



Erasmus+

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AKADEMIA ŚWIADOMEGO **RODZICA**



Rodzic na zastępstwo pilnie poszukiwany!

FOSTER CARE

Foster Care

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1. What is foster care?

Foster care is a collection of people, institutions and actions intended to provide temporary care and upbringing for children whose parents are unable to provide this.

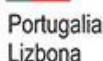
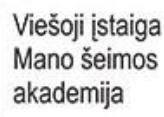
2. Who supports foster families?

The duty to support a family experiencing difficulties in fulfilling its caring and upbringing functions and to organise foster care in Poland rests with the local government units and the government administration bodies within the scope established by the Polish law. Local government units dealing with foster care are: Municipal Social Assistance Centre or District Family Assistance Centre. Both of these institutions perform the role of Foster Care Organiser.

3. What are the different forms of foster care?

In Poland we distinguish two forms of foster care. The first is institutional foster care (facility), which includes various types of institutions, and the second is family foster care, which includes families. In the institutional foster care contracted guardians are look after children. In the family foster care married or unmarried person permanently are taking care of children.

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4. What are the types of foster families?

In Poland we distinguish four types of foster families:

- a) Relative foster families (grandmother, grandfather, adult brother or sister).
- b) Non-professional foster families. Non-professional families are created by a married couple or an unmarried person who is not an ascendant or sibling of a child (aunt, uncle), including persons from extended family or complete strangers (not related to the child).
- c) Professional foster families Care for up to 4 unrelated children. One of the parents takes care of the children permanently. This type of family requires adequate training and qualifications to care for the children. Professional foster families are divided into family emergency families (caring for children in an emergency mode, for the time of court proceedings), specialist professional foster families (caring for children with special needs) and professional foster families (caring for children with a legal with a regulated legal situation).
- d) Family Children's Home. This is usually a family that cares for unrelated children in their own apartment or home. A family orphanage can house no more than 8 children at a time.

5. Do foster families receive financial support?

Related foster families do not receive remuneration for their work, but they do receive financial assistance to partially cover the costs of maintaining a child in their family in the amount of €162.

Non-professional foster families receive financial assistance to partially cover the costs of raising a child in their family in the amount of €246.

Professional foster families receive financial assistance to partially cover the costs of raising a child in their family in the amount of €246. They also receive remuneration for their work (€600 - €760).

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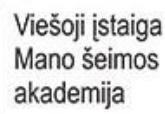
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Family foster home - the person in charge receives remuneration and funds not only for partial coverage of child's maintenance costs and for his/her work, but also for maintenance of an apartment or a house in which a family foster home is run.

6. On what basis do children enter foster care?

A child is placed in a foster family:

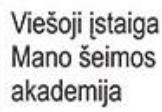
- on the basis of a court decision,
- in the case of an urgent need to secure the child - at the request or with the consent of the child's parents, on the basis of an agreement concluded between the foster family and the province/city/town governor competent for the place of residence of the family.

7. Who can become a foster family?

A foster family can be commissioned to a married or an unmarried person who:

- 1) give a guarantee of proper performance of foster care,
- 2) were not and are not deprived of parental authority and their parental authority is not limited or suspended,
- 3) they pay maintenance obligation – if such an obligation results from an enforcement order,
- 4) are not limited in their capacity to perform legal acts,
- 5) are able to take proper care of the child, which was confirmed by:
 - a. a medical certificate of health issued by a primary care physician,
 - b. an opinion on predispositions and motivation to act as a foster family or to run a family foster home issued by a psychologist,
- 6) are staying on the territory of the Republic of Poland, and in case of foreigners - their stay is legal,
- 7) ensure adequate living and housing conditions enabling the child to satisfy his/her individual needs, including:
 - a. emotional, physical and social development,

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- b. proper education and development of interests,
- c. recreation and organisation of free time.

In addition, the function of a non-professional or professional foster family can be entrusted to persons who have not been convicted of an intentional crime. In the case of a non-professional foster family, at least one person forming the family must have a regular source of income.

8. What are the ages of children who enter foster care?

A child may be placed in one form of foster care from birth or older.

9. How long can a child stay in foster care?

A child may stay in the family custody not longer than until he/she reaches the age of majority (18 years). If the child continues his/her education, he/she may stay with the family with its consent, but not longer than until he/she reaches the age of 25.

10. What benefits are available to a foster family?

11.

A foster family is entitled to a monthly benefit to cover partial maintenance costs of each child placed with it, in the amount appropriate to the form of the care provided. The allowance is granted at the request of a foster family or a family running a children's home.

Children with a disability certificate receive an additional benefit an allowance of approximately €50.

Foster families and those running a family child care home also receive an upbringing allowance at their request.

Children growing up in foster care are entitled to a one-time allowance at the start of the school year, e.g. for books, exercise books, shoes, etc.

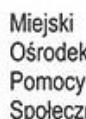
In addition, at the request of a foster family a starost (province governor) may grant:

- a) a subsidy for holidays outside the child's place of residence;
- b) allowance to cover:

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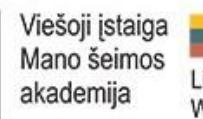
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- necessary expenses connected with the needs of the adopted child – once,
 - expenses connected with the occurrence of fortuitous events or other events affecting the quality of care - once or periodically.
- c) financial means for maintaining a dwelling in a multi-family building or a single-family house - to a non-professional and professional foster family;
- d) allowance to cover the costs associated with carrying out the necessary renovation of a dwelling in a multi-family building or a single-family house - once a year - to a professional foster family.

12. Are foster parents eligible for maternity, parental or paternity leave?

Related and non-professional foster families are entitled to **maternity leave**, followed by **parental leave**. In total, the parent can be at home with the child for one year. They will receive **maternity pay** for this time. After the 20-week maternity leave, foster parents are entitled to parental leave of 32 weeks if they adopt one child, and up to 34 weeks if they adopt two children. Maternity leave is granted, however, no longer than until the child is 7 years old, and up to the age of 10 in the case of a child to whom a decision has been made to postpone compulsory education for health reasons, for example.

Parental leave may be taken in one go or in parts, not later than until the child turns 6 (until the end of the calendar year in which the child turns 6).

Irrespective of the use of other leaves, a foster father who has taken a child is entitled to **paternity leave**, however, no longer than until the lapse of 12 months from the date when the decision on taking child in foster care becomes final and until the child reaches the age of 7 years or 10 years in the case of a child in respect of whom it has been decided to postpone compulsory education. Paternity leave does not exceed 2 weeks. At the same time the child's mother may be on maternity leave and the father on paternity leave.

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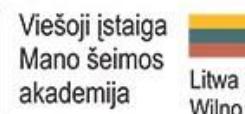
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12. Are foster parents entitled to annual leave?

Like any other permanent employee, each foster family is entitled to up to 30 calendar days off work a year. During that time, the children in foster care are taken care of by a support family, i.e. another foster family who is friends with the foster family or a family that has also completed a special course of study, but has not decided to take in children permanently and only occasionally hosts them. It is often relatives or friends of the foster parents who set up a foster family to take over the care of the children during holidays or emergencies such as hospital stays.

13. How many foster families exist in Żory and how many in Poland?

There are 83 foster families in Żory and they are raising 107 children. Most of them are related. There are 15 children brought up by an institutional foster care.

In Poland there are:

- 24439 related foster families
- 11460 non-professional foster families
- 1300 professional foster families
- 523 emergency care foster families
- 244 specialist professional foster families
- 553 family children's home

Currently, about 58 441 children are in foster families in Poland.

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14. What is the main reason for placing children in foster care?

Children are placed into foster families for many reasons. The most common are:

- various kinds of addiction – 41,7 %
- caring and educational helplessness – 28,1 %

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