

Becoming a foster parent with Saint Francis Ministries involves several steps requiring varying amounts of time, paperwork, and face-to-face meetings. Each step builds on the previous steps.

The process provides information, training, and skill development for prospective foster parents, helps potential foster parents gain a better understanding of the needs of children in foster care, helps families make informed decisions about fostering, and provides information on resources, parenting techniques, and support services available for individuals interested in becoming foster parents.

Once you contact us to explore the possibility of becoming a foster parent, these are some of the steps that we will assist you with. This entire process typically takes about three months.

Step 1: Inquiry

When you first contact our office, a Foster Care Homes Staff will answer your questions about being a foster parent. If you're interested in taking the next step, we will ask some demographic questions, or perhaps you have filled that out on the online form. We then will assign you to a Foster Care Developer in our area.

Step 2: Connect with a Foster Care Home Developer

You will be assigned to a Foster Care Home Developer, they will reach out to complete a foster care referral, answer questions and see if you are ready to enroll in pre-service training. In some cases, a Foster Care Home Developer will come to your home and meet with you individually to answer your questions and do a complimentary pre-tour of your home to make sure there are no barriers in meeting the State's regulations.

Step 3: Pre-service training

The State of Oklahoma requires you to complete Guiding Principles for Oklahoma Bridge Resource Families training. This is a 27-hour curriculum that can be completed in-person or online depending on your schedule. This training is designed to help you make a final decision about becoming a foster parent. In the sessions, we discuss what foster parenting is all about-what it takes, what to expect, the obligations, challenges, rewards, and other topics that prepare you to care for children in care. An additional 6 hours of orientation training is provided to orient you to our specific organization, policies, requirements, and other helpful information to prepare you for your work with foster children.

Step 4: Family Assessment and Certification paperwork

This step is usually started at the beginning of the process. One of our Resource Family Assessment (also called Home Study) specialists that specialize in family assessments will visit your home to interview you and any other family members and residents in your home. These interviews will take place over two separate visits. The interviews are an opportunity for us to:

- Gather background information about you and your family.
- Understand your motivations to become a foster parent.

- Ensure that foster parenting is a fit for you.
- Ensure that you will be able to provide a safe and nurturing home environment.
- Make sure your home has enough space to accommodate additional youth.
- Review criminal background checks on everyone living in your home.
- Interview references provided by you.
- Gather certification paperwork completed by you.

Step 6: Licensing

Once all documentation and assessments have been completed including the Resource Family Assessment (Home Study), all required criminal background and child welfare checks, references, and other documentation, a decision is made to approve your home for placement of children.

Step 7: Child placement

Once you have the appropriate approvals, you will be able to provide a youth in foster care with a safe and loving home.