

Morningstar Foster Care Agreement

***In order to provide the best possible care for foster children, Morningstar and Foster Parent(s) enter into the following agreement:***

**MORNINGSTAR EXPECTS THE FOSTER PARENTS TO:**

1. Provide full time care of the foster child and obtain Morningstar approval for any substitute care (i.e. babysitters, day care, and summer camps).
2. Allow representatives of Morningstar to visit their home for the purpose of foster care planning, placement, and supervision.
3. Accept children only through Morningstar Specialized Foster Care Services.
4. Treat the foster child fairly and with kindness, and allow him/her to participate fully as a member of the family.
5. Assist the child(ren) to successfully cope through an understanding of the effects of trauma on human development.
6. Assist the child(ren) in dealing with separation from their home and family, including recognizing, understanding, and working to resolve potential attachment issues.
7. Provide guidance, appropriate discipline, and as many positive experiences as possible.
8. Understand the feelings and reasons behind a child’s negative behaviors, and provide support that will make the child feel loved, secure, confident, and responsible.
9. Communicate respectfully with the child(ren), taking into account the possibility of diverse outlooks shaped by unique life experiences, cultural beliefs, religious beliefs, and/or age.
10. Help the child(ren) to develop a positive self-concept and identity, recognizing that past experiences or loss may have contributed to poor self-image and identity confusion.
11. Report to Morningstar any change of address, phone number(s), employment status or other important changes.
12. Report to Morningstar any serious family illness and any serious illness or accident involving the child.
13. Adhere to all agency policies regarding discipline, including the prohibition of corporal punishment, humiliation, threat of institutionalization, or other harsh or unreasonable punishment.
14. Report to Morningstar any changes in family membership or significant life-style changes.
15. Contact Morningstar before taking the foster child out of state for any amount of time or out of town for more than two nights.
16. Provide the child(ren) with plenty of opportunities to interact and socialize with peers and participate in extracurricular, social, cultural, and other enrichment activities that are developmentally appropriate.
17. Make careful and sensible parental decisions in keeping with Georgia’s Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standards.
18. Assist in the implementation of the child’s goals and objectives set out on his individualized service plan and/or dfcs case plan.
19. Support Family contact through assisting with family visits and phone calls including visits between siblings and provide transportation and supervision, if able.
20. Provide Morningstar with sufficient time (minimum of 14 days) for making an adequate plan if removal of the child is desired.
21. Maintain continuous contact with Morningstar regarding matters of significance to the adjustment and welfare of the child as well as to report positive or negative behaviors, which would be helpful in understanding the child.
22. Assure the information about the child and his/her family is kept confidential and is discussed with only the appropriate agency staff members or other professional persons designated by Morningstar (see HIPPA Notice of Privacy Practices).
23. Provide the foster child with three meals a day served at regular intervals, conforming to any dietary restrictions or special instructions imposed by the child’s physician. Food provided to the child shall be nutritious, well balanced, and available in sufficient quantity.
24. Keep foster child’s clothing clean and in good repair, and provide each child with appropriate toiletry articles.
25. Schedule and provide transportation for any services needed by the child including, but not limited to, medical, dental, education, and/or mental health services. As a Specialized Foster Parent, these appointments must take top priority when planning your family schedules.
26. Follow the procedures for reporting and contacting Morningstar staff after hours and on weekends.
27. Provide normal, on-going clothing and school expense needs for the foster child (included within the monthly per diem).
28. Adhere to all record keeping guidelines for monitoring the child’s behavior during the week.
29. Complete the necessary 15 hours of on-going annual training required by attending training on your own or by participating in the in person, on-line, or written trainings offered through Morningstar Foster Care Services, keeping in mind 6 of those hours must be face to face (classroom or individual trainings).

**MORNINGSTAR AGREES TO:**

1. Provide a clear explanation for the respective roles of Morningstar foster parents, staff and of the referring agency.
2. Provide any guidelines and policy materials utilized by Morningstar or its staff that may help foster parents better understand the foster care program.
3. Help the foster parents make an informed decision before placement to the suitability of their home for the particular child by:
	* *Providing any necessary information about the child and his/her family that is pertinent to the foster parents’ ability to effectively carry out their roles.*
	* *Describing the behavior patterns, problems, needs and strengths of the child.*
	* *Describing the plan for the child, including such things as length of time he/she is likely to need placement and goals to be accomplished.*
	* *Describing what may be expected of the parents in accommodating to the requirements of the child’s birth family visiting program.*
	* *Assuring the foster parents that their refusal to take a particular child will not jeopardize either the continuance of their certification or the consideration of their home for other children.*
4. Inform the foster parents of Morningstar’s policy concerning payment for board, clothing, and personal allowance, and other payments.
5. Schedule every child for intake examinations that include physical, dental, hearing and visual examinations to comply with state guidelines and regulations.
6. Assist the foster parents in securing the necessary services to meet the child’s medical, psychological/psychiatric, dental, visual and hearing needs with clear instructions as to what is expected of the foster parents, including what to do in an emergency and how billings are to be handled.
7. Provide a copy of the child’s available medical history, which includes such information as childhood disease, immunizations, significant illnesses, surgery, allergic reactions, or particular medical, dental, hearing or visual needs the child may have.
8. Assist the foster parents in securing the necessary services to meet the child’s special needs through utilization of the full range of community resources, such as psychological, psychiatric, special education, and vocational training services.
9. Establish a plan for visits by the Family Consultant to provide regular on-going help to the foster parents with any problems they may be experiencing in parenting a child not their own or integrating the child into their family.
10. Work with the referring agency to establish a visiting plan for the child with his/her own family, with consideration given to the foster parents’ lifestyle plans.
11. Utilize the parents’ experience with the child for assisting the Family Consultant in making recommendations to the referring agency for the on-going planning process.
12. Accept the right of the foster parent(s) to refuse to continue care for a child whose needs they cannot meet and remove the child from the home within the minimum 14-day termination period.
13. Discuss the plan for termination of the placement.
14. Provide help in preparing the child for termination of the placement in addition to help with the meaning of the child’s leaving.
15. Provide an opportunity for the foster parents to discuss and deal with their feelings about the placement experience as it affects their choice in taking another child.
16. Provide for an on-going evaluation of the foster home, in conjunction with the foster parents, both during the placement period as well as after a child leaves.
17. Provide opportunities, written or verbal, for evaluation of agency practices based upon foster parent’s own experience.
18. Provide on-going educational and training opportunities.
19. Each foster family will be provided with a copy of the Foster Parent Manual.

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Foster Parent Date

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Foster Parent Date