

Compulsory Preparation Training for Foster Carer applicants

Background

The completion of the Department of Communities' (the Department) preparation training is currently mandatory for all Department metropolitan based foster carer applicants prior to providing care to children in out-of-home care (OOHC).

There is no current requirement for Department country based foster carer applicants or community sector organisations (CSOs) foster carer applicants to undergo specific preparation training. In practice the vast majority of all foster carer applicants complete preparation training, however the content of preparation training is varied.

What is happening?

To create consistency, from 1 March 2017 all foster carer applicants from the Department or CSOs will be required to complete approved preparation training prior to their assessment report being submitted to the cross-sector foster carer panel for endorsement.

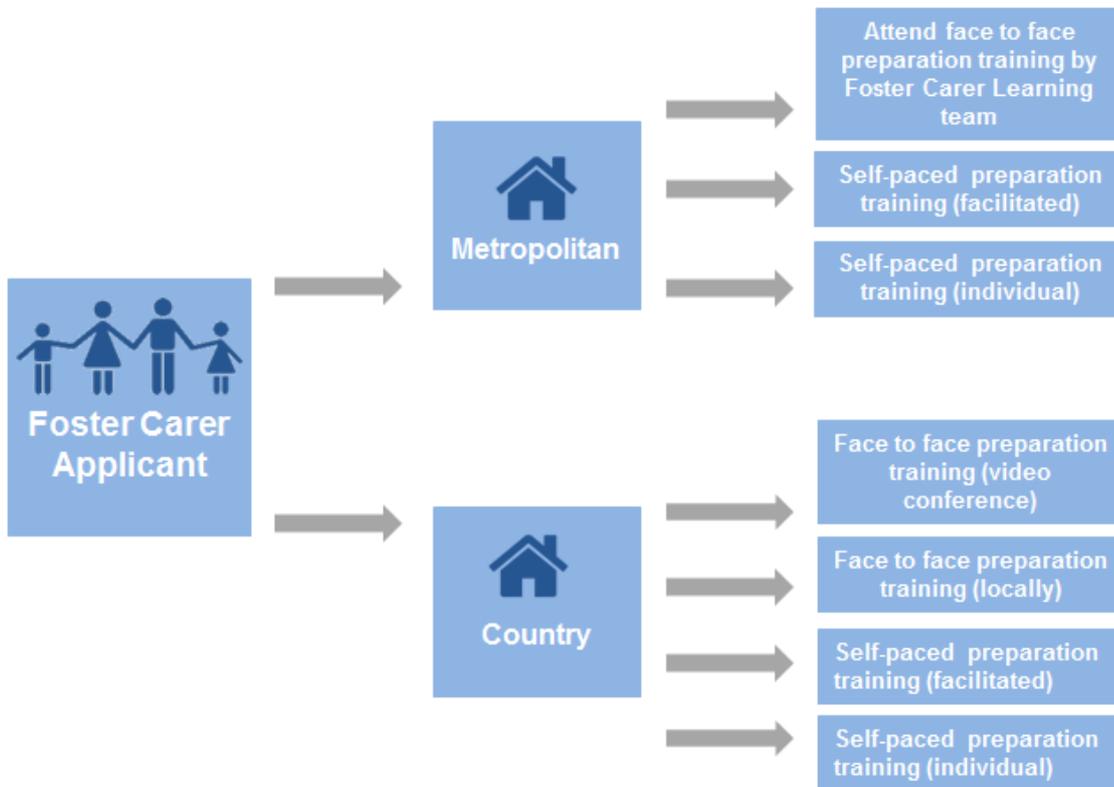
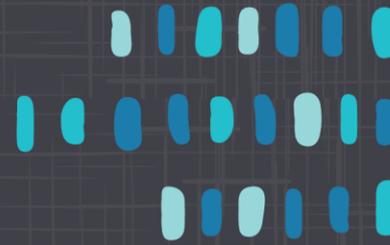
Approved preparation training will include training provided by the Department's Foster Carer Learning team, at the Learning and Development Centre or by the Department in partnership with a CSO. If there are exceptional circumstances where a metropolitan foster carer applicant cannot attend face to face training, an alternative method of training will need to be negotiated.

There will be flexible learning options available to foster carer applicants living outside the metropolitan area. Country foster carer applicants will ideally participate in face to face training, either locally or via video conference, individually or in a group. Materials for this training will be provided and maintained by the Foster Carer Learning team. Country Department District Offices and CSOs are encouraged to work together to provide this training locally.

Self-paced training is used as a last resort for either metropolitan or country foster carer applicants. This should be supported by the assessor/support person to complete the training and explore the content.

All training outcomes for preparation training will be managed by the Foster Carer Learning team. The Foster Carer Learning team will also be responsible for updating the Central Carer Directory once preparation training is complete.

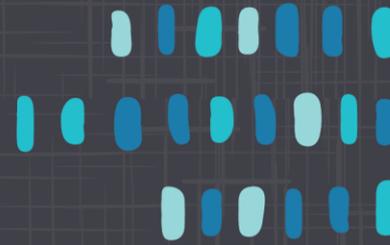




Process for Perth Metropolitan foster carer applicants

1. The foster carer will attend face to face training provided by Foster Carer Learning at the Department's Learning and Development Centre, as per current learning calendar.
 - a. The assessor will complete an enrolment form for the foster carer applicants and email to foster.workshops@communities.wa.gov.au
 - b. Foster Carer Learning team will enrol the foster carer applicants, send them confirmation of their enrolment, and remain in contact with foster carer applicants and assessors until the foster carer applicants completes, or withdraws, from Preparation Training.
 - c. Foster Carer Learning team will issue certificates via email to the foster carer applicants, and provide a copy to assessors.
2. Foster carer applicants in the metropolitan can link into self-paced learning options in exceptional circumstances, either online, or receive paper based versions (only for exceptional circumstances).
 - a. District/contract assessor complete an enrolment form for the foster carer applicants, and advise the reason for foster carer applicants not being able to attend face to face training. (If the foster carer applicants want to do self-paced online, the foster carer applicants need to have separate email addresses).
 - b. The form will need to be sent to foster.workshops@communities.wa.gov.au
 - c. Foster Carer Learning team will enrol the foster carer applicants, create online accounts and send out materials.
 - d. Foster carer applicants will need to be followed up to make sure that they complete the course. It should take one to two months to complete (foster carer applicants can



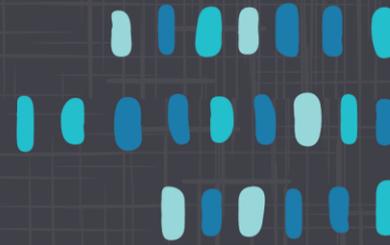


- e. be supported by the assessor to complete this as part of the process, it doesn't need to be done in isolation).
- f. Once the foster carer applicants have completed preparation training and returned their responses/paper via post or email, to Foster Carer Learning team, who will assess and finalise.
- g. Foster carer applicants and assessors are sent a copy of the certificate once completed.
- h. If there are concerning responses are noted by Foster Carer Learning team, the assessor will be contacted for further discussion and/or follow up.

The options for country foster carer applicants:

1. Department District Offices can run local training, using the preparation training materials provided on SharePoint, either as a group or individual (6 x 2 hour sessions).
 - a. Access the Preparation Training materials on the SharePoint site <http://dcpworkspace.ad.dcd.wa.gov.au/Workspaces/ACS/FosteringAdoption/FosterCarerLearning/SitePages/New%20Carers%20-%20Preparation%20Training.aspx>
 - b. Foster Carer Learning team will need to be notified of any foster carer applicants that have completed preparation training locally.
 - c. Foster Carer Learning team will issue certificates via email to the foster carers.
2. The Department can link into Video Conference training for foster carer applicants provided by Foster Carer Learning team.
 - a. Advise Foster Carer Learning team that you have foster carer applicants linking into the Video Conference workshops series.
 - b. Complete the enrolment form for all foster carer applicants attending and send to foster.workshops@communities.wa.gov.au
 - c. Book the room at the District office and the Video Conference equipment.
 - d. Print off the preparation training materials for the foster carer applicants locally and provide a co-facilitator to support the foster carer applicants.
 - e. Once completed, the foster carer applicants will be issued with a certificate.
3. Foster carer applicants can link into self-paced learning options, either online, or receive paper based versions.
 - a. District/contract assessors complete an enrolment form for the foster carer applicants, and advise the reason for foster carer applicants not being able to attend face to face training. If the foster carer applicant wants to do self-paced learning online, the foster carer applicant needs to have a separate email addresses.
 - b. The form will need to be sent to foster.workshops@communities.wa.gov.au.
 - c. Foster Carer Learning team will enrol the foster carer applicants, create online accounts and send out materials, which includes the learner resource (which is 375 pages).
 - d. Foster carer applicants will need to be followed up to make sure that they complete the course. It should take one to two months to complete (foster carer applicants can be supported by the assessor to complete this as part of the process, it doesn't need to be done in isolation).



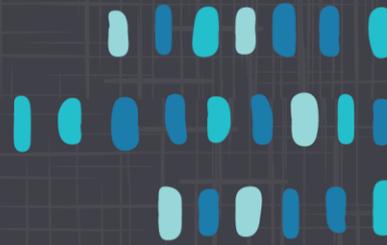


- e. Once the foster carer applicants have completed preparation training and returned their responses/paper via post or email, to Foster Carer Learning team, they will assess and finalise.
- f. Foster carer applicants and assessors are sent a copy of the certificate once completed.
- g. If there are concerns about the applicants training, these are noted by Foster Carer Learning team who will contact the assessor for further discussion and/or follow up.

Appendix One – Summary of Preparation Training options available

<p>Face to face preparation training – full version</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is the preferred preparation training method for all foster carer applicants. • This delivery method has more opportunities for communication, interaction, reflection and involvement in activities as well as more presentations by experienced carers and staff. There are significant benefits to interacting in a group environment; the training is run over five days and nineteen hours. • This training is in a metropolitan based location and run monthly from February to November from the Department’s office in East Perth. • Training is run over four Wednesday evenings, and one full Saturday.
<p>Face to face preparation training – short version</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is the next best preparation training after the full version. • Foster carer applicants will still receive the benefits of the full version, but with reduced time frames, less interactivity, and reduced ‘guest speakers’. There will be six lots of two hour sessions. • The training is run over two Saturdays in the metro area, four times per year January, June, September and December. • These packages are available on SharePoint for local delivery in the country districts, and on disk for CSOs that can’t access SharePoint.
<p>Video Conference preparation training – short version</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is facilitated centrally in conjunction with a local trainer. • Foster carer applicants will still receive the benefits of the full version, but with reduced time frames, less interactivity, and usually no ‘guest speakers’. There will be six lots of two hour sessions • Training is run two to three times a year by Foster Carer Learning team, providing two modules per week for three weeks.
<p>Facilitated self-paced learning package</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This training is preferential to having the foster carer applicant complete the packages in isolation, as it allows for discussion and therefore reflection. • The assessor or support worker can facilitate the delivery of this package, as part of the assessment process. • Resources are available in paper or online format; resources are provided by Foster Carer Learning team. Access to the internet is required (to access videos), but can be managed without it if necessary. • All enrolments need to come via Foster Carer Learning team.





Individual Self-paced learning packages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is the least preferred option as it is usually completed in isolation or as a couple, and there is no opportunity for immediate discussion or feedback. • Responses will be reviewed by an assessor or member of the Foster Carer Learning team and a discussion will occur with each foster carer applicant at the completion of the modules. • Resources are available in paper or online format; resources are provided by Foster Carer Learning. Access to the internet is required (to access videos), but can be managed without it if necessary. • All enrolments need to come via Foster Carer Learning team.
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Appendix Two – Enrolment Form

Government of Western Australia
Department for Child Protection
and Family Support

Foster Carer Learning Learning & Development Centre

PREPARATION TRAINING - ENROLMENT FORM

Prep Training Month **OR Self-paced?**

Destination Agency/ District **Location**

Applicant Details

Family Name Given Name M F

Date of Birth Mobile #

Email Address:

Family Name Given Name M F

Date of Birth Mobile #

Email Address:

Postal Address: Street Suburb P/Code

Preferred mode of correspondence: Mail Email

Please list any special learning needs that may affect participation:

Are there any issues or concerns you would like the Trainer to observe or provide feedback:

(To be COMPLETED by assessor)

I confirm the applicants are able to attend this course and will notify Foster Carer Learning at the first opportunity if they are no longer able to attend, or withdraw

Name: Date:

Contact Details of Assessor:

Agency: Phone:

Email:

Please complete this form and return to Foster Carer Learning, Learning & Development Centre, by either by: Post (Level 6 / 8 Bennett Street East Perth 6004), Email (foster_workshops@cpfs.wa.gov.au)

Office Use Only

Is the applicant on ABBIST (Y/N)	If No, notify assessor/ Central Carer Registrar	
Is applicant on Enrolment system (Y/N)	If No, create new assess	
Applicant enrolled in next training course (Y/N)		



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Appendix Three – Self-paced Learning Options

Self-paced learning options have been created in both paper and online formats to try and reach a wider audience across Western Australia. The preference is for foster carer applicants to attend face to face preparation training, but when circumstances do not allow for this to occur, then self-paced learning can be used.

The process for foster carer applicants who need to access Preparation Training via online learning (or paper based) is as follows:

1. complete an enrolment form with their details;
2. note on the form why they need to enrol in the self-paced version;
3. make sure that there is **an email address for each applicant** (if a couple), this needs to be different for each foster carer applicant; and
4. send the enrolment form to the Foster Carer Learning team, Learning & Development Centre via email foster.workshops@communities.wa.gov.au

Foster Carer Learning will:

- a) create online learning accounts for each foster carer applicant (if necessary);
- b) enrol them in the online learning course (if necessary);
- c) send them out the materials in the post to support their learning;
- d) monitor their progress and review their responses to the modules;
- e) contact the assessor and foster carer applicant if we have any queries about their responses;
- f) advise when they have completed the course, and issue a certificate of completion.

The assessor will need to:

- advise Foster Carer Learning if they withdraw at any stage;
- liaise with the assessor (if external); it is preferable that the assessor is also discussing the content of the training with the foster carer applicant concurrent to the course being completed;
- make sure the foster carer applicant is aware of the above and completes the modules in a timely manner

