



# THE "GO-TO GUIDE"

## A GUIDE FOR FOSTER AND KINSHIP CAREGIVERS

Information You Need To Know... But Not All Of It!



**ARIZONA**  
DEPARTMENT  
*of* CHILD SAFETY

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# INTRODUCTION

Prepared by the Arizona Foster Care Supports Team

This Guide provides basic information about the child welfare system in Arizona to help you understand how children come into care, why they are there, and the rules and policies that have been created to protect children in out-of-home care. It has information about the roles and responsibilities of the people connected to the child welfare and court systems who may work with a child, his or her family, and your family.

The information in this guide is primarily focused on the needs of persons (adult caregiver and other household members) providing care to children in the custody of the Department of Child Safety (DCS). Each DCS foster family should have a copy of the following resource handbooks and handouts. They are the must have reference guides for all families.

- Title 21 Chapter 6, the Licensing Rules
- DCS Discipline Policy Resource Guide
- Mercy Care DCS Comprehensive Health Plan (Mercy Care DCS CHP) Member Handbook
- Confidentiality, Guidelines for Foster Parents
- Family Foster Home Agreement
- Child Placement Rates and Special Allowances Approval Matrix (CSO 1109)

If you do not have copies of this information, please contact your licensing agency or DCS Specialist for assistance in obtaining these documents.

Foster and Kinship Caregivers with the Department of Child Safety (DCS)/Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) or Department of Health Services (DHS)/Home Care Treatment Care for Home Care Clients (HCTC) will need some or all of these reference guides in addition to the information specific to either program services.

Terms used in the Guide:

- Foster parent(s)—means a licensed foster, kinship and adoptive parents, and unlicensed kinship parents.
- DCS Specialist (CSS) —means the same as Child Safety Worker (CSW) or Child Safety Case Manager (CSCM)
- Child—singular refers one child or children

Disclaimer: This information is subject to change based upon the availability of new interpretations, new standards, new policies, federal and state laws, new eligibility requirements or services offered and other developments in the field. Please refer to the DCS, CHP or other referenced web sites for the most current available information. The material provided on this document is designed for educational and information purposes only. This information is not inclusive of all terms, provisions, providers, services and/or support necessary to care for a foster child. There is no document available that will provide you with all of the information necessary to be a competent foster or kinship parent.