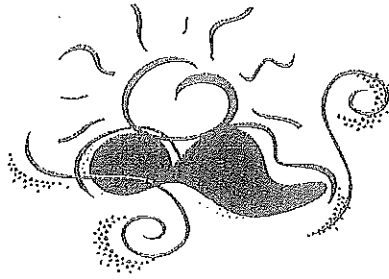


**New Beginning,  
Life Changing Network Inc.**

**Foster Caregiver**

**Orientation Packet**



# Foster Caregiver Orientation Packet

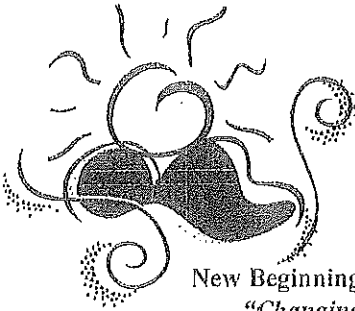
## SECTION I

Agency  
Mission, Vision, & Challenge Statements

## Program Core

- There will be a strong recruitment effort for foster parents that are specifically interested in young teen mothers and their children. The foster parents will be trained to provide strong parenting skills to the young mothers in an effort to help the teens become better mothers. The foster parents will also provide life skill and role modeling to ensure the best success for the teen mothers and their children. The teens will be involved in mentoring programs to include group and/or individual counseling. We will focus on independent living skills and parenting groups for the teens.
- Provides professionalism to the foster care system to include 24-hour support and consultation from staff.
- Children receive a comprehensive array of services that are coordinated through partnership with community agencies and NBN.
- Ensures a strong commitment to children and their families through dedicated and caring NBN foster parents and staff.
- Birth parents will be linked to community resources and support including housing assistance, parent skills training, and job placement services and counseling.
- NBN will service behaviors challenged youths from ages 0 to 18 years old male and female, all races and nationalities to include all religious beliefs that are located in the Metro Atlanta area and surrounding counties.

New Beginnings, Life Changing Network, Inc  
100 Edgewood Ave. NE  
Suite 1530  
Atlanta, Ga. 30303  
404 298-0888 office  
404 298-0222 fax

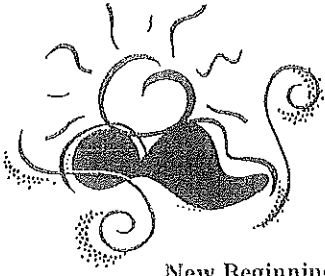


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## SECTION II

# Approval Process for Foster Caregivers



## OVERVIEW OF THE APPROVAL PROCESS

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### I. ORIENTATION:

All prospective New Beginnings Foster Caregivers must attend orientation prior to the application process. Attendance must be documented.

### II. BACKGROUND SCREENING :

Criminal background screening: Federal\*  
Child Protective Services Check (CPS)\*  
Three (3) written professional-personal references each\*Name and contact information for personal, professional, and relative reference.  
Physical Examination \*\*  
TB Test or Chest x-ray\*\*  
VDRL or RPR Screening\*\*  
Wellness Examination\*\*\*  
Immunization Records\*\*\*  
Financial Stability Budget  
Employment history and application forms  
Pre-employment drug screen

\*Required for everyone who resides in the household that is 18 years of age or older

\*\*Required for everyone who resides in the household that is 16 years of age or older

\*\*\*Required for everyone who resides in the household that is 15 years of age or younger

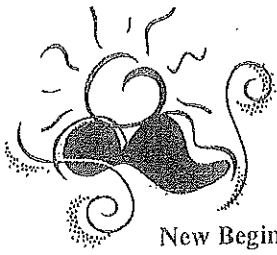
### III. TRAINING :

**20 Hours of Pre-Service IMPACT Training** (Initial Interest, Mutual Selection, Pre-Service Training, Assessment, Continuing Development and Teamwork).

(MAPP, TPRT, PRIDE & PATH Trainings are accepted as well) Certificate must be dated within 2 years of approval OR you must have been fostering for the last 12 months.

**35 Hours of Yearly In-Service Training** – Primary Foster Caregiver.

**25 Hours of Yearly In-Service Training** for spouses; and back-up caregivers.



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## OVERVIEW OF THE APPROVAL PROCESS (cont.)

### IV. HOME EVALUATION (8-10 WEEKS)

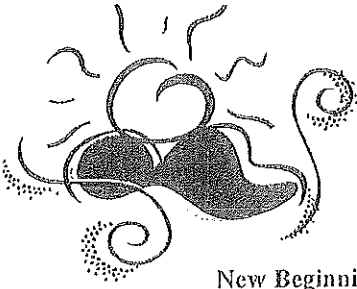
Home visits from the Assessor  
Interview of all members of the household  
Pet inoculation (when applicable)  
Safety inspection  
Fire inspection

- o ABC Fire Extinguisher
- o Carbon Monoxide Detector
- o First Aid Kit
- o Etc.

Each child must have his/her own BED and area for his/her personal belongings  
Outdoor play area or accessible play area within walking distance  
Transportation and telephone accessibility

### GUIDELINES FOR HOME ASSESMENTS

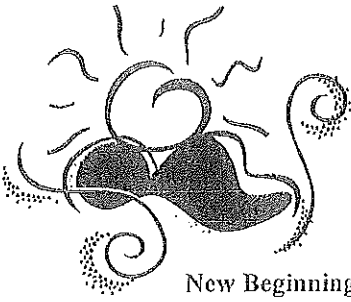
1. Family Composition: Names of all family members
2. Motivation for Foster Parenting
3. Description of family members
4. Evaluation of marriage and family life
5. Evaluation of parenting practices
6. Physical and mental health
7. Understanding of adjustment to foster parenting
8. Description of the applicant's participation in Pre-Service training
9. Finances and occupations of family members
10. Home & Community
11. Religion
12. Results of criminal records for family members including CPS history
13. Pre-Service training that the foster parent or family members received
14. A minimum of three character references (3 separate references for primary and secondary)
15. Description of the type of children desired by the foster family



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## SECTION III

### Requirements For Foster Caregivers

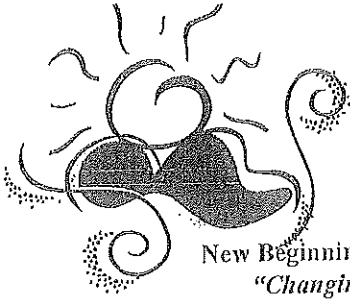


## SUPPLEMENTAL CONDITIONS FOR APPROVAL

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1. Current foster home approval from the State of Georgia with New Beginnings, Life Changing Network, Inc., as the supervising Foster Care Agency.
2. Must have a certification in completion of Model Approach to Partnership in Parenting (MAPP) or Initial Interest, Mutual Selection, Pre-Service Training, Assessment, Continuing Development and Teamwork (IMPACT) State of Georgia certification.
3. Must possess an operational automobile, appropriate insurance and a valid Georgia driver's license.
4. Must possess appropriate home/renters insurance.
5. Successful completion of all local and federal background screenings, determining willingness and ability to meet all responsibilities listed in the Foster Caregiver job description.
6. Participation in semi-annual Foster Caregiver's performance review during the 6<sup>th</sup> month of employment, then annually.
7. Must participate in New Beginnings, Life Changing Network random drug screening as part of the drug-free work place policy.

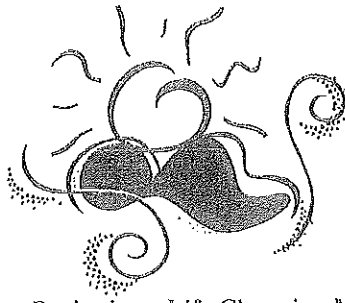




## CONDITIONS FOR DISMISSAL

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1. Loss or expiration of Georgia Foster Home approval.
2. Unwilling or unable to carry out duties listed in the Foster Caregiver job description, including but not limited to transportation of children.
3. Unsatisfactory job performance reviews. Performance reviews for new Foster Caregivers will be conducted at the 12 month anniversary of approval.
4. Substantiated report of physical, sexual or emotional abuse.
5. Use of physical discipline with child(ren) placed in the home.
6. Refusal to participate in random drug screening, as part of the New Beginnings, Life Changing Network policy for a drug-free work place.
7. Positive result on drug screening test.
8. Failure to maintain conditions of approval including but not limited to, submittal of monthly reports and other required documents.
9. Foster Caregiver does not take sufficient actions needed to protect the child(ren) placed in the home from immediate or imminent serious harm.
10. Foster Caregiver denies Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) Case Managers or New Beginnings, Life Changing Network Case Managers access to children.



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## SECTION IV

Discipline

&

Behavioral Intervention

(Corporal Punishment Policy)



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**New Beginnings, Life Changing Network Inc.  
Youth Foster Care Homes and Assessment/Emergency Foster Homes  
Policies and Procedures**

**TITLE: Operating Policies and Procedures for Foster Care Services**

**POLICY: Discipline of Foster Children**

Foster parents are expected to define rules, which establish limits and types of acceptable behavior. These rules must be clearly explained to each child and applied equally to all children. Prohibited disciplinary practices include group punishments for misbehavior of individual, withholding meals, mail of family visits; hitting a child with an object; spanking a child; physical, sexual, emotional and/or verbal abuse; humiliating or degrading punishment which subjects the child to ridicule; placing a child in a locked room and delegation of authority for punishment to other children or persons not known to the child. The foster child should not be disciplined by another child in the home nor should the child be disciplined by other family members, church members, neighbors, teachers, friends, or any person having contact with the family.

**DISCIPLINE**

Discipline is an educational process through which foster children develop the self-control, self-reliance and orderly conduct necessary for them to assume responsibilities, make daily living decisions and live according to acceptable standards of social behavior. Our goal is to work with discipline. When a child has self-discipline he/she is able to control their behavior based on rules that they think are important. These rules are learned by children experiencing the consequences, both positive and negative, of their behavior. In other words, allowing the child to learn what happens and how people react when they behave in certain ways.

**ACCEPTABLE METHODS OF DISCIPLINE INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING**

- A. Reinforce/encourage acceptable behaviors, for example, honest praise, special privileges and treats; extra hugs and kisses; additional time spent with the child; and implementing a points rewards system (i.e. stars or smiley faces on a door or bulletin board).
- B. Verbal disapproval of the child's behavior, but never the child, for example, "I don't like ball throwing in the house."
- C. Loss of privileges, for example, watching television, participating in a special event, and playing with a specific toy.

- D. Grounding (restricting the child to the house or yard) or sending the child out of the room and away from a family activity.
- E. Redirecting the child's activity, for example, suggest a child play with a toy instead of a sharp object.

**The use of corporal punishment upon any child, who is served by, or under the care of a licensed childcare facility, constitutes a violation of the licensing standards of the State of Georgia.** Corporal punishment may herein be defined as any type of physical, discipline, or retaliation inflicted upon any part of the body of a child. This would include such actions as slapping, hitting, punching, spanking, and shoving, pinching, or any other type of actions geared toward inflicting pain or body discomfort upon a child. Violation of this licensing requirement might result in the revocation of license to provide care for children.

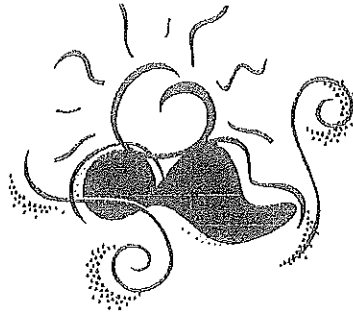
In many instances, use of corporal punishment may result in a child abuse investigation by the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS). It is also conceivable that the child or the child's biological parents might press charges or bring about a legal suit.

#### **VIOLATIONS OF THIS POLICY**

When it is brought to the attention of the agency that a foster parent has violated the provisions of this policy, a Foster Care Counselor will immediately meet with the foster parent(s) to discuss the incident. If during this discussion it becomes apparent that a child may have been neglected or abused, the Foster Care Counselor will immediately report the incident to the Intake for investigation. Policies governing this investigation are found in the Intake and Foster Care Manuals.

If the incident is clearly a violation of this policy rather than an allegation of neglect or abuse, the foster parent will receive a verbal and written warning. This warning will include an in depth discussion of the violation, an explanation of the provisions of the policy and a statement of the necessity to close the foster home if a second complaint is received; staff need to consult with the District Legal Counsel prior to contacting the foster parents.

Copies of the written Letters of Warning and Notice of Closure must be filed in the foster home file as well as the case records of all children in the home at the time of the warning or closure.



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## SECTION V

# Roles & Responsibilities Of Foster Caregivers



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## EXPECTATIONS FOR FOSTER CAREGIVERS

The job of a Foster Caregiver with New Beginnings, Life Changing Network (NBN) goes far beyond that of a regular foster parent. The Foster Caregivers who work with the NBN program will provide 24-hour care of the children placed in their homes; they will also be expected to work as a member of a professional team.

Listed below are some of the expectations of Foster Caregivers for NBN, Life Changing Network Inc.

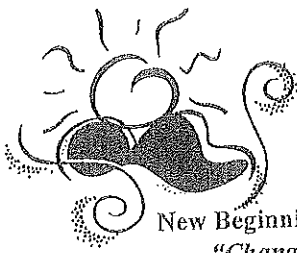
- Maintain compliance with the State of Georgia and NBN regulation standards at all times.
- Participate in initial pre-placement staffing before placement, and initial case planning. During these meetings the Foster Caregiver may meet the biological parent(s) as well as outside case managers and other stakeholders.
- Consent to and pass pre-employment and employment drug testing as required.
- Must have a valid Georgia driver's license, reliable transportation and required safety devices for foster children, (working seat belts, car seats, booster seats etc.).
- Carry out all tasks of the NBN Foster Caregiver job description, including working directly and in a supportive manner with families of the children in care.
- **Maintain current automobile insurance Bodily Injury Coverage MUST be at least (\$100,000/\$300,000) see county chart. Maintain current home owners or renter insurance where applicable.**
- Participation in the Juvenile Court process, including testimony in court when needed, and attendance at Panel Review hearing.
- Participate in all Foster Caregiver meetings to include but not limited to; monthly foster parent meetings, training, events for the children in care and any informational meetings for foster parents deemed necessary by NBN.
- Serve as an educational advocate for the children placed in your home. Attend school meetings and activities, pertaining to the children.
- Commitment to work with children and their families.

- In addition, NBN Foster Caregivers must, as individuals and families, be able and willing to do the following tasks:
  - ✓ Accept the program's treatment philosophy (to provide services to teen mothers and their babies) to provide quality evaluations of children in the effort to reunify children with their families whenever possible and the ability to carry out this philosophy on a daily basis.
  - ✓ Accept high levels of involvement and supervision provided by the NBN program.
  - ✓ Implement treatment plans established for the children, including the use of specific behavior management procedures.
  - ✓ Facilitate visitation between children and families and allow visitation to occur in their homes when deemed appropriate by the team.
  - ✓ Participate in up to 35 or more hours of in-service training per year (about 3 hours per month), which could include a variety of "training" methods.
  - ✓ Accept children in emergency placement to accommodate NBN's 24-hour intake and placement provisions, when necessary.
  - ✓ Work with children who may present certain problem behaviors or medical needs.
  - ✓ Participate in team meetings on a monthly basis, for the children placed in the home.
  - ✓ Embrace the importance of working closely with birth parents, early in the process of placement.
  - ✓ Respect, accept and support the child's cultural, ethnic and spiritual identity.
  - ✓ Keep detailed records of their work with the children and their families.
  - ✓ Successful completion of the Licensing Home Assessment requires that the family and the home meet all licensing standards for foster homes. Beyond the licensing requirements, we are looking for families who have:
    - ✓ Financial and emotional stability, both individually and as a family unit.
    - ✓ Access to a reliable back up and network of support. This is particularly true for single parents.
    - ✓ The willingness and ability to service the types of families and children served by the NBN program.
    - ✓ Complete Pre-Service Training for Foster Care Givers.

**Prospective NBN foster caregivers, who have been licensed foster parents with another agency, must provide a letter of reference from that agency, along with the other references required.**

- Successful completion of the approval process requires that the family and the home meet all State of Georgia and New Beginnings, Life Changing Network's standards for foster homes.
- Beyond the approval requirements, we are looking for families who have; financial and emotional stability, both individually and as a family unit.
- Access to reliable back-up and network of support systems. This is particularly true for single parents.
- The willingness and ability to serve the type of families and children served by NBN's program
- Complete Pre-service Training (IMPACT or MAPP) for foster care givers.
- Also, prospective NBN Foster Caregivers who have been approved foster parents with another agency must provide a letter of reference from that agency, along with the other 3 required references (Professional, family and personal reference).



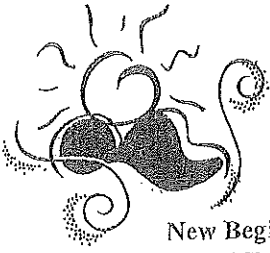


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## SECTION VI

### Description of Children Served



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### POPULATION SERVED

Appropriate children to refer for the sibling program are sibling groups with the goal of reunification, including children with special needs from targeted communities.

Children served by the program must be between the ages of 0 and 18 and part of a sibling group.

Please be advised that New Beginnings, Life Changing Network recently obtained our Maximum Watchful Oversight (MWO) contract with the State of Georgia. In short, this means that we are now capable of taking placements for children who are medically fragile, actively homicidal, suicidal, fire setting or sexually predatory. We also accept children whose family' parental rights have been terminated, or children who are in long-term foster.

If you are interested in caring for children that fall under the MWO contract please be sure to let us know.



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# SECTION VII

## Emergency Procedures



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## Medical Emergencies

### Definition of a Medical Emergency:

A medical emergency is an unplanned accident, trauma, or injury that occurs to a person. Protecting and preventing further damage to an individual is the first and utmost importance.

### POLICY:

New Beginnings Network shall ensure that medical emergencies are handled in a knowledgeable and professional manner as to prevent danger to all personnel, clients and the general public while in the service environment.

### General Procedures

1. The first person that comes into contact with an injured individual needs to stay with the victim and immediately notify someone to alert the Director or delegated person. It is critical to remain calm.
2. The personnel with the injured individual should ascertain as much information about the injury and participants as possible. If the injured person has seriously harmed their body, is bleeding and/or is unconscious DO NOT move them. Keep them warm, comfortable, and continue speaking to them.
3. NBN Director or one who is delegated, determines the condition and makes the final decision to notify an ambulance, doctor, and/or personal family member(s).
4. If the decision is to contact an ambulance, the Director or delegate calls 911. Be prepared with the site's address, phone number, victim's name and medical status, and if any medical attention has been administered.
5. If the decision is to contact a Doctor and/or family member(s) the Director or delegate gather appropriate information from the victim.
6. In a severe medical emergency when family member(s)/friend(s) are unavailable to accompany the victim to the hospital, on staff person shall stay with the victim through arrival at the hospital.

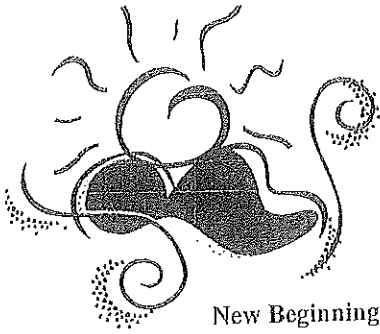
## Medical Emergencies (Cont.)

### Site-specific Information:

1. NBN will create, maintain and store on computer disk with a hard copy easily accessible a complete personnel file that would include:
  1. Home phone number
  2. Next of kin (phone number)
  3. Spouse/friend work number
  4. Medical; allergies to medications, existing conditions
2. The NBN staff who are currently certified in CPR
3. In the event of a medical emergency the staff should be notified by calling their immediate supervisor. The staff member that receives the call shall then notify the Executive Director and proceed with the proper paperwork.  
(an incident report)
4. This procedure should be reviewed with all staff and foster-caregivers on a quarterly basis at the staff meetings.

#### Example:

Name	Home Phone	Pager/work	Cell
Doe, Jane (employee)		Pager #	
Doe, Joe (spouse)		Work #	



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## SECTION VIII

Support Services  
Available  
For  
Foster Caregivers

Positive Change, LLC.  
Clinical/Mental Health Support Services

## Positive Change, LLC.

Positive Change, LLC is an independently owned and operated agency that provides the following services to children and families:

- CORE Services
  - Behavioral Aid
  - Interpretation Services
- Clinical Services
  - Group/ Individualized Therapy
  - Anger management groups
  - Etc.
- Nursing Assessments
  - Medical Management
  - STD Counseling Services
  - Etc.

Although we offer a broad spectrum of services, the underlying principle in all of our work is to:

- Empower children and their families to envision and achieve transformation
- Ensure that children are safe in their environment
- Advocate for the needs of the families
- Support parents and hold them accountable for their children
- Help to achieve and maintain reunification
- Keep siblings together

**How to refer for Specialized Program Services:** Foster Caregivers are to contact their New Beginnings, Life Changing Network, Case Manager regarding special service needs.

## Clinical Services

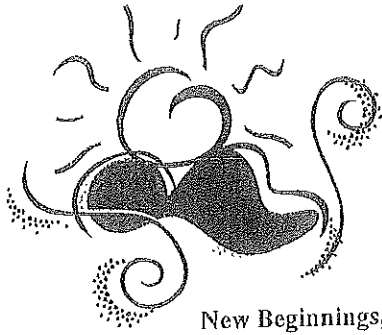
**Children needing clinical services are referred to resources within the community.**

### **When to Refer for Clinical Services:**

- Child is exhibiting emotional and behavioral problems at home or school (i.e. aggressive, destructive, depressed, oppositional/defiant, disrespectful, severe tantrums, behaviors not typical of a child that age).
- Child has a history of sexual abuse.
- Child is asking for support/someone to talk to.
- Foster parent is unable or having difficulty managing the child's behaviors
- As a professional, you are concerned with child's behaviors or emotional state as, evidence by...

### **How to refer a child for Clinical Services:**

Foster Caregivers are to contact their New Beginnings, Life Changing Network, Case Manager regarding Clinical Service needs.

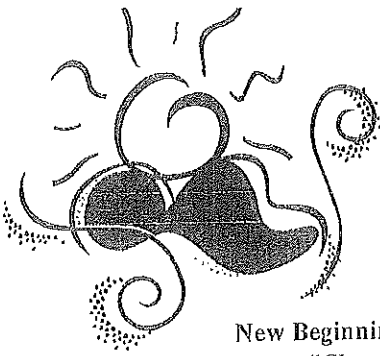


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## SECTION IX

### General Information Regarding Financial Reimbursement & Benefits





## General Information Regarding Financial Reimbursement

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### Per Diem

Foster Caregivers are compensated based on the ages of the foster children placed in their care. The per diem is paid effective the date of actual placement.

Please note: pre-placement visits are not reimbursed.

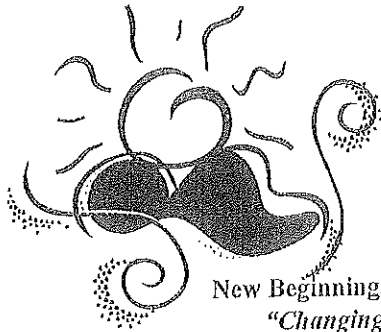
- Ages: 0-5 \$14.60 per day/per child
- Ages: 6-12 \$16.50 per day/per child
- Ages: 13-18 \$18.80 per day/per child

### **Clothing Allowances:**

Initial and Annual Clothing Allowances are available for children in DFCS custody the actual amounts and dates of pay out vary on the county that has custody of the children. Be sure to ask your NBN Case Manager if/when these funds are available **PRIOR** to spending any money on clothing for the children placed in your care.

### NBN Foster Caregivers are responsible for the following:

- Shopping and purchasing the clothing
- Submitting the original receipt(s) to their Case Manager for reimbursement.



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## SECTION X

New Beginnings, Life Changing Network  
Inc.

Open Door  
&  
Complaint Resolution  
Policy

**TITLE:**

Open Door Policy and Complaint Resolution Procedure

**STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:**

It is the policy of New Beginnings, Life Changing Network, Inc. (NBN) that employees should have an opportunity to present their work-related complaints and to appeal management decisions through a complaint resolution procedure.

**PROCEDURE:**

An appropriate complaint is defined as an employee's expressed dissatisfaction concerning any interpretation or application of a work-related policy by management, supervisors, or other employees. Matters that may be considered appropriate dispute under this policy include:

1. A belief that NBN policies, practices, rules, regulations, or procedures have been applied inconsistently;
2. Treatment considered unfair by an associate, such as discipline, coercion, reprisal, harassment (including sexual harassment), or intimidation;
3. Alleged discrimination because of race, color, gender, age, religion, and national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, or disability; and
4. Improper or unfair administration of employee benefits or conditions of employment, such as scheduling, vacations, fringe benefits, promotions, retirement, holidays, performance reviews, salary, or seniority.

Employees should notify NBN management in a timely fashion of any complaint considered appropriate for handling under this policy. The complaint resolution procedure is the exclusive remedy for employees with appropriate complaints. As used in this policy, the terms "timely fashion", "reasonable time", and "promptly" generally will mean five (5) working days.

The complaint resolution procedure has a maximum of four (4) steps, but complaints can be resolved at any step in the process. Complaints will be processed until the employee is satisfied, does not file a timely appeal, or exhausts the right of appeal under this policy. A decision becomes binding on all parties whenever an employee does not file a timely appeal or when a decision is made in the final step and the right of appeal no longer exists.

Usually, the employee can get the answers to these questions through informal discussions with his/her supervisor who is available to assist and to ensure employees are treated fairly. If the supervisor is unable to provide a satisfactory answer, he or she will assist the employee in getting the correct information.

**Step One** – Promptly bring the complaint to the attention of the immediate supervisor. If the complaint involves the supervisor, then the employee may proceed directly to Step Two. If it is not a routine matter that he or she can handle promptly, he or she may ask the employee to put the complaint in writing so an answer may be provided later. The supervisor should investigate the complaint, attempt to resolve it, and give a decision to the employee within a reasonable time. The supervisor should prepare a written and dated summary of the dispute and proposed resolution for the employee's personnel file.

**Step Two** – Appeal the decision to the Director if dissatisfied with the supervisor's decision, or initiate the procedure with the Director if Step One has been bypassed. This appeal or initial complaint notification must be made in a timely fashion using a written format. A personal meeting can be

arranged if the employee wishes. After the Director has reviewed all the facts, he or she will provide the employee with a response. The supervisor's version of the complaint and decision will be submitted to the Director. The Director will, in a timely fashion, confer with the employee, the supervisor, and any other member of the management considered appropriate; investigate the issues; and communicate a decision in writing to all parties involved.

**Step Three** – Appeal an unsatisfactory Director decision to the Vice President of Programs. The timeliness requirements and procedures to be followed are similar to those in Step Two. The VP of Programs will take the necessary steps to review and investigate the complaint and communicate a decision in writing to all parties involved.

**Step Four** - Appeal an unsatisfactory VP of Programs decision to the VP of Human Resources. The Human Resources representative will take the necessary steps to review and investigate the dispute and will then issue a written, final, and binding decision.

Human Resources will provide training and support to supervisors and management in dealing with employee complaints. In addition, employees should be encouraged to consult with Human Resources, their supervisors, or other members of management on a less formal basis regarding employee complaints or disputes.

Final decisions on complaints will not be precedent-setting or binding on future disputes unless they are officially stated as NBN policy. When appropriate, the decisions will be retroactive to the date of the employee's original dispute notification.

Information concerning an employee dispute should be confidential. Supervisors, Executive Directors and other members of management who investigate a complaint may discuss it only with those individuals who have a need to know about it or who are needed to supply necessary background information or advice. Implementation of the dispute resolution procedure by an employee does not limit the right of NBN to proceed with any disciplinary action.

Time spent by employee in dispute discussion with management during normal working hours will be considered hours worked for pay purposes.

Employees will not be penalized for proper use of the complaint resolution procedure. However, it is not considered proper use if an employee raises complaints in bad faith or solely for the purpose of delay or harassment or repeatedly raises merit less complaints. In addition, employees and supervisors are prohibited from retaliating against an employee who properly uses the complaint resolution procedure.

NBN may, at its discretion, refuse to proceed with any dispute it determines is improper under this policy. Further, this policy does not alter the employment-at-will relationship in any way.