

## Frequently asked questions about becoming an Adult Foster Home provider

- **What experience do I need to have?**

Providers must have compassion and willingness to help people and really want to include others in their family life.

Current providers have worked in the aging, mental health and mental retardation/ developmental disability fields. Some have experience caring for family members who have had chronic illnesses, while others have experience as a day care or foster care provider for children.

People who have never cared for an older adult or someone who has a disability (e.g. mental illness) are likely to find it a challenge to have a vulnerable adult move into the home.

Because the decision to have a vulnerable adult move into your home may involve a change in lifestyle, it is also important that each applicant consider the potential impact upon his or her family.

- **In order to become certified, do I have to live in the home?**

Yes. The primary caregiver for residents of the Adult Foster Home must also live in the home on a full time, permanent basis. Applicants must live in the residence at the time the application is submitted to the COAAA. Proof of residence is required. Paying the mortgage or paying utilities for an address. or receiving mail at an address does not mean that someone lives at an address.

- **I work outside of the home, may I still apply for Adult Foster Home certification?**

In order to become certified, applicants must be able to provide care on a full time basis. If you are away from the home for more than 6 hours at a time, you must make arrangements for someone else to provide meals and supervision during that six hours. People who work outside of the home full-time typically do

not have the time available to provide care required by the Adult Foster Home program.

**COAAA staff will make the final determination as to whether your schedule will allow you to qualify as a certified Adult Foster Home provider.**

- **How long does the certification process take?**

The entire process can take several weeks, but depends on how quickly you can complete the application, submit the paperwork and meet all the requirements for Adult Foster Homes.

- **What do I need to do to become certified?**

After you have read the application materials:

- Complete all the enclosed forms and the items on the checklist.
- Call Tracy Moebius to schedule a Home Visit. During the home visit we will discuss the Adult Foster Home requirements and responsibilities, and do an initial inspection of the home.
- Staff will provide technical assistance if you need help in implementing the standards.
- A final inspection of the home is scheduled. Other inspections will be scheduled as needed.

**Applicants who do not demonstrate the ability to meet standards for Adult Foster Homes on a continual basis will not receive Adult Foster Home certification.**

- **How do I get residents for my home?**

After you have received your certificate, there are two ways to obtain residents for your Adult Foster Home:

**A. Residential State Supplement (RSS) participants**

Adult Foster Home providers must be willing to accept Residential State Supplement recipients into their homes. When a provider becomes certified, the provider's address and phone number is listed in COAAA's Approved Community Living Arrangement Directory. The directory is given to people who are enrolled in the RSS program or who need housing. They will contact you if they are interested in living in your home. When contacted, you will need to set up an interview in your

home with the person to make sure that the arrangement would be a good match for **both of you**.

***It is important to understand that certification does NOT guarantee that RSS recipients will be referred to your home, or that they will choose to move into the home. Providers must have another source of income that permits financial stability.***

### **B. Private Pay Residents**

Providers may also take non-RSS, private paying residents into their facilities. Providers who market their facilities (advertise their facilities in places like churches, senior centers, hospitals or with other social services agencies) may have an easier time obtaining private clients. Private clients may or may not have formal support systems involved in their lives (e.g. mental health, MR/DD and or Veteran's Administration professionals) and do not receive case management from the Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging.

Providers may decide what fee to charge their private paying clients. It is important that a fee is agreed upon before a private paying resident moves into your home.

### **• Who are RSS clients? What are they like?**

An RSS case manager who is a nurse or social worker has assessed all RSS enrollees who are referred to your home. The assessment determines if a person is eligible for the RSS program. They must meet specific criteria.

- They must be at least age 65 or over  
**and/or**
- Have a disability which may be either a physical or mental disability.
- Need supervision or assistance with their activities of daily living (like bathing or eating) instrumental activities of daily living (preparing meals, doing laundry, scheduling appointments etc.)
- Need less than 24 hour care, such as what is provided in a nursing home.
- They must meet particular financial income requirements.

Consult RSS Case Managers for details.

We will fill out a "Provider Profile" during the certification process that describes your home and what services you are able to provide. This will help Case Managers get to know you and help them suggest facilities for RSS recipients.

Because RSS residents have had a variety of experiences and a range of needs it is impossible to describe the "typical" RSS resident. For this reason, it is very important that you carefully consider whether you and a potential resident would be a good match before agreeing to take someone into your home.

- **Who pays for RSS residents to live in my home? How will I get paid?**

Each month an RSS resident will receive an income subsidy from the County Department of Job and Family Services. The resident or the resident's money manager has the responsibility to pay you \$750 as reimbursement for housing and services. The resident keeps a portion of the check as his/her own spending money.

You and the resident will sign an agreement that states when the money will be paid to the provider. Because the payment is distributed to RSS residents at the beginning of the month, it is recommended that the "due" date for your fee be set after the beginning of the month.

- **How will I know if I am doing the right things?**

Each year, RSS Development Staff will visit your home to complete an Annual Structural Review. The review consists of an inspection of the home, and review of the documentation requirements for the home provider and residents. A list with 37 items is used to measure compliance to the Adult Foster Home rules. You are expected to obtain at least 85% compliance.

Every two years, certified providers must apply for re-certification, and must update and submit materials contained in this packet.

- **What training will I receive?**

As an Adult Foster Home provider you would be required to obtain 6 hours of continuing education each year. There are many opportunities to complete this requirement. The COAAA, through RSS Quality Development funding, hosts a number of **free** workshops each year. These are generally scheduled along with the RSS Provider Quarterly meetings, which give providers the opportunity to talk with people in the community who are also operating facilities.

Our quarterly newsletter, *The Provider Press*, is mailed to all Adult Foster Home Providers. The newsletter is used to communicate information about rule updates, training opportunities and ways to make your facility successful. Providers should read the newsletter and share it with family members who live in the home.

- **What happens if the RSS resident wants to move out of my home, or what happens if I want the resident to move out?**

While Adult Foster Homes are not temporary arrangements, from time to time the arrangement may not work out. Providers and residents are always encouraged to try to resolve a situation before a move becomes necessary. RSS Case Managers are also available help you try to resolve problems between you and the residents.

If the resident desires to move from the home, he/she is encouraged to give the provider 30 days notice. Often a resident will move at the end of the month so as to prevent confusion about checks. However, if the resident needs to move due to circumstances beyond his/her control, e.g. home cannot provide services needed by the resident, the provider must prorate the money given to provider for the month.

If a provider wants to end the arrangement, then he/she must give 30 days notice to the resident, resident's guardian, and the RSS case manager. The RSS case manager will work with the resident to find another appropriate home.

- **What happens if I want to have more than 2 residents live in my home?**

If your experience as an Adult Foster Home provider is successful, and if you have the room in the facility, you may wish to become licensed as an Adult Family Home provider (3-5 residents) or as an Adult Group Home provider (6-16 residents). These are collectively called Adult Care Facilities, which are licensed by the Ohio Department of Health. Reimbursement for residents living in Adult Group Homes is somewhat higher than that for Adult Foster Homes and Adult Family Homes. The Ohio Department of Health requires that applicants for licensure already have 2 non-family residents receiving your supervision and living in the home.

The requirements for licensure and for operating Adult Care Facilities are different than the requirements for certification and operating an Adult Foster

Home. If you become interested in licensure, contact the Ohio Department of Health at 614/ 466-7713 for further information.

- **Who should I call if I have a question about a resident's care or behavior?**

When in doubt contact the resident's case manager and/or family members or the resident's guardian, if applicable. You should develop a plan with the resident, and his/her case manager, family, or guardian about what to do when particular situations arise.

Contact RSS Case Managers at 614/ 645-7250.

- **Who should I call if I have a question about certification?**

Contact Tracy Moebius at [Moebius@coaaa.org](mailto:Moebius@coaaa.org) or 614/645-5917 or Rod Pritchard at [pritchar@coaaa.org](mailto:pritchar@coaaa.org) or 614/645-3886.