

GOODLIFE INNOVATIONS, INC.
PROFESSIONAL FAMILY TEACHING MODEL PROGRAM

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FROM PARENTS/GUARDIANS
About GoodLife's Specialized Foster Care Provider Program

How is the determination made as to who can receive services in a Provider's home?

GoodLife Innovations prefers that a Specialized Foster Care Provider knows and has developed a relationship with any prospective person to be served prior to placement. In some cases, Foster Care Providers have worked for GoodLife Innovations in other capacities and already have established relationships with persons who could benefit from a small, family-style living environment. When such GoodLife Innovations staff members decide that a Specialized Foster Care Provider lifestyle is right for them, and an individual they've served in another capacity and/or the individual's family is willing to make the same commitment to this lifestyle, the person's Core Team can begin the process of determining the appropriateness of such a living arrangement for all parties.

What are other requirements for becoming a Specialized Foster Care Provider?

In addition to a relationship with the person to be served, requirements include participating in a placement study, an in-home family interview, home check, meeting minimum training standards, willingness to become certified within 18 months of contract, and successfully passing thorough background checks and screenings (including a general physical exam, drug screening, criminal history check, and checks for any history of abuse, neglect or exploitation) as well as any other applicable requirements by the program. A Foster Care Provider must then agree to become an independent contractor, and must remain in compliance with all minimum training standards and requirements throughout the extent of their contract.

What exactly does *independent contractor* mean?

An independent contractor is not an employee of GoodLife Innovations, but is an independent party contracting with GoodLife Innovations to provide services. GoodLife Innovations is preparing to provide services under the auspices of Foster Care with the intent to meet the requirements for funding for care that meets the definition of qualified foster care payment. This potentially allows the Foster Family to consider this payment exempt from state and federal taxes. This has all been made possible by Federal legislation passed in 2002, which allows qualified Foster Care payments to be exempt. This of course increases the compensation to Foster Care Provider's significantly. While Foster Care Provider's are Independent Contractors, they must adhere to all standard licensing and guidelines and are accountable to meet all critical Quality of Life outcomes as defined in the Minimum Contractual Outcomes (MCOs), as well as any other program requirements.

What are Minimum Contractual Outcomes?

Minimum Contractual Outcomes (MCOs) refer to both general and person-specific outcomes that are consistent with GoodLife Innovations's definition of "Quality of Life" for people with and without disabilities. The MCO is an addendum to the contract between GoodLife Innovations and the Foster Care Provider, and specifies the quality outcomes that must be met for the home, individual served and their family. The individual to be served, his/her family/guardian, the GoodLife Innovations team who supports the person, and the prospective Foster Care Providers work together to develop, write, and approve the MCO list. The MCOs are then monitored at least quarterly through visits that the GoodLife Innovations representative makes to the home. Satisfactorily achieving the standards described in the MCO is a primary responsibility of Foster Care Provider and is required for the continuance of their contract.

In what other ways does GoodLife Innovations monitor program quality?

All Foster Care Providers are required by contract to become certified through GoodLife Innovations certification process and State of Kansas certifications, if applicable. To become certified, the Foster Care Provider works with a GoodLife Innovations consultant to complete a curriculum that includes training, observation and feedback.

What happens if a Foster Care Provider placement does not work out for any reason?

First and most important, if the individual is receiving services in a Foster Care Provider home, he or she is still considered to be served by GoodLife Innovations, and GoodLife Innovations will continue to serve him/her if the Foster Care Provider placement should end, unless extenuating circumstances exist.

If the individual moves out of a GoodLife Innovations group home, individualized living program home, or other residential living arrangement to move in to an Foster Care Provider home, their place will most likely be filled by another individual, so in most cases they would not be able to move back to the same GoodLife Innovations living arrangement they left.

If/when a Foster Care Provider placement ends, GoodLife Innovations will act to find a living arrangement that best suits the needs and lifestyle preferences of the individual, and you will be involved. GoodLife Innovations may need to make a temporary placement until the most suitable option can be arranged. A temporary placement might include living with another Foster Care Provider (approved by you, of course), or in another Family Teaching or Individualized Living Program home. It should be noted that Foster Care Providers are asked to give at least 6 month notice, which allows GoodLife Innovations and the person served support team to ensure successful transition planning.

What happens to personal belongings (like furniture) when a person moves into the Foster Care Provider home?

Like when most people decide to live together and combine households, Foster Care Provider(s) and the person they will be serving in their home need to take inventory of what the individual owns, determine what is needed to serve the needs of the person and make the household efficient, and make some decisions together. If a person served has some items that the Foster Care Provider(s) already own, all parties, including you, work together to decide what to do. The items owned by the individual could be stored, sold to another individual or family, or maybe even donated.

What is contributed financially toward my family member/ward's living expenses while s/he lives in an Extended Family Teaching home?

A monthly flat fee will be paid to the GoodLife Innovations for the purpose of providing a stipend to the Foster Care Provider for covering rent, utilities, food, and transportation. This fee was determined by averaging costs across all consumers of Foster Care Provider services. If your family member or ward does not have enough income to cover the monthly fee, he or she is guaranteed \$85 per month for personal spending, and whatever is left is paid to the Foster Care Provider. Foster Care Providers understand that if the individual served in their home does not have enough income to pay the full amount of the monthly fee, the difference will not be subsidized by GoodLife Innovations as it may have been through the Service Agreement when the person lived in an HCBS-funded home.

What safeguards are in place regarding my family member/individual's personal finances?

The Foster Care Provider will assist your family member or individual with managing their money as needed, and you will receive copies of financial reports from the Foster Care Provider. A member of the GoodLife Innovations finance department will audit the individual's checkbook and personal finances on at least a quarterly basis. Additionally, the individual's Targeted Case Manager may also preview the finances as well.

Does the Foster Care Provider provide only residential services?

The Foster Care Provider Model is primarily a residential service model, and GoodLife Innovations's day services program includes a variety of options developed around the interests, preferences, and vocational goals of persons served. In some cases, however, it may be appropriate and even preferable for the Foster Care Provider(s) to provide part-time or all day community based services in addition to residential services.

The Foster Care Provider placement committee, your family member/ward's Core Team and you must first consider your family member/ward's lifestyle preferences, interests, preferences, and vocational goals. If the Foster Care Provider(s) would like to provide community based day services and are able to meet the those preferences and goals, all parties work together to determine how community based day services are to be provided, tailoring them in such a way that the Foster Care Provider(s) provide services anywhere from one to five days a week.

What respite support is available for Foster Care Providers to prevent “burnout,” and who is with my family member/ward when they need to take a break?

Foster Care Providers are responsible for supervising the person they serve 24 hours a day if they are providing both residential services and community based day services. If the Foster Care Providers provide residential services only, they are responsible for the person served during mornings, evenings, on weekends, for days the person is sick, and for days that day services are not provided (i.e. holidays, planning days) However, GoodLife Innovations requires that respite for Foster Care Providers be part of the contract, and during contract development a pre-specified amount of respite will be agreed upon.

The Foster Care Provider is solely responsible for arranging all respite/relief services. There are two types of respite – paid support and “natural” support. Paid support would be staff members that the Foster Care Provider either employs or arranges for through GoodLife Innovations. “Natural” supports are people like family, friends and advocates that your family member/ward already knows and trusts, or that the Foster Care Providers know and trust.

GoodLife Innovations must screen and approve all persons paid to provide respite/relief support, and you must approve of all volunteers, family, friends or other similar people who do not receive pay for providing respite/relief. The Foster Care Provider(s) must provide any person providing respite/relief with individualized orientation/training.