

Caregiver Guidelines For Foster Childhood Activities *To Assist In Caregiver Decision Making*

[RCW 74.13.710](#) authorizes caregivers to provide or withhold permission without prior approval of the CA worker or department to allow a child in their care to participate in normal childhood activities based on a reasonable and prudent standard. This standard is characterized by careful and thoughtful parental decisions intended to maintain a child’s health, safety, and best interest which encourage the child’s emotional growth and development.

A “normal childhood activity” includes age or developmentally appropriate “extracurricular, enrichment, and social activities, and may include overnight activities outside the direct supervision of the caregiver for period of over twenty-four hours and up to seventy-two hours. “Normal childhood activities within the described time frames, including being babysat do not require background checks or prior department approval. Licensed foster parents must still follow the minimum licensing requirements for child foster homes in WAC 388-148.

A youth in Extended Foster Care is a "child" for the purposes of the dependency and must comply with responsibilities in WAC 388-25-0546; otherwise the youth has the legal status and legal rights of an adult and is responsible for their actions.

| Child Activity Category | Green – Examples of normal Childhood Activities caregivers can approve independently* | Red- Examples of childhood activities CA must approve* or obtain a court order |
|--|---|--|
| <p>CA worker approval or a new court order is needed any time an activity is in conflict with any court order or supervision/safety plan. Prior CA worker approval is required if there are costs or fees associated with the child’s participation in the activity if the department is expected to pay the participation costs.</p> | | |
| <p>Family Recreation (Children should be closely supervised and use appropriate safety equipment for water activities.)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movies • Community events • Family events (less than 72 hours) • Camping (less than 72 hours) • Hiking • Boating wearing a lifejacket • Swimming • Biking using a helmet • Other sporting activities using appropriate protective gear • River tubing • River rafting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any events or activities over 72 hours |

***Neither the department or the caregiver will be held liable for injuries to the child that occur as a result of authority granted unless the action or inaction of the department resulting in injury constitutes willful or wanton misconduct.**

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| Social/Extra-curricular Activities | Less than 72 hours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camps • Field trips • School related activities • Church activities • Youth Organization activities • Sports activities • Community activities • Social activities with peers • Spending the night away from the caregiver's home. | More than 72 hours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camps • Field Trips • School Related Activities • Church Activities • Youth Organization Activities • Sports Activities • Community Activities • Social Activities with Peers • Spending the night away from the caregiver's home. |
| Motorized Activities Children and caregivers must comply with all laws and use appropriate protective/safety gear. | Children <u>riding in</u> a motorized vehicle with an adult may include, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snowmobile • All-terrain vehicle • Jet ski • Tractor Youth at least 14 years <u>operating</u> motorized equipment or vehicle may include, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lawn mower • Snowmobile • All-terrain vehicle • Jet ski • Tractor | Children under 14 years old are not permitted to operate motorized equipment or vehicles (e.g. lawn mower, motorcycle) |

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| Driving | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregiver acts as the “parent/guardian” for the purposes of the Intermediate Driver’s License Law. • Caregiver must provide and pay for insurance for the child driving and agree to maintain and pay for insurance until child reaches 18 or until another responsible adult assumes financial liability risks for the child. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Driver’s education classes ➢ Driver’s training ➢ Driver’s test ➢ Issuance of a personal driver’s license | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CA worker must complete and submit the Request for Washington State Instruction Permit or Personal Driver License (DSHS 02-363) form to DOL before a youth can obtain the permit or license. • Youth must have an Identocard form (DSHS 16-029) on file with DOL prior to seeking a driver’s permit or license. (This can be submitted with DSHS 02-363.) |
| Travel | <p>All travel within the United States less than 72 hours</p> <p>Travel to the British Columbia (BC) territories of BC Rockies, Thompson/Okanogan and Vancouver Coast and Mountains are considered ‘border counties’ to Washington State and do not require out of country approval if less than 72 hours. All territories beyond are considered out of country travel.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All travel more than 72 hours. • All out-of-country travel |
| Employment/ Babysitting | <p>Youth 14 years old or older and following WAC 296-125</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview for employment • Continuation of current employment • Does not interfere with school <p>Reminder:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster children may not babysit other foster children. • Sexually aggressive and physically assaultive youth may not babysit other children. | Youth is 13 years old or younger |
| Religious Participation | Attend a religious service of the child’s choice. | Notify worker when the child and biological parent choices are in conflict. |

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