

## REG 24 - Fact checks

### Who can act as the Nominated Officer to grant REG 24 temporary approval within Sandwell Children's Trust?

- Head of Service for CWCF & Fostering, deputised to other Heads of Service in absence.
- It is ONLY once the REG 24 request (IVA) has been physically approved within LCS by the Nominated Officer that the Reg 24 temporary approval becomes lawful.
- Any care arrangement without a signed copy of the REG 24 is not a regulated fostering placement.

### What is the length of time that a further period of assessment under REG 25 can be granted?

- 8 weeks

### When must an extension under REG 25 be sought?

- Before the pre-existing REG 24 temporary approval period lapses. REG 25 cannot be requested or applied retrospectively once the initial 16 weeks of temporary approval under REG 24 has lapsed.

REG 24 is agreed and signed by the nominated officer.	16 weeks of temporary foster carer approval begins from the date the REG 24 is agreed and signed by the nominated officer.	A further 8 weeks of assessment can be requested under a REG 25 Extension but only <b>BEFORE</b> the existing 16 weeks of approval lapses.  All Stage 1 checks need to be returned as satisfactory before the fostering assessment can be considered complete.	If the assessment is not completed after this time (i.e., within 24 weeks), the fostering placement becomes unregulated and therefore unlawful. A risk assessment needs to be put in place and agreed by the responsible AD. Weekly social worker visits need to be undertaken.	Connected Person's assessment concludes with presentation to fostering panel with either a positive or negative recommendation.	Agency Decision Maker (ADM) considers fostering panel's recommendation and sends down final ADM Decision.	Applicants are substantively approved as Connected Person's foster carers.

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**What are the six pre-requisite conditions that need to be present in order for applicants to be able to request an assessment as a connected person's foster carer?**

- Are actively seeking (requesting) approval as a Connected person's foster carer.
- If a joint application, both applicants MUST be willing to be assessed.
- Must either be a UK Citizen or have permanent 'leave to remain' in the United Kingdom.
- Must be aged 21 years of age or over.
- Must have right of tenure in the home that they live in and are proposing to offer as a fostering household.
- Do not have any criminal convictions that would present as a contraindication to the fostering task.

**What are the two most important considerations that 'family or friends' carers need to fully appreciate before they request a connected person's fostering assessment?**

- When applicants are requesting to be approved as a Connected person's foster carer under REG 24 considerations, it is important that they are fully aware that the child remains 'looked after' by the Local Authority and so they do not have the authority to make decisions for the child without speaking to the Local Authority about such decisions first. This means that they must be considered to be a foster carer first and the child's relative or family friend second.
- When applicants are seeking to become a Connected person's foster carers, they are seeking to foster this child until they reach the age of 18, unless an SGO is then sought and granted before then. A connected person's fostering placement is therefore considered to be long term matched from substantive approval.

**What are the two care arrangements that cannot be supported by Reg 24 temporary approval?**

- Foster Carers cannot hold dual approval (either as mainstream and connected person's foster carers (including REG 24), whether externally or with Sandwell Children's Services. Where applicants may already be approved Connected person's foster carers with Sandwell Children's Trust's Fostering Service, permission needs to be sought from the Fostering Service before any consideration of placing another child under REG 24 arrangements can be made.
- 'Parent and Child' foster placements are not permitted under REG 24 or connected person's fostering placements; this includes either birth parent of the subject child regardless of the child's age during their time in foster care.

**What are the three main statutory instruments that consider the temporary approval of connected person's foster carers?**

- The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations (2010)

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- National Minimum Standards for Fostering (2011)
- Fostering Services Regulations (2011)

### **What are the specific sections of this legislation?**

- Reg 26, FSR (2011)
- Standard 30, NMS (2011)
- Standard 10, NMS (2011) specifically considers the expectations of home conditions required for fostering households?
- REG 24, The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations (2010)

### **What is the timeframe in which the fostering service have to consider all checks undertaken under Stage 1 considerations as to whether to counsel applicants out of assessment?**

- 10 working days
- The responsibility for the progression and monitoring of all Stage 1 checks sits within the Fostering Service undertaking the assessment. Where this is delegated to an ISW on behalf of Sandwell Children's Trust's Fostering Service, the responsibility of the progression and monitoring of Stage 1 checks remains with the fostering service.
- Where the decision is made that the assessment will not be able to progress under Stage 1 considerations, the applicant is not able to progress in assessment any further nor are they able to request a further fostering assessment UNLESS there is a material change in the circumstances of the Stage 1 checks leading to the original assessment failing.

### **What piece of legislation governs the use of Stage 1 and Stage 2 within fostering assessments:**

- Assessment and approval of foster carers: Amendments to the Children Act 1989, Guidance and Regulations Volume 4: Fostering Services July 2013

### **References:**

#### **National Minimum Standards for Fostering (2011)**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fostering-services-national-minimum-standards>

#### **Fostering Services Regulations (2011)**

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2011/581/contents>

#### **The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations (2010)**

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/959/contents>