



readyreference

WESTERN REGION

A photograph of a young girl with dark, curly hair being hugged from behind by a woman with long, blonde hair. Both are smiling warmly at each other. The background is a soft-focus outdoor setting with greenery.

thank you!

We know the child welfare system can be complex, and we're here to help you navigate the agencies, acronyms, positions, and people involved. This handbook will help you:

- Understand who does what and the structure of the child welfare system in Utah
- Know how to access various resources and supports available to you
- Access contact names, numbers, and emails for those who can assist you

Thank you for becoming licensed and for your willingness to help children in need.

STAYING CONNECTED

FOSTER ROSTER

The Foster Roster is a bi-monthly magazine for foster and adoptive families, published by Utah Foster Care. Licensed families receive it in the mail, and it's available online at utahfostercare.org/fosterroster.

The Roster contains important, time-sensitive information about upcoming trainings, events, available donations, policy changes, relicensing requirements, opportunities for children in care, and helpful articles. You'll also find regional contact names and numbers.

If you're not receiving the Foster Roster, you may have unknowingly unsubscribed. Contact your regional retention specialist to be added back to our mailing list.

WEBSITE

Our website, utahfostercare.org, contains a wealth of information. Most of what you'll use is in the Foster Parent Resources section, accessible from the "Foster Parent Resources" link at the top of the site. Here you'll find upcoming events, relicensing requirements, digital copies of the Foster Roster, Wishing Well and Giving Tree request forms, links to other agencies, and contact information for local UFC staff who are happy to answer any questions.

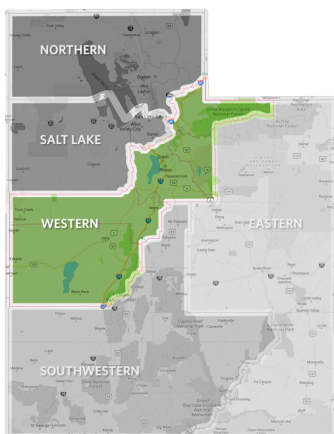
Webinars of pre-service and in-service classes are available anytime for review. Reach out to your local retention specialist to gain access to the training portal.

UTAH FOSTER CARE'S RETENTION SPECIALIST

Once you're licensed, get to know your UFC Foster Family Retention Specialist (see contact information on page 6). They're your best guide to accessing all kinds of Utah Foster Care support opportunities found in this guide.

WELCOME TO THE WESTERN REGION

As a foster parent, you'll interact with three different agencies. Services for foster families in each agency are organized by region. You live in the Western Region, composed of Utah County, Wasatch, Summit, Juab, and Millard Counties.



UNDERSTANDING THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM



UTAH FOSTER CARE

That's us! We're a private, nonprofit (501c3) agency responsible for finding, training, and nurturing the foster families who serve Utah's children in foster care. We have a contract with the State to provide these services, including ongoing support for licensed foster families outlined in this reference guide.

Each Utah Foster Care regional office has staff responsible for recruitment, education, and retention. Foster-Adoptive Consultants shepherd prospective families through the licensing process; trainers educate prospective and current families; and retention specialists work closely with families, answering questions about special funding resources, appreciation events, Cluster Support Group meetings, Facebook groups, and the Foster Roster.

UTAH DIVISION OF LICENSING AND BACKGROUND CHECK (DLBC)

This State agency is responsible for processing your paperwork, conducting a home study, issuing your initial foster parent license, and renewing that license each year. dlbc.utah.gov/home/office-of-licensing/human-services/foster-care-licenses/

UTAH DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

DIVISION OF CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES (DCFS)

This State agency is responsible for protecting children from abuse, neglect, or dependency. It places children with foster families and oversees their care, including providing a wide range of services.

DCFS works with a child's biological parents to address the problems that warranted removal, so the child may safely return home (reunification). Depending on whether your placement is a child you know or not, you'll be assigned either a Kinship Family Consultant or Resource Family Consultant (in some areas, one person might fill both roles). You'll also work closely with your child's DCFS caseworker. DCFS has specialists who can help transition older youth to adult living and assist you through the adoption process. dcfs.utah.gov/

Note: DCFS refers to foster/adoptive parents as "resource families" and families who care for children they already knew as "kinship families." You'll see this terminology in forms and hear it from caseworkers.

RESOURCES FOR FOSTER PARENTS

The best way to advocate for your child in foster care is to become knowledgeable. The resources below are available to help you stay informed, proactive, and connected to support systems for you and the kids in care.

GET INVOLVED: YOUR LOCAL CLUSTER SUPPORT GROUP

One of the first things you should do is join your local Cluster Support Group for foster parents (your Retention Specialist can show you how). Your group is assigned based on where you live and will help empower you by providing both educational and social support.

Most groups meet monthly, offering training that helps you develop skills necessary to understand and parent children who have experienced trauma and abuse. You can attend any cluster regardless of the one you're assigned to. These in-service trainings help you meet the requirements to renew your license annually.

Clusters are also an informal network for seeking respite care providers, listening ears, and advice on various issues. Meetings are a good time to get to know DCFS and UFC staff. Community donations are frequently distributed during Cluster meetings. You can find your cluster here: utahfostercare.org/foster-parent-resources/support-groups/

STAY CONNECTED: FACEBOOK

Once you're licensed, request to join your regional Facebook group by emailing Carmen Hall at carmen.hall@utahfostercare.org. You'll be invited once your license is verified. These groups are a great way to receive reminders about trainings, special events, and recent donations, and they serve as a vital link to other licensed families in your area.

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

Foster parents are relicensed annually. To meet minimum training standards, foster parents need to complete 16 hours of approved courses annually. If there are two caregivers in the household, 16 hours is the total required for both caregivers combined, with neither having fewer than 4 hours. Single providers are required to complete 12 hours.

Required breakdown: A **minimum of 4 hours in-person, 3 hours on prerecorded trainings, books, or movies**. The remainder may be live in-person or virtual trainings.

Any training offered through your Cluster Support Group, Utah Foster Care, or DCFS is automatically approved. Other training offered through work, school, or community sources may be approved in advance by your DCFS-assigned Resource Family Consultant.

TRAINING PORTAL

You can earn up to 3 hours of in-service credit by watching short training videos on various topics in our training portal. This is also where you register and RSVP to classes. Visit ufctraining.talentlms.com to access the portal. This is also where you send information in receive credit for attending in service also.

ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM

Each year, UFC hosts a conference featuring local and nationally renowned speakers in child welfare. Foster and adoptive parents can attend for a minimal fee. Look in the Foster Roster and on Facebook for details. utahfostercare.org/training-for-parents/annual-symposium/

CPR TRAINING

Each foster parent is required by DLBC to have current CPR/first-aid training. Online CPR courses are acceptable, and you can take a free course at utahfostercare.org/cpr. If you prefer another site, that's fine—some may charge a small fee.

RSVP/REGISTER

You will be notified of changes or cancellations in Cluster Support Group trainings only if you register by confirming on the training portal or by calling the trainer. <https://ufctraining.talentlms.com/index>

DON'T LET IT LAPSE!

It's much easier to **renew a license** than to have it lapse and need to go through relicensing. Lapsed licenses have real consequences: Medicaid cards and state payments can only be sent to licensed providers, and children can only remain in licensed homes. **A lapsed license means stress and trouble for everyone—especially the child.**

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

CLINICAL SERVICES

Foster parents open their homes to children who need connections with caring adults. When children return home following placement, foster parents can experience a multitude of feelings—sadness, anger, hurt, loneliness, and more. Additionally, the stressors of caring for children with difficult emotions and behaviors can become overwhelming.

Utah Foster Care offers clinical intervention, both individual and group services, to help foster parents with these demands. Each region has a clinical staff member to provide services as needed, with regularly scheduled support groups held monthly. Request clinical services at utahfostercare.org/clinical-services

MENTORING PROGRAM

A foster parent mentor is an experienced foster parent who provides guidance, support, and advice to those new to fostering. They act as a trusted resource, helping new or less experienced foster parents navigate the complexities of fostering children.

Mentors share knowledge about working with child welfare agencies, dealing with emotional challenges, and helping foster parents stay resilient during difficult times. They provide practical advice on managing visits with biological families, advocating for a child's needs, and handling paperwork and meetings with caseworkers.

To request a mentor for yourself or to become a mentor for others, visit utahfostercare.org/foster-parent-resources/mentors

FOSTERING CONVERSATIONS PODCAST

Real and raw conversations about parenting for bio, foster, adoptive, or blended families to increase understanding of issues we all face. Hosted by Amy Smith, a foster adoptive parent. You can listen to episodes and receive training credit at utahfostercare.org/fostering-conversations-podcast

LENDING LIBRARY

Raise the Future offers a free lending library featuring children's books and titles about drug exposure, grief and trauma healing, mental illness, parenting advice, sexual abuse, and special-needs adoption. You can check out up to three titles at a time by mail and keep them for up to 6 weeks. Return postage is included with your order. To check out selections or place an order, call (801) 265-0444 or visit utahadopt.org/lending-library

FAMILY EVENTS

Appreciation events offer families a great way to get out, have fun together, and get to know other licensed families. Swim parties, skate parties, BBQs, bowling nights, and corn mazes are just a few of the free activities organized through your Cluster Support Group. Local and statewide events occur throughout the year. Watch your Foster Roster for the next one in your area, or search for your cluster at utahfostercare.org/foster-parent-resources/support-groups

SUPPORTING TEENS IN FOSTER CARE

We talk a lot about teens at Utah Foster Care—and with good reason. Half of all children in care are over age 10, so we're eager to find families willing to open their hearts to older children. Teens in care are literally running out of time—time to find a permanent family and receive the love and support they need to thrive as adults.

With added urgency come added supports. The State has an entire website dedicated to state supports for teens: dcfs.utah.gov/services/youth-services

MEDICAL AND ADOPTION RESOURCES

Health services, post-adoption subsidies, and post-secondary education grants are available. Medicaid covers medical, dental, and mental health services to age 18 (with some children qualifying for extended coverage if they qualify for DSPD). An adoption subsidy may be available based on the youth's needs. dcfs.utah.gov/services/adoption/

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Federal Pell grants are available to pay college tuition and other expenses. Youth may apply for the Olene S. Walker Transition to Adult Living Scholarship (up to \$5,000 for degree or certificate programs), Education Training Vouchers (ETV), and other grants at dcfs.utah.gov/services/youth-services/education-employment. Youth aged 16–25 can complete their GED requirement and receive job training at Utah Job Corps. clearfield.jobcorps.gov/



[Federal Pell Grants](#)



[Utah Job Corps](#)

UTAH FOSTER CARE CONTACT INFORMATION

LOCAL STAFF

Melissa Nielsen , Lead Foster/Adopt Consultant	melissa.nielsen@utahfostercare.org	(801) 462-0747
Carmen Hall , Retention Services Specialist	carmen.hall@utahfostercare.org	(801) 783-4654
Maegen Jenne , Volunteer Coordinator	maegen.jenne@utahfostercare.org	(801) 743-7332
Makenzie Wiscombe , Care Communities Coordinator	makenzie.wiscombe@utahfostercare.org	(801) 639-9097
Terri Rowley , Regional Trainer	terri.rowley@utahfostercare.org	(801) 830-1850

STATEWIDE POSITIONS

Michelle Ostmark , Mentor Program Coordinator	michelle.ostmark@utahfostercare.org	(801) 755-4766
Les Harris , Clinical Support Coordinator	les.harris@utahfostercare.org	(435) 219-0561
Melina Moore , Volunteer Services Manager	melina.moore@utahfostercare.org	(801) 743-7334
Luciana Eguiguren , Spanish Speaking	luciana.eguiguren@utahfostercare.org	(801) 743-7320
Stephanie Benally , Native Families	stephanie.benally@utahfostercare.org	(801) 783-4430

DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR POSITIONS

See all department directors and Utah Foster Care's Administration at <https://utahfostercare.org/contact-us/>. Please note that the director of Community Volunteers includes Care Communities and volunteers. The Director of Retention includes retention, mentor, and clinical Services.

CLUSTER SUPPORT GROUP FACILITATORS

Experienced foster/adoptive parents who plan Cluster Support Group meetings and trainings. Let them know if there's a training topic you need.

North Cluster

Emily A. (425) 457-0140
Emily-anderson@outlook.com

Wasatch Cluster

Jennifer H. (870) 208-7417
Honeyvance@yahoo.com
Katy F. (612) 618-3816
knmoline@gmail.com

Post Adopt Cluster

Julie A. (801) 602-7349
Julie@andersens.org

Timpanogos Cluster

Cindy H. (423) 863-7088
Cindytrrent2hall@gmail.com

Level 3 Cluster

McKenna L. (435) 841-4422
Kennalister@gmail.com
Mitzi H. (801) 830-5807
Mmpinki30@gmail.com

Kinship Cluster

Danielle H. (385) 269-1666
danielle.holdaway@simplicitylaser.com

Central Cluster

Tasha M. (801) 636-3501
Tashmonestine@gmail.com

South Cluster

Jodi C. (385) 207-0126
Jodilyn55@gmail.com

Not sure who to call at Utah Foster Care, or have a question not covered here?
Call our statewide toll-free number: 1 (877) 505-5437

Contact Information – State Employee Directory

Many of the State employees you'll work with are listed below. Others may be found using the State's online directory: **statephone.utah.gov**. Each child in foster care has their own DCFS-assigned caseworker, whose contact information will be found in the child's home-to-home binder.

Division of Child & Family Services (DCFS)

After-hours Emergency Hotline: **1 (855) 323-3237**

Resource Family Consultants (RFCs)

Ask your Resource Family Consultant (RFC) or Kinship Family Consultant (KFC) about placements in your home. Don't know your consultant? Call the appropriate supervisor listed below.

Jacque Burks , RFC Supervisor	jburks@utah.gov	(801) 361-8720
Candice Whiteley , North Utah County	cwhitele@utah.gov	(801) 372-2781
Geneil Young , Central Utah/Summit/ Wasatch Counties	gbyoung@utah.gov	(801) 234-9187
Erica Wankier , Level 3 RFC	ewankier@utah.gov	(435) 660-1174
Mike Pickett , South Utah County	mikepickett@utah.gov	(801) 616-6568
Carly Cook , South Utah/Juab/Millard Counties	cbcook@utah.gov	(385) 277-3938

Kinship Family Consultants (KFCs)

Janalee Burdette , KFC Supervisor	jburdett@utah.gov	(801) 592-8750
Priya Ellwood , North Utah County	pellwood@utah.gov	(801) 874-4826
Abel Kannigan , Summit/Wasatch Counties & Provo	akanigan@utah.gov	
Iliana Chavez , Spanish Speaking & Central Utah County	ichavez@utah.gov	(801) 592-8750

DIVISION OF LICENSING AND BACKGROUND CHECK (DLBC)

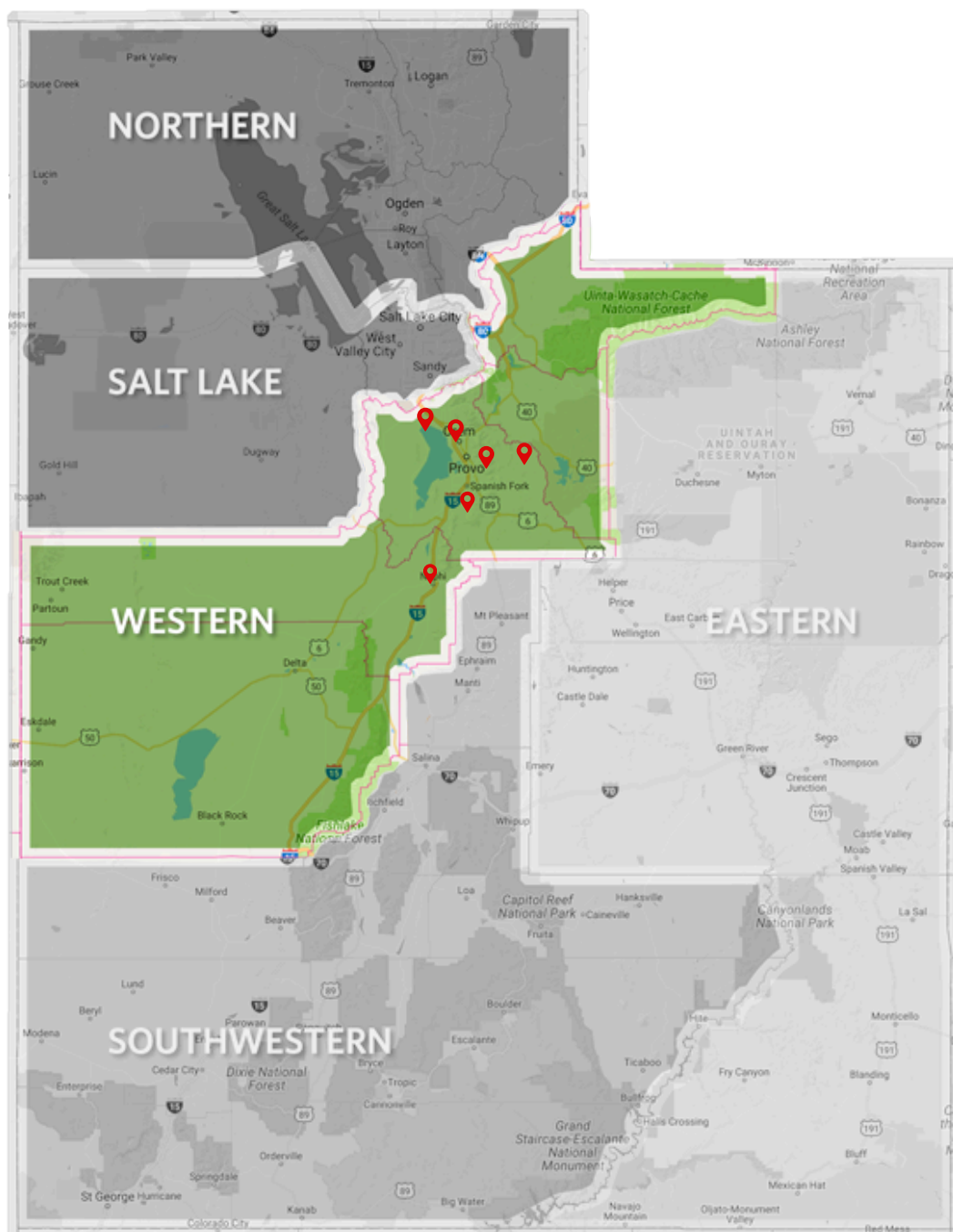
Ask your licensor about licensing rules, requirements, and renewal, or check <https://dlbc.utah.gov/home/office-of-licensing/human-services/foster-care-licenses/>. If you don't know who your licensor is, call the supervisor listed below.

Kolyn Tacy , SLC/Utah County	ktacy@utah.gov	(385) 321-5591
Jolene Dalley-Waters , SLC/Utah County	jdalley@utah.gov	(385) 321-5587
Lauren Andrews , SLC/Utah County/Nephi	laurenandrews@utah.gov	(385) 329-0192
John Ortiz , Supervisor	jortiz@utah.gov	(801) 319-1441

Not sure who to call at Utah Foster Care, or have a question not covered here?
Call our statewide toll-free number: **1 (877) 505-5437**

DCFS OFFICE LOCATIONS

Lehi Office	3098 W Executive Pkwy ste 330, Lehi, UT	(801) 763-4100
Orem Office	97 E Center St, Orem, UT	(801) 224-7820
Provo Office	150 E Center St, Provo, UT	(801) 374-7005
Heber Office	69 N 600 W A, Heber City, UT	(435) 657-4200
Salem Office	609 UT-198, Salem, UT	(801) 794-6700
Nephi Office	1403 S. Main St., Nephi, UT	(435) 623-7207



REIMBURSEMENTS AND RESOURCES

In addition to your monthly stipend, funds are available through both the State (via DCFS) and Utah Foster Care (UFC). Supplemental DCFS funds are contingent on legislative funding and are summarized in the table below. UFC funds are made available through private donations.

DCFS FUNDING

DCFS funding is requested through your caseworker or Resource Family Consultant (RFC). Receipts may be required for reimbursement. Copies of receipts are to be turned in with the payment form. Original receipts remain in the home-to-home book.

MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT

Routine trips are not covered (for example, travel to the store, shopping center, a friend's house, school, or recreational activities). If transporting more than one child at the same time, mileage can only be submitted for one child.

You must document all reimbursable mileage claims on the appropriate Child & Family Services form that includes odometer readings, purpose of travel, and destination. Mileage claims are submitted monthly for reimbursement. All mileage claims and receipts must have a one-time payment form from DCFS submitted with them. These forms can be located online at dcfs.utah.gov/resources/records-request at the bottom under Provider-only payment forms or from your DCFS caseworker.

DCFS REIMBURSEMENT

See the DCFS Reimbursement table on the next page (page 9) for more details.

UTAH FOSTER CARE FUNDING

WISHING WELL

Private donors contribute to this fund, allowing children in foster care to participate in common childhood activities or purchase needed items not covered under state funding. If special needs funds through DCFS have been used or are not available, you, your caseworker, or the RFC may request up to \$500 per child annually through the form on our website.

Wishing Well funds may be used for music, dance, or karate lessons; vacation expenses; team fees and equipment; or other great childhood activities. Teens may be interested in purchasing contacts, school rings, yearbooks, or formal wear for prom. Vacation requests are limited to \$300 once in a lifetime. You may apply here: <https://utahfostercare.org/foster-parent-resources/wishing-well-fund/>

OTHER HELPS & RESOURCES

Donations: Books, blankets, quilts, school supplies, and backpacks are some of the donations made available to kids in care from the community. When available, donated items are distributed during Cluster meetings or appreciation events and through the Resource Sheds. Notices may also be posted on the regional Facebook group or in the Foster Roster.

Holiday Help: Generous donors and community service groups aid UFC staff in providing gifts and needed items for kids in care during the holiday season. Watch your Facebook group or personal email in the fall for details. utahfostercare.org/giving-tree/

RESOURCE SHED

"The Shed" was created and operated by foster parents for foster parents. It contains clothing items, toys, baby items, and other things generously donated by Kid to Kid, Plato's Closet, and other community partners. These items are free to our foster families.

Type of Service	Description	PSA Code	Rate
Initial Clothing Payment	One-time, emergency clothing needs when the child lacks basic clothing at time of placement. Must be used within 30 days of placement.	ICP	Limited to \$196 one time per custody episode
Special Needs: Baby	Special baby needs such as diapers, special formulas, baby furniture/equipment.	SNB	\$240 maximum special needs requests for all service codes combined every six months with DCFS approval
Special Needs: Clothing	Clothing needed over and above the \$41 included monthly in the provider payment.	SNC	
Special Needs: Gifts	Additional Christmas gifts, birthdays, graduation, etc.	SNG	
Special Needs: Lessons/Equipment	Lessons (music, art, swimming, dance, drama) and rental/purchase of musical instruments, lesson supplies	SNL	
Special Needs: Recreation	Recreation (trips, vacations, fishing licenses, summer camps, etc.), sports equipment, bicycles, etc.	SNR	
Special Needs: School Expenses NOT FOR TUITION!	Student body fees that cannot be waived, locker costs, school supplies, summer school, yearbook, graduation pictures, etc.	STP	DCFS may review and approval one-time support based on the funding availability after all other special needs codes have been explored
Special Needs: Miscellaneous	One-time expenses that are not covered under other special needs codes	SNM	
Mileage: Case Activity	Case activity miles, miles to and from reviews, court activities, case planning, staffing and placement transitions	FTC	\$0.44 per mile by providing the mileage reimbursement request including the detailed starting place and destination for each trip
Mileage: School of Origin	Cost of reasonable travel (out of foster parents' school boundaries and over 10 miles) for a child to remain in the same school they were attending prior to placement. This will require Child and Family Team and Resource Family Coordinator (RFC) documented approval in case logs with a review every six months.	FTE	
Mileage: Visitation	Visitation miles to and from visits with parents, siblings and other relatives/caregivers.	FTV	
Mileage: Miscellaneous	Medical and other essential miles – only mileage to and from medical, dental and mental health appointments	FTP	
Joyous Seasons Payment	All children in service receive this payment separate from the special needs support. This is an auto run payment the first week of December. No receipts will be required.	JSP	ages 0–5 \$50 ages 6–12 \$60 13 and above \$65 Reach out to DCFS for a manual payment if the payment is not included in the auto run and return the funds if the payment is made in error.



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE UTAH
DIVISION OF CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES

The information in this Ready Reference was correct as of June 2026. Please let your Retention Specialist know of any errors. Thank you!

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UTAHFOSTERCARE.ORG