

Section: Family and Children's

Subject: Alternate Care – Emergency Foster Care

Title: Emergency Foster Care

- I. PURPOSE:** When it is determined by an intake social worker or supervisor that a child can no longer remain in his/her own home safely, it is of paramount importance that La Crosse County Human Services Dept. provide a network of emergency foster homes. Those foster homes designated as “emergency” have volunteered to be on-call and carry a county issued pager or use their own personal cellular phone.

To qualify as an “emergency” foster home, the home must maintain a current foster home license with LCHSD, have two openings available (according to the number of children the home is licensed for minus the number of children in placement) and have at least one foster parent not employed outside the home. In cases where the foster parent is employed outside the home, but in the summer is not required to report to work (e.g. teachers, school staff) that provider would qualify to be an emergency foster home during the summer months only provided they have a current license and two openings.

Two foster homes will be scheduled to be on – call at all times, one for children ages 0 – 5 and one for children ages 5 – 17. Emergency foster homes will only be utilized for children that are victims of abuse or neglect. Some of these children even though they are victims may also have perpetration issues – if aggressive tendencies or perpetration issues are known by the social worker at the time of placement this must be disclosed to the emergency foster parent.

To minimize multiple placement trauma, when an emergency foster home volunteers to be on-call, they must be available for sixty days beyond the period of on-call time to provide for the children placed with them.

- II. APPLICABILITY:** All emergency out of home placements of children.

- III. DEFINITIONS:** Emergency placement: placement of a child that was necessitated due to emergency conditions
On – call: availability twenty-four hours a day for a specific number of days based on scheduling

III. POLICY/PROCEDURE:

REGULAR HOURS (M-F, 8:30 – 5:00)

1. The Child Protection Intake Social Worker must contact the Placement Coordinator when they receive a referral for investigation and it is likely that the child(ren) will be placed in emergency foster care. If the placement coordinator is not available, the Social Service Specialist (Sharon McHugh) responsible for the scheduling of emergency homes will assist the CPS Intake Social Worker. The Placement Coordinator or the Social Service Specialist must be given pertinent data about the child (name, age, race, any known behaviors etc).
2. The Placement Coordinator will contact the emergency on-call foster home to notify them that an investigation is occurring and there is potential for placement.
3. The emergency on-call home is expected to accept all placements they are paged or called for unless the child is beyond the age range licensed for, or the placement(s) would put the home over the limit on number of children indicated on their license. There is a provision that allows for up to 6 children per home if it is for the purpose of allowing a sibling group to stay together.
4. The CPS Intake Social Worker will call the emergency foster home directly to indicate estimated time of arrival or to make arrangements for the foster parent to pick the child up from the agency or another location.
5. The CPS Intake Social Worker will give the emergency foster parent a **signed medical authorization, placement paperwork and the child's medical assistance/Badger care card**. In the event that the medical assistance/Badger care card is not available the CPS Social Worker will make every effort to obtain the card and forward it to the foster parent within three working days. If an initial application for MA coverage for the child must be submitted it will take approximately two weeks for the card to be mailed directly to the foster home.
6. Within **one working day** of the placement the CPS Intake Social Worker must complete the Placement Notification form. The Placement Notification form must be filled out completely and accurately – check the “**emergency**” placement box to ensure that the foster parents receive emergency foster care payment. Completed forms must be turned into to the S.S.S. in the Alternate Care Unit.

AFTER HOURS (CPS INTAKE PAGER)

1. The CPS Intake Social Worker will contact the emergency on-call foster home to notify them that children have been taken into custody and are in need of placement. They will make arrangements for delivery/pick-up of the children.
2. The emergency on-call home is expected to accept all placements they are paged or called for unless the child is beyond the age range licensed for, or the placement(s) would put the home over the limit on number of children indicated on their license. There is a provision that allows for up to 6 children per home if it is for the purpose of allowing a sibling group to stay together.
3. The CPS Intake Social Worker will give the emergency foster parent a **signed medical authorization, placement paperwork and the child's medical assistance/Badger care card**. In the event that the medical assistance/Badger care card is not available the CPS Social Worker will make every effort to obtain the card and forward it to the foster parent within three working days. If an initial application for coverage for the child must be submitted it will take approximately two weeks for the card to be mailed directly to the foster home.
4. Within one working day of the placement the CPS Intake Social Worker must complete the Placement Notification form. The Placement Notification form must be filled out completely and accurately – check the “**emergency**” placement box to ensure that the foster parents receive emergency foster care payment. Completed forms must be turned into to the S.S.S. in the Alternate Care Unit.

EMERGENCY HOMES

1. Payment/Rates: For children placed in emergency foster care

		2009	
1.	ages	0 – 4	\$11.47/day + 19.91/day (31.38)
	a.	5 - 11	\$12.53/day + 23.62/day (36.15)
	b.	12 – 14	\$14.24/day + 22.05/day (36.29)
	c.	15 – 18	\$14.86/day + 21.49/day (36.35)
2. Payment for the child's placement starts on the day the child arrives (e.g. if you are called at 11:40 p.m. on Jan. 1 and the child actually arrives at 3:00 a.m. on Jan.. 2, placement starts on Jan. 2).
3. Emergency foster homes that are scheduled to be on-call will receive \$20.00/day pager duty for the actual days on-call. (effective 8-1-06)
4. The on-call schedule will be determined based on foster homes that have an interest in being on-call and that volunteer to go on-call based on their availability. **When the scheduled on-call home is at capacity the pager will be moved to another on-call home.** Pager duty will only be paid to the new on-call home.
5. Emergency on-call foster homes must be available to take children twenty-four hours per day.
6. Emergency on-call foster parents must be available by pager or telephone (i.e. you and the pager must be in range at all times, rule of thumb is within La Crosse County, **within 30 minutes**).
7. Emergency on-call foster homes that also have on-going placements cannot combine the use of respite for the other children in placement while being on-call to accept more placements.
8. Emergency on-call foster parents will have children in emergency placement for up to 60 days. Emergency foster care placements do not earn respite and emergency homes will not be allowed to use respite. **Exception: If a placement exceeds thirty days 2 days of respite/month will be earned and can be used.**
9. If an emergency foster home expresses an interest in keeping a child as an ongoing placement or they are asked to keep a child for ongoing placement and agree, they will no longer be paid emergency foster care rates. They will be paid the base rate for that child and if the child has special needs, a supplemental/exceptional payment. Payment will change on the date an agreement is made. The CPS Social worker will complete the change in placement (status) form.
10. If an emergency on-call home has openings and refuses a placement the pager will be moved to a new on-call home. The day the pager is moved only the new on-call home will be paid pager duty

IV. **METHOD OF REVIEW:** This policy will be reviewed in August of every year.

EFFECTIVE: 8/30/00

REVISED:

APPROVED:

NANCY POHLMAN 8/00