Foster Care Allowances

The tables below show the rates for the financial year **2023/2024**

* **Regulation 24 - temporary foster carers**

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| **Age** | **0-4** | **5-10** | **11-15** | **16-17** |
| **Weekly Rate** | £182.00 | £203.00 | £232.00 | £270.00 |

* **Regulation 27 - approved foster carers**

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| **Age** | **0-4** | **5-10** | **11-15** | **16-17** |
| **Weekly Rate** | £347.00 | £368.00 | £397.00 | £435.00 |

* **Regulation 27 - approved foster carers - tier 1 completed TSD’s**

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| **Age** | **0-4** | **5-10** | **11-15** | **16-17** |
| **Weekly Rate** | £372.00 | £393.00 | £422.00 | £460.00 |

* **Regulation 27 - approved foster carers – tier 2 Therapeutic Fostering**

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| **Age** | **0-4** | **5-10** | **11-12** | **13-15** | **16-17** |
| **Weekly Rate** | £387.00 | £418.00 | £467.00 | £498.00 | £541.00 |

**Guide to the division of the weekly foster care allowance**

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| **REGULATION 24 - TEMPORARY FOSTER CARERS** |
| **Age Bands** | **Caring costs** | **Clothing** | **Transport** | **Enrichment/ leisure activities** | **Personal Allowance /Pocket Money** | **Savings** | **Reward Element** | **Total** |
| **0 - 4** | £119.50 | £20.00 | £20.00 | £10.00 | £2.50 | £10.00 | £0.00 | £182.00 |
| **5 - 10** | £132.00 | £21.00 | £20.00 | £15.00 | £5.00 | £10.00 | £0.00 | £203.00 |
| **11-15** | £144.00 | £28.00 | £20.00 | £20.00 | £10.00 | £10.00 | £0.00 | £232.00 |
| **16 - 17** | £166.00 | £34.00 | £20.00 | £25.00 | £15.00 | £10.00 | £0.00 | £270.00 |

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| **REGULATION 27 – APPROVED FOSTER CARERS** |
| **Age Bands** | **Caring costs** | **Clothing** | **Transport** | **Enrichment/ leisure activities** | **Personal Allowance /Pocket Money** | **Savings** | **Reward Element** | **Total** |
| **0 - 4** | £119.50 | £20.00 | £20.00 | £10.00 | £2.50 | £10.00 | £165.00 | £347.00 |
| **5 - 10** | £132.00 | £21.00 | £20.00 | £15.00 | £5.00 | £10.00 | £165.00 | £368.00 |
| **11-15** | £144.00 | £28.00 | £20.00 | £20.00 | £10.00 | £10.00 | £165.00 | £397.00 |
| **16 - 17** | £166.00 | £34.00 | £20.00 | £25.00 | £15.00 | £10.00 | £165.00 | £435.00 |

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| **REGULATION 27 – APPROVED FOSTER CARERS****TIER 1 - COMPLETED TSDs** |
| **Age Bands** | **Caring costs** | **Clothing** | **Transport** | **Enrichment/leisure activities** | **Personal Allowance/Pocket Money** | **Savings** | **Reward Element** | **Total** |
| **0 - 4** | £119.50 | £20.00 | £20.00 | £10.00 | £2.50 | £10.00 | £190.00 | £372.00 |
|  **5 - 10** | £132.00 | £21.00 | £20.00 | £15.00 | £5.00 | £10.00 | £190.00 | £393.00 |
| **11-15** | £144.00 | £28.00 | £20.00 | £20.00 | £10.00 | £10.00 | £190.00 | £422.00 |
| **16 - 17** | £166.00 | £34.00 | £20.00 | £25.00 | £15.00 | £10.00 | £190.00 | £460.00 |

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| **REGULATION 27 – APPROVED FOSTER CARERS****TIER 2 – THERAPEUTIC FOSTERING** |
| **Age Bands** | **Caring costs** | **Clothing** | **Transport** | **Enrichment/ Leisure activities** | **Personal Allowance/Pocket Money** | **Savings** | **Reward Element** | **Total** |
| **0 - 4** | £119.50 | £20.00 | £20.00 | £10.00 | £2.50 | £10.00 | £205.00 | £387.00 |
| **5 - 10** | £132.00 | £21.00 | £20.00 | £15.00 | £5.00 | £10.00 | £215.00 | £418.00 |
| **11-12** | £144.00 | £28.00 | £20.00 | £20.00 | £10.00 | £10.00 | £235.00 | £467.00 |
| **13-15** | £144.00 | £28.00 | £20.00 | £20.00 | £10.00 | £10.00 | £266.00 | £498.00 |
| **16 - 17** | £166.00 | £34.00 | £20.00 | £25.00 | £15.00 | £10.00 | £271.00 | £541.00 |

**The weekly allowance**

The following is a guide to foster carers and supervising social workers on how to use the allowance elements of the weekly payment for the foster child.

**Caring costs**

The caring costs component will generally cover expenses such as food, laundry, heating, cleaning, water rates, linen, minor damages and replacement of furniture and equipment. The caring costs also includes, for this financial year, the following: an additional £10 a week annual rise and an additional £10 a week housing/cost of living payment.

**Transport**

Additional claims for transport should be rare and exceptional. It is an expectation that carers, within a 10 mile radius of a journey, will absorb the cost of transport within their allowance. In other cases a claim should be made for any such requests by the supervising social worker. £20 per week per child will be deducted for any additional transport claims agreed. Where a claim is approved for car transport this will be at a rate of 45p a mile.

**Clothing**

The clothing component will cover items of clothing needed for the child. The clothing component can also be used to save up for larger items such as a winter/summer clothes. It might also be used, if appropriate, to prepare a young person for independence by being paid directly to their bank account. The issue should be discussed at the pathway plan meeting or the young person’s review.

**Enrichment and leisure activities**

Carers are expected to use this allowance to encourage children and young people to develop interests and hobbies in extra curricula activities. Some examples would be swimming, arts and crafts, dance, playing a sport or musical instrument, caring for a pet, religious classes, learning a language, outdoor activities, books, toys, etc.  These activities will encourage personal growth, increase individual self-esteem, and improve interpersonal and social skills. This will also offer a sense of enjoyment, fun and stimulation for children. Carers need to discuss the children’s interests with their social worker and supervising social worker for guidance on how the allowance can be used.

**Personal allowance/Pocket Money**

The child’s/young person’s personal allowance can be used for pocket money and for savings. It is important for children and young people in care to have their own bank account for their savings. The issue around savings should be addressed at the planning meeting and all subsequent reviews. A note should be made at each review of the amount of savings held for the child/young person.

**Savings**

Foster carers are encouraged to open a separate savings account for their foster children. The money saved should then be passed on to the new carer if the child moves placement or the child, unless otherwise indicated by their Pathway Plan, when they turn 18.

**Reward element**

This is used at the discretion of the foster carer.

**Bulk Payments**

Bulk payments are made on a periodic basis usually monthly, quarterly, or annually. They rely on accurate placement information being based by supervising social worker to business support who provide the bulk payment information to the payments team for payment.

**Birthday payment**

Payable on a child’s birthday. £110 for age range 0 to 10 and £150 for age range 11 to 18.

**Child holiday payment**

Payable for all children in placement in July of each year. Paid at a rate of £500 for each child in placement.

**Christmas payment**

Payable for all children in placement, except those who receive an Eid payment, in December of each year. £110 for age range 0 to 10 and £150 for age range 11 to 17.

**Council tax**

We will pay a fifty per cent contribution towards the costs of a foster carer’s annual council tax. If a foster carer receives a council tax discount the rate will be fifty per cent of the actual annual payment. We will need evidence of the actual council tax bill for the financial year 2023/2024. We will normally make the contribution in May direct to the foster carer.

**Eid payment**

Payable for all children in placement, except those who receive a Christmas payment, on Eid each year. £110 for age range 0 to 10 and £150 for age range 11 to 17.

**Foster Carer Holiday payment**

Payable for all approved foster carers in May of each year. Paid at a rate of £400.

**NVQ payment**

Payable for all approved foster carers who have completed their NVQ training for each child in placement over the course of the financial year. Payable in March of each year. Paid at a rate of £10 per week for each child in placement up to a maximum of £520 a year.

**Other Allowances**

**Alternative to residential care/custody**

£880 per week. This allowance requires the authorisation of the Head of Service for Regulated Services and Children’s Resources and will normally only be payable where the child would otherwise be placed in residential care.

**Mockingbird**

£477 per week allowance. £122 per week for activities.

**Mother and baby/child placements**

This would normally be paid at the equivalent rate for the baby/child age band/tier rate and the equivalent rate for the mother at the 16/17-year-old age band/tier rate. Where the mother is in receipt of state benefits for herself and/or the baby/child the equivalent should be deducted from the weekly payment rates.

**One-off clothing grants**

If a child comes into placement without sufficient clothing an emergency payment of up to £100 can be made. For those children moving school a clothing grant of up to £250 can be applied for the purchase of a school uniform.

**Short break carers**

Short breaks carers will be paid at £15.00 per hour for each child up to a maximum of 10 hours. If the child stays with the carer overnight or longer, the carer will be paid the fostering allowance according to the child’s age and the tier level of the carer. Expenses for activities, transport and light meal costs can be claimed for the carer and the child on the production of receipts.

**Special needs**

This is decided on a case-by-case basis and needs the authorisation of the Head of Service for Regulated Services and Children’s Resources.

**Staying put**

£435 per week reviewed at age 19 and 20. This needs the authorisation of the Group Manager for Regulated Services and Children’s Resources and ends at age 21 or the date that the staying put arrangement ends, whichever is the sooner unless the young person remains in full time education in which case the arrangement can be extended to the date that the full-time education ends.