



The child welfare industry is complex and can be confusing. At FaithBridge, we seek to simplify the process, pairing each foster family with a consultant who will walk with them through the journey from when they first attend an orientation program through the entire time that they are with the ministry, no matter how many foster children they end up fostering over the years. This includes moving together through the home study process and ensuring that all the requirements are met and expectations understood. Like any private, child placement agency, we must adhere to government requirements. Being a faith-based organization, we also have our own policies.

General Requirements

- Be willing to work to meet the needs as an advocate for the child(ren) and toward a permanency plan.
- Be in good mental and physical health.
- Be 21 years old or older, if married; be 25 years old or older, if single. If you intend to foster teenagers, you must be at least 10 years older than the foster child(ren).
- Have adequate income to meet the needs of your family without the foster care reimbursement.
- No more than three children under 3 years old, including biological children, may live in your home.
- Work with FaithBridge as they consider the number of children in your home under 17 years old, per state requirements on capacity.
- Be able to provide appropriate care and supervision for the child(ren) in your home.

FaithBridge Requirements

- Be an active member of a local, Christian church and demonstrate a commitment to Jesus Christ in your daily life and in your home.
- Be willing to be part of a FaithBridge Community of CareSM, asking for and accepting support as you do the difficult job of parenting foster children. Also, be willing to support other families within your community.
- Sign and abide by the FaithBridge Position on Morality, FaithBridge Statement of Faith, Child Safety Agreement/ Discipline policy, Privacy/Confidentiality and Foster Family Handbook.

Process Requirements

- Attend Encounter, our orientation program.
- Participate in Foundations, the state-mandated foster parent multi-day training program.
- Complete the application and all related paperwork.

Housing Requirements

- Maintain your home in a condition that ensures the health and safety of children.
- Provide adequate sleeping arrangements, including a bed for each child and space to store clothing and personal possessions. Only bedrooms should be used as sleeping space for the child(ren).
- No child shall sleep in the same bed as an adult. No child over 1 years old may sleep in a room with an adult. Foster children over 3 years old, of different genders, may not share a room.
- A maximum of two children may sleep in a double or larger bed if they are siblings, are the same gender, have no known sexually predatory behaviors and are under 5 years old.
- Each non-related child must have a separate bed.
- Keep hazardous items (cleaning supplies, medications, firearms, knives, alcohol, etc.) in a place inaccessible to children.
- Have functional smoke alarms on each level of the home and at least one fire extinguisher.
- Inoculate pets against rabies, as required by law.
- Abide by all other home health and safety regulations.



Frequently Asked Questions

1. Does a FaithBridge foster family have a say in choosing the child(ren)?

Yes. We call this your “desired placement,” and it includes gender, age and race considerations, and we’ll discuss your rationale for your preference. If it’s on your mind, we welcome the conversation!

2. How long do foster children stay in care?

The length of time varies according to the need. Some are placed briefly (a few days) while some remain for months or years. The average is less than seven months.

3. What about biological parents?

The first goal of FaithBridge is the return of the child(ren) to biological families, when possible. To maintain relationship, regularly scheduled visitations are arranged and supervised.

4. Can FaithBridge foster families house several children at one time?

Yes, this happens typically with siblings. We work within state guidelines for the number of foster children in one home at one time and also consider what is best for your family.

5. Who takes responsibility for the child(ren) in the home?

You are responsible for the daily care of the foster child(ren) in your home. FaithBridge staff, government employees and biological parents maintain various legal, guardianship and service responsibilities. FaithBridge maintains overall responsibility for decisions regarding children, and any and all questions and major decisions should be discussed with your family consultant.

6. What happens if the placement doesn't work out?

The principle of “First Placement, Best Placement” for the foster child(ren) seeks to prevent disruptions. Foster families are encouraged to contact their family consultant when having difficulty and make all efforts to stabilize the home and the placement.

7. Are children available for adoption?

The majority of children in foster care return to their biological family, which is most often the best option. However, when reunification is not an option, a permanent, adoptive family is the goal. FaithBridge can assist you in the process of transitioning from a foster family to an adoptive family, if you desire to do this. If not, FaithBridge will work with you and the child(ren) to transition them to a home that is open to adoption.

8. Are there costs involved to become a FaithBridge foster parent?

Generally, there are fees involved in some of the approval steps, including but not limited to drug screens, fingerprinting, co-payments for physicals or medical documentation, veterinary expenses for rabies vaccinations (if you have pets) and septic tank inspections. If these are a hindrance, consider discussing options with your local church or ministry.

9. For what costs, if any, am I reimbursed? Who pays for medical and dental care?

Purchases must be approved by your family consultant before they are made. Many expenses have an annual allowance, regardless of how many foster homes and parents the child has had. Original receipts are required. Foster children are wards of the state and eligible for Medicaid.

10. Do I receive any tax breaks for being a foster parent?

There are some tax implications, and we recommend consulting a CPA or tax advisor.

ABOUT FAITHBRIDGE

A nonprofit that is changing the way America does foster care by mobilizing, organizing and equipping local churches to solve their community’s foster care crisis.



Got Questions? Ready to Get Started?

If you’re interested in exploring what it means to be a foster parent, begin with Encounter, our orientation program. See www.faithbridgefostercare.org/encounter to get started.

www.faithbridgefostercare.org

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