

Aspiranet

~September 2022~ Monthly Regulation Topic

Preventing Allegations & Complaints

Community Care Licensing (CCL) defines a complaint as “any allegation that a licensing regulation or law is being violated”. Complaints can come from a variety of different individuals or sources (foster child, child’s birth family, school, therapist, social worker, etc.). Understandably, a complaint and subsequent investigation can be one of the most difficult experiences in your role as a resource parent. It is a common reaction to feel betrayed and/or angry, and many resource parents find it difficult to not take an allegation personally. It may be helpful to remember that children are placed in foster care due to neglect, abuse and trauma and therefore complaint reporting laws are designed to protect them and prevent further mistreatment.

Risk Prevention

One of the best ways to prevent problems and allegations is to take steps to minimize risk as much as possible:

- * **Take advantage of training opportunities:** Learn all you can in order to develop your skills and knowledge in caring for children in foster care who often have behavioral and emotional struggles.
- * **Follow all State and Agency Licensing Regulations:** As a resource parent, it is essential that you maintain state and agency licensing requirements in order to protect the children in your care as well as your entire family.
- * **Reduce Risk within your Home:** Maintain health and safety standards in your home at all times. Prevent any possibility that a child in your care may access something dangerous or potentially harmful. Routinely check your home and yard for possible safety hazards or regulation violations.
- * **Make Supervision a Priority:** Resource parents are expected to supervise and know where your foster children are at all times. If the children are not in your presence, know where they are, who they are with, including name, address and/or phone number. Get to know your foster children’s friends and their parents.
- * **Have a Supervision Plan:** If for some reason you are unable to provide care and supervision, you must have appropriate adults available for supervision who understand the requirements and the significance of providing supervision to foster children.

Have at least one adult identified, who is able to provide appropriate care and supervision to your children. This could be another resource parent, or an adult friend or family member who you’ve identified using the Prudent Parent Standard as appropriate, willing and capable to care for your children. This is a very important component of your supervision plan as a resource parent.

- * **Be as informed as possible about children in your care:** Aspiranet provides all known information to resource parents at placement and. Continue to ask questions and learn as much as you can about children in your care. The more you know, the better you will be able to respond to behaviors and possible risk factors.

Protection

- * **Maintain Regular, Open Communication:** One of the most important ways to prevent and protect yourself from possible allegations is to maintain open communication with your Aspiranet Social Worker. Communicate regularly about the status of your foster children, share your concerns, ask

questions and request help when needed. Also be sure to report all injuries or accidents that occur with your foster children.

- * **Be a Professional Team Member:** When working with your child's service providers, always be professional and courteous. Develop positive relationships, as well as cooperate and communicate with key adults involved with your foster children, including county social workers, birth parents, therapists, teachers, & medical professionals.
- * **Foster Parent Self Reporting:** If you recognize that you have violated a regulation or law, it is best to immediately report it to Aspiranet. A self reported violation often does not require an investigation as the event is already reported and known to all parties. Therefore, a self-reported violation will most often be treated as an incident, rather than a complaint.
- * **Know Children's Personal Rights:** Be very familiar with children's personal rights and uphold them at all times. Personal rights violations are the most common type of complaint. If you do violate a child's personal rights, own your mistake and apologize to the child. As mentioned, self-report to Aspiranet immediately.
- * **Maintain Appropriate Boundaries:** Along with supervision, teaching and maintaining appropriate boundaries within your family is very important. This is particularly important for children with a history of aggression or sexual acting out behavior. Develop household rules that support boundaries, such as asking before hugging, knocking before entering bedrooms/bathrooms, one person in bathroom at a time, children play in common rooms not bedrooms, etc. Also be cautious about being alone with a child who is sexually provocative.
- * **Complete Foster Parent Incident Reports:** A Foster Parent Incident Report is vital for communicating in writing *your* account what occurred during an incident or event. Please do not underestimate the importance of this documentation. Please provide to your Aspiranet social worker as soon as possible following an event or incident.

Please sign and return this page to your Aspiranet Social Worker for training credit.

My signature below indicates that I have completed the September 2022 "Preventing Allegations & Complaints" training.

Signature Resource Parent #1

Date

Print Name Resource Parent #1

Signature Resource Parent #2

Date

Print Name Resource Parent #2

Aspiranet Authorized Signature

Date

Training credit: ____ minutes