determined as relevant by the foster parents and staff participating in the development of the regional pages.

- 7) *The right at any time during which a child is placed with the foster parent, to receive additional necessary information that is relevant to the care of the child.*

Camelot Care Centers understands and acknowledges foster parents have the right to all critical information about the child when participating in pre-placement procedures. During the intake process of youth new to Camelot Care Centers, the licensing specialist, Clinical Director, Regional Director, and Case Management supervisor review all documentation to gather as much information about the youth as possible. This information regarding this youth is then provided to the potential foster parent in order to ensure the foster parent is able to make an informed decision prior to placement. Camelot staff will utilize the Child Profile when locating a new home for a youth. The Child Profile contains important information about the youth including but not limited to behavioral, emotional, developmental, medical, placement history, current services, permanency goal, and visitation plan. Foster Parent can also make a request to review relevant documents in the child's file and discuss any issues of concern prior to placement. The foster parent is provided The Behavior Disclosure/Identification form incorporates crisis planning and crafted to directly address the youth's identified triggers. The foster parent is provided a medication delivery form, which outlines the medication the youth is currently prescribed. The Foster Parent(s) signs the document as an acknowledgement of receipt. This is necessary to provide a cohesive, consistent multidisciplinary team approach to the child's treatment plan. This form is updated and changed upon any discovery of new information or additional case history and shared with the foster family.

Foster parents are provided additional and necessary information regarding each child during contact with case managers and in-home therapists, Child and Family Team Meetings, and during consultation with the Clinical Director. Depending on the level of care of the youth, case managers visit the home one to three times per month or more frequently if needed. Every effort is made to share any new or important information with the foster parent as soon as possible when clinically appropriate to do so, which may also include scheduling an appointment to review the child's file along with Camelot staff. Camelot wants to make every effort to ensure foster parents receive pertinent information about the youth, staff has developed child packets. Camelot caseworkers continue to



ensure that new and current placements receive the child packets. Child packets will include the following information: child's information, important contact information, 906, medication/behavioral information, upcoming dates/appointments, school information, and payment breakdown for foster parents.

- 8) *The right to be given information concerning a child from the Department, as required under Section 5(u) of the Children and Family Services Act, and from a child welfare agency, as required under Section 7.4 (c-5) of the Child Care Act of 1969. [20 ILCS 520/1-15]*

At the time the caseworker places a child with a foster parent or prospective adoptive parent, or prior to placement of the child, whenever possible, the worker shall provide available information necessary for the proper care of the child in writing to the foster parent or prospective adoptive parent:

- a. The information given to the foster parent should include:
  - 1) The medical history of the child including known medical problems or communicable diseases, information concerning the immunization status of the child, and insurance and medical card information, and any current medication the child is taking
  - 2) The educational history of the child, including any special educational needs and details of the child's individualized educational plan (IEP), Individual Family Service Plans (IFSP) when the child is receiving special education services or 504 Educational Special Needs Plan, if applicable;
  - 3) A copy of the child's portion of the client service plan including any visitation arrangements and all amendments or revisions; case history of the child, including how the child came into care; the child's legal status; the permanency goal for the child; a history of the child's previous placements; and reasons for placement changes, excluding information that identifies or reveals the location of any previous foster or relative home caregiver.
  - 4) Other relevant background information of the child, including any prior criminal history; information about any behavior problems including fire setting, perpetration of sexual abuse, destructive behavior and substance abuse habits; and likes and dislikes, etc.
- b. In the case of an emergency placement, when all of the above referenced information may not be available, the worker shall provide known information verbally as it becomes available and subsequently provide this information in writing.
- c. Within 10 working days after the placement, the worker shall obtain from the prospective adoptive parent, foster parent or other caregiver signed verification of

receipt of the information described above and forward a copy of the information to the child's guardian ad litem.

- d. Supervisory review and approval is required prior to providing any information to the foster parents or prospective adoptive parents.

Clinical and case management staff has contact with foster parents on a regular basis ranging from weekly to monthly. Documentation of those contacts and the content of the contacts are reviewed by the Clinical and Case Management Supervisors during individual staff supervision. Supervisors are responsible for assuring appropriate services and information is provided for clients and caregivers.

Annual training is made available in the confidentiality of all information related to foster children. Upon admission of the child to Camelot's Program, any information relative to past and present schools, doctors and placements are obtained. This assists the foster parent in registering the child for school, and in obtaining necessary medical care and current clinical information. Additional training specific to the needs of the child is made available to the foster parent prior to and/or in conjunction with placement. One specific training area has to do with placement of children with sexual behavior problems. Camelot works with the facility referring the child to provide appropriate training to foster parents to help make transition to foster care a successful one.

Case management staff receives training annually, and refreshers through supervision, regarding the information about children to be disclosed to foster parents to enable the foster parents to provide adequate and appropriate services for children in their care. Staff is trained on all new policies and procedures during monthly training or supervision sessions. The training on the requirements of DCFS policy Guide 2007.14 and compliance with this policy will be documented in supervisory sessions. Any lack of compliance with policy will be handled per agency disciplinary policy. The issue of receiving adequate information is part of the annual foster parent satisfaction survey.

- 9) *The right to be notified of scheduled meetings and staffing concerning the foster child in order to actively participate in the care planning and decision making process regarding the child; including an individual service planning meeting, administrative case reviews, interdisciplinary staffings, and individual educational planning meetings; the right to be informed of decisions made by the courts or the child welfare agency concerning the child, the right to provide input concerning the plan of services for the child and have that input given full consideration in the same manner as information presented by any other professional on the team, and the right to communicate with other professionals who work*

*with the foster child within the context of the team, including therapists, physicians, and teachers.*

Foster parents are a crucial part of the youth's multidisciplinary team and their input is necessary to ensure the youth's needs are able to be met. The Case Manager notifies foster parents all ACR dates, court proceedings, psychiatric evaluations and individual educational planning staffings for the children, as well as inform families of appointments and cancellations. Case managers will notify foster parents of these meetings either verbally or in written communication. Foster parents are also given the opportunity to call in to participate in office-based treatment plan reviews when they are unable to attend in person to offer observations and input relative to the child's behavior and treatment or service needs. Foster parents are provided a variety of opportunities and methods to voice their concerns regarding the care of the child as evidenced by their interaction with the In-Home Therapists, Therapists and medical experts.

Case Managers notify foster parents either in writing or verbally during home visits, of the outcomes of any court, permanency, case review (ACR), treatment plan or other meetings the foster parent is unable to attend. Case Managers and In-Home Therapists document the input of foster parents during home visits or other contacts. This input is utilized when preparing reports for the court, permanency hearings, treatment and service plan reviews, case reviews (ACR's), and child and family team meetings.

*10) The right to be given, in a timely and consistent manner any information a caseworker has regarding the child and child's family which is pertinent to the care and needs of the child and to the making of a permanency plan for the child. When a positive relationship exists between the foster parent and the child's family, the child's family may consent to disclosure of additional information.*

When a child is being matched with a foster family, all pertinent referral information on the child is shared with the potential foster family in addition to any information regarding the child in placement that is relevant to the needs of that child. Foster parents are encouraged to consider their own strengths, weaknesses, ability to manage challenging behaviors, and support system. Camelot understands that accepting foster children into your home can be a complicated decision. Prior to the pre-placement visit, In-Home Therapist or Case Manager reviews with the Foster Parent the Behavior Disclosure/Identification Form pertaining to the child being considered for placement. The document identifies all known

current and historical behavioral issues and provides an opportunity for the foster parent to review relevant documents in the child's file and discuss any issues of concern. The foster parent(s) signs the document as an acknowledgement. Any additional information received and/or updates will be provided to the foster parent on an ongoing basis by Camelot Staff.

Upon placement, foster parents are given a copy of the child's placement agreement form (906), medical care, copy of the child's portion of the service plan, visitation plan, educational information, & if applicable list of medications. In the event of emergency placement, the information will be mailed to the foster parent the next business day. After placement, it is the responsibility of the case manager to continually update the foster parent on any additional learned about the child. Foster parents will be encouraged to maintain importance documents and information in the child packet's after they receive it from the case manager.

Treatment interventions are identified to address behaviors that impact upon developing a trust-affection relationship, communication skills, self-actualization and interpersonal skills. As a result, these positive healthy relationships being developed, a child may self-disclose information about his/her family. When the child's family consents to disclosure of additional information to the foster family, such information will be shared.

Specific information concerning such issues as behavior, health, education, permanency or any known health factors are shared with the foster parents to assist in meeting the needs of that child.

*11) The right to be given written notice of (i) any change in a child's case plan, (ii) plans to terminate the placement of a child with the foster parent, and (iii) the reasons for the change or termination of placement. The notice shall be waived only in cases of a court order when the child is determined to be at imminent risk of harm*

Any change in the child's case plan is communicated in writing and/or verbally to the foster parents as early as possible, but no later than 72 hours after the occurrence and again in person at the next scheduled contact, to provide the child and foster family transition time. Foster families are involved in the permanency planning of the foster child in their home and, in the case of adoption as a permanency goal, are given first consideration in the adoption.

Camelot's policy and the Individual Independent Contract on each child placed in a foster parent's home specifies that a 14 day written notice, with reference to Emergency Review, will be provided when a placement is being terminated. In any situation resulting in the issuance of a 14-day notice, the notice will be in writing and copies of Department Rule 337,

Service Appeal Process, and Camelot Grievance Policy will be provided. In the event that a child is considered to be at imminent risk, the child will be removed immediately and the “notice of decision” issued.

An internal Clinical Review may be convened following a number of events that might compromise the stability of a child’s placement. These may include Significant Incident Report trends, unsuccessful service termination, a step-up to a more intensive placement level, foster parent 14-day notices, more than two lateral placement changes or any other concerns identified by the child, foster family or the treatment team. The treatment team can convene this review and request the presence of the Camelot State Executive Director as well as other appropriate staff, as needed. The purpose of this review is to understand the dynamics for the child as well as the foster parent that may have contributed to the disruption and which, if better understood, anticipated and planned for, could prevent future disruptions. Review outcomes should in most instances include recommendations for improvement where indicated. Cases may also reviewed by DCFS after multiple placement moves, or as requested by the agency or foster parent. A DCFS CIPP (Clinical Intervention for Placement Preservation) helps determine if there any additional service needed to stabilize the placement or if the youth would benefit from a different level of care. This meeting includes case managers, supervisors, clinical staff, foster parents, biological family, and any other involved parties. CIPP can take the place of an internal clinical review when appropriate. This information has also been incorporated into Camelot Performance and Quality Improvement process in which trends are analyzed and service improvements can be identified and implemented.

*12) The right to be notified in a timely and complete manner of all court hearings, including notice of the date and time of the court hearing, the name of the judge or hearing officer hearing the case, the location of the hearing. This includes the court docket number of the case and the right to intervene in court proceedings or to seek mandamus under the Juvenile Court Act of 1987.*

Upon receipt of any court date notifications, the Case Management Supervisor ensures the case manager has forwarded a copy of the notification to the foster parent of the designated child. Case Managers encourage foster parents to attend all court hearing during home visits and CFTMs. Case managers inform foster parents that attending court hearings are a great way for the judge and court personnel to hear from the foster parents firsthand of the needs of the youth and how the youth is doing in their home. Case managers also provide notification of upcoming court hearings to all service providers working with the youth. The notification is then filed in the child’s file for future reference. The notification itself provides the date, time, Judge’s name, location, and the court docket

number of the case. The Case Manager has the primary responsibility of informing the foster family as well as responsible for communicating this information to their Supervisor during weekly supervision. The Case Management Supervisor is responsible for maintaining a tracking document of all court dates for staff supervised and ensuring timely notifications of court hearings to foster parents are made. Notifications to foster parents have been incorporated into the quality improvement process to reinforce the importance of notifications and to support accountability. Staff accountability is also part of the annual evaluation section related to “Program and Service Responsibility”.

- 13) The right to be considered as a placement option when a foster child who was formerly placed with the foster parent is to be re-entered into foster care, if that placement is consistent with the best interest of the child and other children in the foster parent’s home.*

When a child with an ongoing case through Camelot Care Centers re-enters foster care, a check of the Camelot’s data-management software system and/or other data sources, is made to identify previous placement foster family. An assessment of availability and/or suitability of return to that placement is made by contacting the foster parents. If the child’s case has closed with Camelot, then the DCFS worker will conduct a record search in their system for all previous placements. DCFS will then contact Camelot to determine if home is a viable option for the youth re-entering foster care. Camelot will also consult with the biological parents to gather information about previous placements to ensure all efforts are made to find previous placements.

A comprehensive assessment of the child’s current behavioral and emotional functioning is completed. An assessment of the foster family situation, number of children in the home, the needs of the children currently in placement, and ability to meet the child’s needs are evaluated before placement would be determined.

- 14) The right to have timely access to the child placement agency’s existing appeals process and the right to be free from acts of harassment and retaliation by any other party when exercising the right of the appeal.*

Foster parents have several processes for appeals therefor; the appeal process may differ depending on the nature of their concern. For example, if their concern is regarding a placement change or the service plan, foster parents must follow the appeals process outlined by DCFS Appeals Brochure. This brochure can be given to the foster parent at any time but is always given during the ACR and when the agency issues a notice of removal.

During a licensing investigation, foster parents are informed of their rights and ability to appeal decisions made. If a licensing investigation is substantiated, foster parents are provided written communication to appeal and/or request a supervisory review.

Camelot has implemented a Grievance Policy for foster parents. During the Implementation Plan committee meetings, the grievance procedure is reviewed and all participants are asked for feedback about the procedure. All foster parents are provided a copy of the policy and the grievance form, as well as information regarding filing of appeals. All Camelot Foster parents are also given information of how to contact the State Executive Director should local response be inadequate. Camelot foster parents are encouraged to contact the Regional Director of their local office as early as a concern emerges and then the State Executive Director if needed.

Camelot staff complete regular training on harassment and ethical conduct upon initial hire and annually thereafter.

Any grievances of a serious nature, which have not been addressed by the above means, can be submitted in writing to:

Camelot Care Centers, LLC.  
333 W. Pierce Rd. Suite 175  
Itasca, IL 60143  
Attn: Ronica Patel (LCPC) State Executive Director or by email at  
[Ronica.Patel@pathways.com](mailto:Ronica.Patel@pathways.com)

*15) The right to be informed of the Foster Parent Hotline established under Section 35.6 of the Children and Family Services Act and all of the rights accorded to foster parents concerning reports of misconduct by Department employees; service providers, or contracts, confidential handling of these reports, and investigation by the Inspector General appointed under Section 35.5 of the Children and Family Services Act.*

All Camelot Specialized Foster Home Parents receive information about the Foster Parent Hotline through four sources:

- a) PRIDE training by the State of Illinois
- b) Brochures supplied by the Department and distributed to each foster parent by Camelot
- c) Camelot Foster Parent Manual
- d) Foster Parent Law Implementation Plan

All foster parents are provided a list of the following resources for assistance with any foster parent issues. The following information will also be made available on the Camelot Website, Foster Parent page(s).

- |  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| a) Ronica Patel, LCPC, State Executive Director                          | (630) 773-1985           |
| <a href="mailto:ronica.patel@pathways.com">ronica.patel@pathways.com</a> |                          |
| b) Office of Inspector General   | (800)722-9124            |
| c) Advocacy Office for Children and Families                             | (800) 232-3798           |
| d) Foster Parent Hotline   | (866) 368-5204           |
| e) Camelot Foster Parent Grievance Policy                                |                          |
| f) Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline   | (800) 25ABUSE (252-2873) |
| g) Day Care Information  | (877) 746-0829           |

### **FOSTER PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 1) *The responsibility to openly communicate and share information about the child with other members of the child welfare team.*

Open and ongoing communication between the therapist, case manager, foster parent and other members of the treatment team is strongly encouraged. Camelot also requires that all members of the child’s team actively participates in Child & Family Team meetings. Camelot acknowledges that foster parents will have the most pertinent information, which makes their attendance at all appointments/meetings regarding the youth vitally important. This is especially critical when children are being prescribed psychotropic medication. This philosophy is thoroughly incorporated into Camelot’s New Employee Training and Orientation Process to ensure new employees reinforce the importance of the foster parent’s attendance at meetings. Licensing Specialist discuss the importance of open communication and sharing information throughout the licensing process. Camelot staff reinforces the importance of communication during treatment team meetings, staff meetings, individual supervision and policy procedure reviews. Camelot conducted service delivery calls to solicit real-time feedback on service delivery and recommendations for improvement or continuation positive services. Camelot will continue increase utilization of this feedback loop to maintain open communication opportunities.

The foster parent also meets with the In-Home Therapist to review goals, current behavior and emotional problems, and focus of treatment. Depending on the needs of the youth the foster family may be asked to participate in family counseling services. If a youth receives therapy outside of Camelot, they family is encouraged to meet with the youth’s assigned therapist to review goals, current behaviors, and other possible issues arising with the youth.

The foster family meets with the Case Manager one to-three times per month, depending on level of care, to focus on service needs, visitation, education, health, safety and



wellbeing of the child in care. Due to the complexity and extensiveness of needs of the youth Camelot often serves, other providers and specialized services must be additionally utilized. Foster parents are expected to maintain medication logs and expenditure sheets, which must be submitted monthly to the assigned case manager. Delays in submitting these vital reports may result in delay of payment to the Foster Parent. Foster parents are also encouraged to contact the local office anytime to provide or receive additional information relevant to the ongoing care of the child in their home.

Quality assurance initiatives have continued as an effort to ensure that regions meet internal and external outcome requirements of service delivery. Each regional director ensures that their teams meet weekly to discuss performance measures including but not limited to:

- Documented and confirmed contacts with children
- Documented and confirmed contacts with foster parents
- Documented and confirmed contacts with biological parents
- Documented and confirmed completion of parent-child visits
- Documented and confirmed completion of sibling visits

These weekly performance meetings are intended to ensure service needs communicated to foster parents are met, monitored, and maintained.

Camelot enters into a contract with foster parents for each child placed in the home. The contract specifies the expectations of the relationship between Camelot and the foster parents. Foster parents have a responsibility to communicate all information relative to the care of children in that home.

All foster parents receive copies of the Foster Parent Law and the Camelot implementation plan during the licensing process and each time the plan is revised. It is posted and fully accessible on Camelot's website at [www.camelotcarecenters.com](http://www.camelotcarecenters.com). Also, all foster parents are invited to review and provide feedback of the Foster Parent Law Implementation Plan annually during September and October prior to the plan's submission. Case Managers, Case Manager Supervisors, Regional Directors, and Licensing Specialists also review different areas of the Implementation Plan throughout the year to recommend changes in service delivery or specifics of the Plan.

2) *The responsibility to respect the confidentiality of information concerning foster children and their families and act appropriately within applicable confidentiality laws and regulations.*

Foster parents are provided with rules about confidentiality during PRIDE training. It is further discussed during the licensing process with the CFS 590 and Camelot Foster Parent Manual. Licensing Specialists have ongoing conversations about the basics of confidentiality during their annual and semi-annual monitoring visits. Foster parents are given a copy of the DCFS Rule 402, which also reinforces confidentiality. Foster parents are encouraged to review all materials provided during the licensing process. Camelot will provide foster

parents with any updates concerning confidentiality. Navigating the rules of confidentiality can be challenging therefore, foster parents can request additional training or clarification to assist them with understanding the importance of confidentiality. Foster parents that are unsure if information can be shared should speak with the child's case manager before disclosing the information. The case manager will provide details of what can be shared and who it can be share with. Foster parents review and sign a "Foster Parent Clinical Non-Disclosure Agreement" which acknowledges their awareness of confidentiality concerns and their agreement not to disclose information. A copy is placed in their personal copy of the Camelot Foster Parent Manual. Camelot and Foster parents also enter into a formal contract, signed by both parties, which also emphasizes confidentiality. All foster parents have also been informed of the requirements of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

Foster parents agree to abide by the Camelot policy which states: "The Foster parents certify that they will keep all information concerning any child/family in the strictest confidence, to be used only by Camelot professionals and themselves in service to the child".

3) *The responsibility to advocate for children in the foster parent's care.*

Camelot foster parents act as advocates on behalf of the foster children in their care. This includes accessing education, medical and dental care, and psychiatric services and through interactions with the Camelot staff. While foster parents are primarily responsible for providing transportation, Camelot Case Managers may assist families by taking youth to medical, dental, and psychiatric appointments. These should be rare instances as case managers may not have all of the necessary information to share at these appointments. Case Aides are available to *assist* by accompanying foster parents who require vehicle services to transport youth in their care to medical, dental, and psychiatric appointments.

As a condition of license renewal, all foster parents are required to complete Educational Advocacy training. New Foster parents are encouraged to participate in the eight-hour training on Educational Advocacy to keep them abreast of any changes to "child rights" policy and procedure as soon as possible following initial licensure, and are required to be completed within the first year.

Case Managers will provide foster parents with information about court and working with the legal system in the best interest of the child. The foster parents are informed of the appeals process, regarding the rights of foster children, during the pre-service training and during continuing education. Foster parents are encouraged to contact their local Regional Director with any questions or to obtain help.

Camelot provides service appeal brochures to foster families and will assist in arranging for or directly provide training in service appeals.

Case Managers provides written or verbal notification to foster parents of court hearings, case reviews, placement review team meetings, case conferences and all other meetings pertaining to the delivery of services to the child. Foster parents are expected to attend these meetings to offer input regarding child's needs and other issues pertaining to the child's health, safety and well-being. Camelot staff can provide transportation assistance to facilitate foster parent attendance at any of the above-mentioned activities.

4) *The responsibility to treat children in the foster parent's care and the children's families with dignity, respect and consideration.*

Foster parents have the responsibility to treat foster children and their biological families with dignity and respect and consideration. This topic is covered in their PRIDE training and reviewed with the foster parents during the licensing process and ongoing monitoring appointments. The foster parent receives a copy of and agrees to follow all guidelines of Camelot Care Centers Child Rights Policy. This policy, which is read and signed by the child and guardian, guarantees a child's rights to receive appropriate and humane services within the least restrictive setting. Foster parents and youth served receive copies of the Child's Rights document. The document is also posted in each Camelot facility and is available in English and Spanish.

Foster parents receive training focused on working with children with specialized needs and meeting those needs with dignity, respect, and consideration. Training is also provided on how to work with biological families where reunification is the goal.

Camelot Case Managers are the primary service link for foster parents and for the children in their care. Case Managers are responsible for monitoring appropriateness of services and environment for children in foster care including, but not limited to, treatment with dignity, respect, and consideration. Case Managers document these monitoring efforts in the child's case record. Camelot therapists are present in the foster parent home on a weekly basis and Case Managers are in the home one to three times per month, depending on level of care, and also have additional contact with the child as needed. These contacts are viewed as opportunities to improve relationships across all lines and to also provide an opportunity for observation of parent-child interactions. In-Home Therapists and Case Managers are expected to provide feedback and suggestions for enhancing the relationship between foster parent and child wherever appropriate.

5) *The responsibility to recognize the foster parent's own individual and familial strengths and limitations when deciding whether to accept a child into care; and the responsibility to recognize the foster parent's own support needs and utilize appropriate supports in providing care for foster children.*

As part of the parent skills training offered during the pre-service, parents are assessed on their strengths and the availability of existing family resources. Prior to licensure, Foster parents complete a Tolerance of Behavioral Challenges form to help them assess what behaviors they are willing to manage. This will also help the licensing worker determine what additional training a foster parent might need to successfully foster specialized youth. During the licensing process, foster parents are encouraged to have a detailed discussion with their friends or family how they can best be supported. These are some of examples of what support may consist of: making a weekly meal for the foster family, taking the foster youth to an appointment, or babysitting the youth as needed. The foster parents have a responsibility to use these natural resources in an effort to support the children in their care. Camelot provides additional training and/or resources for the foster parents to address limitations identified throughout assessment process that the licensing specialist completes. The pre-service and on-going trainings also discuss the importance of how support systems aid in maintaining placements. Springfield and Peoria locations utilize a foster parent mentoring program as formal supports to foster parents. Licensing Specialists will also provide foster parents with a list of support groups, resource websites, and other resources as they become available.

Camelot foster parents are encouraged to seek appropriate supports and are linked with other licensed foster parents in the Camelot Specialized Foster Home Program, as well as local community, county, and state organizations.

The Camelot team considers strengths, limitations, and additional training needs of the foster parent when making placement recommendations.

- 6) *The responsibility to be aware of the benefits of relying on and affiliating with other foster parents and foster parent associations in improving the quality of care and service to children and families.*

Regional Directors have and continue to work to develop local advisory committees comprised of foster parents and community stakeholders (where possible) to address local issues and participate in the anticipated establishment of a Statewide Foster Parent Advisory Board. Other efforts to elicit participation have been more successful. In past years, Camelot has had members in leadership roles with the Foster Parent Advisory Council. Another office submitted a video testimonial to the State Executive Director from a foster parent attesting to improved service delivery and educational opportunities available to her and other fosters parents.

Regional Directors ensure that all foster parents are aware of the opportunity to join State and National Foster Parent organizations and may cover the costs to send a select number of foster parents to the annual Foster Family-Based Treatment Association (FFTA) meeting to facilitate on-going training and provide the opportunity to network with other foster

parents throughout the country. Each Camelot regional office will continue to support the development, implementation and maintenance of local foster parent advisory committees to provide continual input and feedback to the local and state administrative leadership.

7) *The responsibility to assess the foster parent's on-going individual training needs and take action to meet those needs.*

All foster parents receive training to address emotional and behavioral concerns consisting on three levels:

- a. Orientation: The goal of the orientation level training is to provide an overview of the philosophy, policies and procedures of the Foster Home Program, as well as an introduction to the therapeutic approach utilized by all Camelot programs.
- b. Parent Skills Training: The goal of the parent skills training is to provide practical information on specific treatment interventions, practice and explore effective and appropriate parenting skills, and to understand child development.
- c. Continuing Education: The goal of continuing education is to provide foster parents with the opportunity to receive information on topics that are of immediate concerns or interest in the care of the children. These topics can include, but are not limited to: impact of trauma, psychiatric diagnosis & medications, substance abuse issues, holiday programming, case manager responsibilities, and crisis intervention.

Licensing Specialist request feedback regarding training needs from the foster parents, case managers, and other Camelot staff. This feedback helps guide the selection of training topics that are conducted throughout the year. Licensing Specialists work closely with the families to solicit any additional training resources that are not captured in the above-mentioned training format. If a foster parent or Camelot staff identifies an area of need, then the team will seek out or develop a training or resource for this need. Specialized Foster parents are required to obtain 16 hours of training annually to help families met the needs of youth Camelot serves. Our families are highly encouraged to complete 8 hours or 50% of the annual training requirement a through Camelot provided training. Camelot's website also includes links for foster parents to locate training and additional resources. Foster parents are encouraged to make recommendations to Camelot staff regarding worthwhile training opportunities.

8) *The responsibility to develop and assist in implementing strategies to prevent placement disruptions, recognizing the traumatic impact of placement disruptions of a foster child and all members of the foster family; and the responsibility to provide emotional support for the foster children and members of the foster family if preventative strategies fail and placement disruptions occur.*

Camelot foster parents are informed of the intensive level of behavioral and emotional needs of the children that Camelot serves. Because of these heightened supervision and

behavior modification skills required of foster parents, it is the responsibility of the foster parent to enlist all the necessary support possible, including Camelot's 24-hour on-call service, to offset a possible placement disruption. Camelot staff and the foster parents have a dual responsibility of ensuring the stability of a child in placement. Prior to placement, Camelot identifies foster parent's strengths and preferences for placements to increase placement stability. Additionally, the child's caseworker and other members of the team are responsible for sharing information with the foster parent as it relates to the child including but not limited to the emotional, behavioral, and mental health needs. Foster parents are also responsible for sharing information about the child's on-going needs or new needs that may arise. Foster parents are expected to engage with a child's in-home therapist in order to best understand the child's needs and how to meet those needs.

To prevent placement disruptions Camelot designated on-call staff are available 24-hours a day. In-home therapists provide individual interventions to the child, both at home and at school to stabilize placements. The frequency of contact relates to level of care and identified need. Frequency can be increased as it relates to the needs of the child or family. Camelot Clinical Director and the Regional Director are available by cell phone 24-hours a day, seven days a week for crisis consultation/intervention. When necessary, Clinical Directors and Regional Directors may be accessed by foster parents via the designated on-call staff. The foster parent has the responsibility of sharing all information to these team members in order to prevent a disruption.

Foster parents receive training in strategies for stabilizing the placement including the use of Respite Care, 24-hour on-call staff availability, and on-going stabilization services.

If a child should require a short stabilization in a psychiatric hospital, after being assessed by the local SASS Program, the Case Manager, In-Home Therapist, and Clinical/Regional Director works with the foster parents to understand the situation and the needs of the foster child. As needed, Camelot staff will provide any supportive services to assist the foster family in managing the impact of the disruption on their own family and/other foster children in the home. Camelot staff maintains contact, participates in hospital staffings, and provides individual interventions as appropriate to the hospitalized foster child. In the event that placement stabilization efforts fail, the foster parent has a responsibility to share information with Camelot staff that may assist in the stabilization of the next foster home setting.

Under certain circumstances, The Illinois State Executive Director will be consulted by the local office's clinical staff regarding premature discharges and foster placement disruptions. Requests for clinical staffings will be made via email and can be requested by direct service staff, supervisors, managers, or foster parents. The purpose of the review is to identify solutions to problems or concerns that could lead to disruption and understand the dynamics that may have contributed to the disruption. This will help Camelot staff and

foster parents work together to prevent future disruptions and stabilize the placements. The review itself will include clinical, case management, and supervisory staff of the local office, the foster parent(s), and additional parties as needed. The review will focus on actions that could be taken, or could have been taken, to better manage the environment and prevent child's disruption and/or foster parent burn-out. In cases where CIPP's need to occur, the staffing would take the place of this review.

- 9) *The responsibility to know the impact foster parent parenting has on individuals and family relationships; and the responsibility to endeavor to minimize, as much as possible, any stress that results from foster parenting.*

Parenting youth that have experienced significant trauma is taxing and challenging on foster families. During the initial licensing process, Camelot assesses how the family is currently managing stress in their lives and techniques each foster parent utilizes to decrease their stress. Licensing specialist emphasize the importance of the families being able to recognize when they are feeling stress and strategies for managing stress. Camelot staff will also routinely assess how foster families are coping with any challenges and solicit opportunities for foster parents to report stress-related issues and/or to identify the need for stress management assistance. Camelot staff make themselves available to talk through concerns, brainstorming solutions, and or simply lending a sympathetic ear. As needed, Camelot will also find resources to provide stress management training and/or other resources to foster parents.

If the In-Home Therapists or caseworker perceives an increase in the level of stress of the foster parent, respite services or other identified interventions can be quickly implemented. This will provide both the child and the foster family the opportunity to relax, regroup and decrease the stress level within the home prior to a placement disruption occurring. Camelot will provide each foster parent with a specialized or adolescent level of care youth with one day per child in care per month of paid respite care to assist with the stress of caring for the children placed in their homes. Camelot will provide each foster parent with a traditional placement with respite care as needed to assist with the stress of caring for the children placed in their homes.

In addition to the planned respite opportunities for foster parents, unplanned respite can also be utilized when the stress level of the foster parent indicates a therapeutic need. Additional respite can be requested and approved at any time the foster parent and treatment team determine it may be in the best interest of either the foster parent or the child or both. Foster parents are not penalized "accrued" respite days for these situations. Foster parents can also initiate a "voluntary hold" on placements to allow an opportunity for a break between placements. The "voluntary hold" should be specified in writing and provided to the Licensing Specialist. Foster parents may also request assistance in

managing the stresses associated with fostering specialized needs children both during and after placements. Such assistance can be provided by Camelot staff or foster parents will be assisted in locating alternative counseling or other supports.

*10) The responsibility to know the rewards and benefits to children, parents, families, and society that come from foster parenting and to promote the foster parenting experience in a positive way.*

Camelot models promoting foster parenting in a positive way during our initial meeting with potential new families and throughout the licensing process. Licensing specialists encourage foster parents to be advocates of our program through the participation in the development of the Implementation Plan, recruitment events, and our referral incentive program. Licensing specialist also ask foster parents to share their fostering experiences for Camelot to use on our social media platforms. Lastly, foster parents are encouraged to join county, state and national foster care associations, which promote foster parenting in a positive manner. Camelot provides assistance in locating organizations and will pay for the cost of membership to the Illinois Foster Parent Association.

Foster parents have a responsibility to provide testimonies and success stories about their positive experiences as a foster parent. This may come in the form of a letter of accolades to other foster parents, verbal testaments at a foster parent meeting or through word of mouth at community and social gatherings. Research shows Foster Parents are the best recruiters of new foster parents. Camelot encourages recruitment by offering a substantial recruitment bonus for all foster families, new to foster care and licensed by Camelot.

Camelot also provides, where possible and subject to economic or regionally imposed limitations, annual foster parent appreciation dinners, annual foster parent picnic, and Christmas party for each of its office locations.

The Camelot Website, Facebook page, and Instagram page provide additional opportunities to promote activities and events both from within and outside of the Agency including individual foster parent recognition.

*11) The responsibility to know the roles, rights and responsibilities of foster parents, other professionals in the child welfare system, and the foster child's own family.*

Pre-service training for Camelot foster parents includes a discussion of the foster parent's roles, rights and responsibilities, as well as the roles, rights and responsibilities of the child's natural family, Camelot, and the State. Each foster parent receives copies of the Foster Parent Law and the Camelot Implementation Plan.



Camelot foster parents also receive a copy of the Foster Parent Manual that clearly defines their role and responsibilities. During the licensing process, foster parents learn how their role interfaces with other roles and programs within the Illinois child welfare system. Upon request, Camelot foster parents are provided an organizational chart specific to the staff structure of the office in which they are licensed as well as the State structure of the Agency. All foster parents receive contact information for the Camelot's Leadership team and are encouraged to contact the Leadership with needs or concerns they may have.

Regular Foster Parent Training is provided which includes foster parents and agency staff. Training topics vary based on continuing training requirements for licensure as well as new policies and procedures of both Camelot and DCFS. Foster parents are being asked to identify areas in which they feel comfortable to participate as co-trainers or lead trainers in monthly foster parent meetings.

Foster parents are highly encouraged to participate in Child and Family Team Meetings which involve review of treatment services for children in their care and modification of treatment plans when indicated. Additionally, foster parents are encouraged to attend and participate all other meetings involving the youth in their home including but not limited to ACR's, court proceedings, CIPPs, and other staffings. This gives foster parents an opportunity to have provide important information regarding the youth and contribute to the youth's success.

*12) The responsibility to know and, as necessary, fulfill the foster parent's responsibility to serve as a mandated reporter of a suspected child abuse or neglect under the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act; and the responsibility to know the child welfare agency's policy regarding allegations that foster parents have committed child abuse or neglect and applicable administrative rules and procedures governing investigations of those allegations.*

During pre-service training, foster parents receive education on their role as a mandated reporter of suspected child abuse or neglect under the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act. During the licensing process, Licensing Specialists review foster parents role as a mandated reporter and answer any questions or concerns may have regarding being a mandated reporter. A copy of the mandated reporter agreement (CANTS 22B) is reviewed and signed by each foster parent as acknowledgment of the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act. A copy of the agreement is given to the parent for their continued review and a copy remains in the foster family file. Case managers also reinforce the importance of being a mandated reporter and offer assistance to foster parents as needed.

Pre-service training also discusses how to manage allegations of abuse and neglect against foster parents, the responsibility of the Agency and of the State to investigate such allegations, the rights of the foster parents during such investigations, and the rules and regulations governing such investigations.

DCFS Learning and Development Center (LDC) has a mandated reporter training that is offered on-demand for foster parents. This training helps foster parents understand their role in protecting children by reporting abuse as required. DCFS LDC also offers Working with Youth with Sexual Behavior Problems training for both foster parents and case managers. Foster parents are encouraged to take this training to help distinguish between what can be regarded as normal youth sexual behavior and what is defined as a sexual behavior problem. This training will also increase their knowledge of when and how to intervene with a youth in their home who has sexual behavior problem.

- 13) The responsibility to know and receive training regarding the purpose of administrative case reviews, client service plans and court processes, as well as any filing or time requirements associated with those proceedings; and the responsibility to actively participate in the foster parent's designated role in these proceedings.*

Case managers or case manager supervisors provide individualized information to foster parents regarding procedures for Administrative Case Reviews and court hearings.

As needed, Camelot will invite a DCFS representatives to make presentations discussing the importance of ACR's client service plans. The Camelot policy on Court Appearances (located in the Foster Parent Manual) discusses the importance of the foster parent's attendance and participation. The foster parents have a responsibility to review this information periodically and seek clarity from the supervising agency whenever necessary.

- 14) The responsibility to know the child welfare agency's appeal procedure for foster parents and the rights of foster parents under the procedure.*

Foster parents have the responsibility to understand and review the child welfare agency's appeal process as outlined by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services.

Foster parents are provided copies of Department Rule 337, Service Appeal Process, and the Camelot Grievance Procedure at initial licensure. Foster parents also receive training regarding their rights under these procedures. Any grievances, appeals, etc. which have not been addressed by the above means, can be submitted in writing to:

Camelot Care Centers, Inc.  
333 W. Pierce Rd, Suite 175  
Itasca, IL 60143

Attn: Ronica Patel, LCPC  
Executive Director  
Or by email to Ronica Patel at [Ronica.Patel@pathways.com](mailto:Ronica.Patel@pathways.com)

Foster parents are given the Camelot's Grievance Policy with the Foster Parent Manual at the time of licensure and again during renewal. Additional information concerning utilization of and access to internal and external appeals systems is available to all foster parents upon request.

- 15) The responsibility to know and understand the importance of maintaining accurate and relevant records regarding the child's history and progress; and the responsibility to be aware of and follow the procedures and regulations of the child welfare agency with which the foster parent is licensed or affiliated.*

The Camelot foster parents are provided with guidance on Foster Parent Documentation, including: conducting monthly fire drills, daily medication logs, disaster drills (every 6 months), Medical Consultation Reports, Medication Logs, Quality Assurance Reports, Respite Request Forms, Mileage Reimbursement Records, Monthly Expenditure Sheets and Maintenance of Records. Foster parents receive a Foster Parent Manual during the licensing process that contains copies of the forms they are expected to complete along with the Camelot policy pertaining to the documents. Training also discusses the importance of social history information pertaining to the child both before and during foster care placement and the role of the foster parents in adding to social history data. Foster parents also receive a copy of Department Rule 402, Licensing Standards for Foster Family Homes, which further specifies documentation requirements. Licensing Specialists review this information during announced and unannounced monitoring visits and assist foster parents with collection and organization of relevant documents.

Camelot foster parents are provided with a child packet on every foster child in their care at the time of placement. The information in this packet will include: child's information, important contact information, 906, medication/behavioral information, upcoming dates/appointments, school information, and payment breakdown for foster parents. Foster parents will be responsible for adding updated information such as: yearly physical, dental exam, hearing/vision exam, school information and any other pertinent information to the child's care or needs.

- 16) The responsibility to share information, through the child welfare team, with the subsequent caregiver (whether the child's parent or substitute care giver) regarding the child's adjustment in the foster parent's home.*

Camelot staff provides available written and verbal information to subsequent caregivers regarding the child adjustment to the home. This information includes history of child, any psychological evaluations, mental health assessment, individualized treatment and service plans, current medical information, Reviews and Individualized Education Plan. Foster parents are encouraged to provide relevant information to subsequent caregivers in order to assist in the adaptation and transition for the child to his/her new home. Although

Camelot does not have a formal training regarding communication, Camelot staff ensures foster parent are aware of this responsibility through ongoing conversations. Camelot staff model the expectation of communication through home visits, asking for input, and our Quarterly Newsletter.

When children are moved to new foster homes a pre-placement visit is required unless the placement change is due to an emergency situation. Prior to the pre-placement visit, the Case Manager reviews with the prospective Foster Parent the Behavior Disclosure/Identification Form pertaining to the child being considered for placement. The document identifies all known current and historical behavioral issues and provides an opportunity for the Foster Parent to review relevant documents in the child's file and discuss any issues of concern. The Foster Parent(s) signs the document as an acknowledgement.

Permanency planning for any child admitted to the Specialized Foster Home Program includes identification of a discharge resource. This includes the child's biological family, adoptive family, foster care family or independent living resource.

Foster parents also have the responsibility of developing and maintaining a life book for the foster children. Case Management staff and/or the Permanency Specialist assist foster parents in the creation and maintenance of the life book, which may include pictures, chronicles and/or major milestones in the life of a child. The life book is shared with each placement and is expected to continue at each placement.

- 17) *The responsibilities to provide care and services that are respective of and responsive to the child's cultural needs and are supportive of the relationship between the child and his/her own family. Also, the responsibility to recognize the increased importance of maintaining the child's cultural identity when the race or culture of the foster family differs from that of the foster child and the responsibility to take action to address these issues.*

Camelot provides training regarding cultural sensitivity especially when the child's race or culture differs from that of the foster family. The Camelot staff provides additional support to the foster parent wherever possible and when indicated. Clinical intervention is scheduled anytime it is perceived that a foster parent does not understand the cultural differences in foster child/ren.

Camelot staff and foster parents receive training on the Inter-Ethnic Placement Act and understand the implications of the law. Camelot supports foster parents in delivering culturally sensitive services to children and families, including the foster family.

Camelot Care Centers' website will provide linkages to training opportunities and information relevant to cultural sensitivity.