

## **POLICY**

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**SUBJECT: Foster Grandparent Program**

**NUMBER: RF-717-14**

**APPLICABLE TO: All Staff**

**APPROVED:** \_\_\_\_\_ /signature on original/

**Sam Abed, Secretary**

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_ 10/29/14

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### **I. POLICY**

The Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) sponsors the Foster Grandparent Program, a volunteer program that is federally funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service.

### **II. AUTHORITY**

- A. Md. Code Ann., Human Services, §9-203 and §9-204.
- B. P.L. 93-113 (87 Stat. 394) - Domestic Volunteer Service Act Of 1973
- C. 42 U.S. Code § 4950, *et seq.*- Volunteerism Policy
- D. 45 CFR Part 2552 – Foster Grandparent Program
- E. Code of Maryland, Human Srvcs. Article, §9-203

### **III. DIRECTIVES/POLICIES RESCINDED**

- A. Foster Grandparent Program, 01.16.28

### **IV. FAILURE TO COMPLY**

Failure to comply with the Department's Policy and Procedures shall be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

### **V. STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES**

Standard operating procedures have been developed.

**VI. REVISION HISTORY**

DESCRIPTION OF REVISION	DATE OF REVISION
Revised policy issued; application procedures revised; added reference to DJS Confidentiality, Elimination and Reporting of Sexual Abuse and Harassment, Child Abuse & Neglect Reporting policies to ensure compliance with state and federal laws.	10/29/14
Revised procedures to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prohibit the department from restricting the eligibility of a Foster Grandparent based on their limited English proficiency;</li><li>• Allow Foster Grandparents to receive reimbursement for the cost of one meal per day during their service schedule, orientation and training; and</li><li>• Allow Foster Grandparents an opportunity to file a grievance or an appeal prior to being terminated for cause.</li></ul>	1/26/15



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## PROCEDURES

**SUBJECT: Foster Grandparent Program**

**NUMBER: RF-717-14**

**APPLICABLE TO: All Staff**

**APPROVED:** \_\_\_\_\_ /signature on original/

**Linda McWilliams, Deputy Secretary**

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_ 1/26/15

### I. PURPOSE

To provide guidelines for the consistent implementation of the Foster Grandparent Program and the supervision of Foster Grandparent volunteers.

### II. DEFINITIONS

*Advisory Council:* The Board, which is comprised of 12 people including, but not limited to, Foster Grandparent volunteers, community members, site coordinators, is a focused and sustained core group that provides perspectives and active assistance from the larger community. The Board assists in fundraising, resource development and review of grievances.

*Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS):* The authorized Federal Department/Agency that establishes rules and regulations for the Foster Grandparent Program.

*Project Director:* The Department of Juvenile Service staff member responsible for the operation and daily management of the Foster Grandparent Program.

*Site Coordinator:* The Department of Juvenile Services staff member or other DJS designated person located on site at the volunteer station who supervises the day to day work of the Foster Grandparent volunteer.

*Sponsor:* The Maryland Department of Juvenile Services.

*Volunteer Site:* The location to which a Foster Grandparent volunteer reports to perform his or her duties as a member of the Department of Juvenile Services Foster Grandparent Program.

### **III. PROCEDURES**

#### **A. Work Criteria**

1. Foster Grandparents are volunteers and are not employees of the Department, the volunteer station, the Corporation for National and Community Service, or the Federal Government.
2. A pre-service and annual physical examination is required and must be submitted to the Project Director to determine fitness for duty.
3. Under no circumstances shall a Foster Grandparent receive a fee or gratuity for services from service recipients, their legal guardians, members of their family, or friends.
4. Foster Grandparents shall give direct services to one or more eligible children. Foster Grandparents cannot be assigned to roles such as teacher's aides, group leaders, or other similar positions that would detract from a person-to-person relationship.
5. Upon entering the program, Foster Grandparents shall serve a three (3) month probationary period.
6. Foster Grandparents' shall be eligible to receive an hourly stipend as established by the CNCS. This stipend is tax free and cannot be claimed as income. To receive a stipend, a Foster Grandparent's annual income must not exceed the federal guidelines set forth in the federal regulations authorizing the Foster Grandparent Program.
7. Over-income persons age 55 or more may be enrolled in the Foster Grandparent Program as non-stipend volunteers. They must not displace or prevent eligible low-income individuals from becoming Foster Grandparents. No special privilege or status is to be granted or created among Foster Grandparents; equal treatment is required among Foster Grandparents who receive a stipend and those who do not.
8. Foster Grandparents shall serve a period of no less than nine (9) months of a year with at least 15-40 hours served per week. A Foster Grandparent may serve a maximum of 2,088 hours per year.
9. A Foster Grandparent shall not perform any service or duty or engage in any activity that would otherwise be performed by an employed worker, or that would supplant the hiring of or result in the displacement of employed workers, or impair existing contracts for service.
10. Because the actions of any one of the Foster Grandparents affect the image

and effectiveness of the entire program, each Foster Grandparent shall:

- a. Serve to the maximum of his or her ability,
- b. Be neat in appearance,
- c. Exhibit courtesy and respect when interacting with fellow Foster Grandparents, youth, DJS staff, and the public, and
- d. Serve as a role model for youth.

11. The Foster Grandparent Project Director shall provide Site Coordinators with the hourly stipend rate and federal annual income limit guideline.
12. The Foster Grandparent Project Director shall notify the Site Coordinators about all changes in the Federal Regulations.

## **B. Recruitment and Retention**

1. Selection Criteria. Applicants shall:
  - a. Be capable and responsible persons of good character and reputation,
  - b. Be persons who shall be age fifty five (55) or older, and,
  - c. In order to receive the stipend, have an income at the time of application that does not exceed the federal guidelines.
2. Application Criteria. Applicants shall:
  - a. Complete an application to become a Foster Grandparent;
  - b. Submit the completed application to the DJS Foster Grandparent Project Director; and
  - c. Complete fingerprint/background check, including a review of findings of CJIS-CR, FBI, Child Protective Services, and the National Sex Offender Public Website.
3. Eligibility to be a Foster Grandparent shall not be restricted on the basis of formal education, experience, race, religion, color, national origin, sex, age (except for the federally mandated minimum age of 55), handicap, limited English proficiency, or political affiliation.
4. Serving in this program shall not be offered as a consideration or reward for the political support of any political party or candidate for public office, nor may any person serving as a Foster Grandparent engage in partisan activity.

## **C. Reimbursement for Travel**

1. Foster Grandparents using public transportation to their volunteer stations shall be reimbursed a travel allowance equal to public transportation cost per day.

2. Foster Grandparents using personal transportation shall be reimbursed a travel allowance at the per mile state rate.

**D. Reimbursement for Meals**

Foster Grandparents shall receive reimbursement for the cost of one meal per day during their service schedule, orientation and training.

**E. Incentive Leave**

1. Incentive leave days may be earned at the rate of one (1) day for each additional year of service up to a maximum of ten (10) days per year.
2. Incentive leave days must be taken during the year in which they are accrued.
3. Incentive leave days are not to be accumulated or carried over to future years and are lost if not used.

**F. Sick Leave**

1. A Foster Grandparent shall receive up to fifteen (15) paid sick leave days per year based on a five (5) hour day, or seventy-five (75) hours per year. This leave cannot be accumulated or carried over to future years.
2. A Foster Grandparent shall remain on the active list while on sick leave for thirty (30) consecutive days per sick leave occurrence.
3. If a Foster Grandparent returns from sick leave before thirty (30) days, the Foster Grandparent will automatically be returned to their site.
4. If a Foster Grandparent is unable to return after thirty (30) days, the Foster Grandparent will be placed on the waiting list and given first consideration for a Foster Grandparent opening when able to return to active status.
5. Upon return to active status, the Foster Grandparent shall submit a physician statement saying that they may return to work to the Site Coordinator who shall submit it to the Project Director.
6. After five (5) consecutive days of illness, a Foster Grandparent shall provide a physician statement saying that he or she may return to work before returning to his or her assignment.

## **G. Hazardous Weather Days**

1. Foster Grandparents shall not travel to their sites:
  - a. When weather reports state that persons with respiratory and heart diseases should remain inside, and the Foster Grandparent personally suffers from such illnesses.
  - b. When schools where a Foster Grandparent lives or volunteers are closed;
  - c. When weather reports predict temperatures over ninety-eight (98) degrees; or
  - d. During a state of emergency.
2. The Department shall allow up to five (5) paid weather days per year, based on a five (5) hour work day, or twenty-five (25) hours per year. This leave cannot be accumulated or carried over to future years.
3. Foster Grandparents shall consult local weather reports for notice of hazardous weather days.
4. Foster Grandparents shall notify their Site Coordinator when they are unable to appear at their assigned volunteer stations because of hazardous weather.

## **H. Vacation Leave**

The Department shall allow five (5) paid vacation days based on a five (5) hour work day, or 25 hours per year. This leave cannot be accumulated or carried over to future years.

## **I. Paid Holidays**

1. Foster Grandparents shall be paid for all State Holidays as articulated by the Maryland General Assembly for all State employees.
2. These paid holidays will be based on a (5) hour work day.
3. These hours cannot be accumulated or carried over to future years.

## **J. Insurance Coverage**

1. Foster Grandparents are volunteers and are not covered under Worker's Compensation Insurance.
2. Foster Grandparents shall be covered under CIMA Companies, Inc., agent for Insurance Company of North America; which includes coverage for

accidents, personal liability and excess automobile insurance as required by the Corporation for National Service. This insurance shall be secondary insurance and shall cover excess expense incurred as the result of a volunteer activity-related injury.

3. Reporting Injuries
  - a. All injuries shall be reported immediately to the Site Coordinator.
  - b. The Site Coordinator shall submit a report to the Project Director within one (1) working day.
  - c. The Project Director shall make a report to the insurance company within three (3) working days.
4. Foster Grandparents are volunteers and are not eligible for the State Unemployment Insurance Program.

**K. Training**

All Foster Grandparents shall receive the following training:

1. Forty (40) hours of orientation training of which twenty (20) hours must be pre-service training, including review of the following DJS policies and procedures:
  - a. *Confidentiality;*
  - b. *Elimination and Reporting of Sexual Abuse and Harassment; and*
  - c. *Reporting and Investigating Child Abuse and Neglect.*
2. Four (4) hours of mandatory monthly in-service training, and
3. Individual site training as requested by the Site Coordinator.

**L. Jury Duty**

1. Any Foster Grandparent called to serve on a jury or as a witness shall be given the time to serve without loss of stipend. The stipend shall be paid as if the normal service time had been completed.
2. Any monies received for jury or witness expenses shall remain with the Foster Grandparent.

**M. Supervision and Evaluations**

1. All Foster Grandparents shall be supervised by a Volunteer Site Coordinator.
2. All Foster Grandparents shall be evaluated by their Site Coordinator in cooperation with the Project Director each June and December.



3. After three (3) consecutive unsatisfactory evaluations, a Foster Grandparent shall be terminated by the Project Director.
4. Foster Grandparents receiving unsatisfactory evaluations shall be evaluated monthly until their performance is again rated satisfactory or above.
5. Site Coordinators shall forward unsatisfactory evaluations to the Project Director within five (5) working days of the evaluation.

**N. Attendance**

1. Failure to attend a mandatory Foster Grandparent program activity is subject to forfeiture of up to three (3) days of stipend pay. Mandatory program activities include:
  - a. Forty (40) hours of orientation training,
  - b. Monthly in-service training sessions,
  - c. Other mandatory activities as designated by the Department or Project Director.
2. Foster Grandparents shall notify their Site Coordinator when they are unable to appear at their assigned volunteer station for any reason.

**O. Personnel Records**

1. Personnel records shall contain the application, all references, criminal background checks, annual income reviews, evaluations, correspondence, record of work hours and stipend payments.
2. Foster Grandparents shall be responsible for providing the project office with the following information:
  - a. Annual physician's report due by June 30<sup>th</sup> each year,
  - b. Name of person to notify in case of emergency,
  - c. Name of personal physician,
  - d. Legal change of name,
  - e. Annual income, and
  - f. Change of address or telephone number, if applicable.
4. The Project Director shall provide emergency information to the Site Coordinators for each Foster Grandparent.

**P. Grievance Procedure**

1. Present grievance in writing to Site Coordinator for resolution.

2. Present grievance in writing to Project Director if dissatisfied with Step 1 resolution.
3. Present grievance to Advisory Council Grievance Committee if dissatisfied with Step 2 resolution.
4. The Advisory Council Grievance Committee will submit their recommendations to the Project Director who will make the final decision.

**Q. Termination**

1. Foster Grandparents may be terminated for cause including, but not limited to, the following reasons:
  - a. Three (3) unsatisfactory evaluations,
  - b. Unethical practices,
  - c. Curtailment of funds,
  - d. Excessive unauthorized absences,
  - e. Misconduct,
  - f. Three (3) consecutive absences from in-service training sessions,
  - g. Inability to perform assigned duties,
  - h. Failure to accept supervision, and
  - i. Failure to inform Project Director of income in excess of the eligibility level.
2. Foster Grandparents shall be given an opportunity to file a grievance or an appeal prior to being terminated for cause.

**IV. RESPONSIBILITY**

Facility Administrators and Regional Directors are responsible for implementation and compliance with this procedure.

**V. INTERPRETATION**

The Deputy Secretary of Operations shall be responsible for interpreting and granting any exceptions to this procedure.

**VI. LOCAL OPERATING PROCEDURES REQUIRED**

No

**VII. DIRECTIVES/POLICIES REFERENCED**

- A. Confidentiality Policy
- B. Elimination and Reporting of Sexual Abuse and Harassment Policy
- C. Reporting and Investigating Child Abuse and Neglect Policy

**V. APPENDICES**

1. Foster Grandparent Application



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## DJS POLICY AND STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES Statement of Receipt and Acknowledgment of Review

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**SUBJECT: Foster Grandparent Program**  
**NUMBER: RF-717-14**  
**APPLICABLE TO: All Staff**

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I have received and reviewed a copy (electronic or paper) of the above titled policy.

I understand that failure to sign this acknowledgment form within five working days of receipt of the policy shall be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

I understand that I will be held accountable for implementing this policy even if I fail to sign this acknowledgment form.

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
PRINTED NAME

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

*DJS Employees shall send the original, signed copy to Vernell James in the DJS Office of Human Resources for Placement in their personnel file. Volunteers shall send the original, signed copy to Project Director for Placement in their file.*