**Emergency Beds are for children and young people who need an immediate placement, and for when a matched placement cannot be found.**

Emergency Bed foster carers are on duty for six weeks, followed by a two week break.

Children and young people can expect a maximum placement opportunity of seven nights (eight days), but can move sooner if an appropriate matched placement is identified.

Everything must be done by the child’s social worker, the fostering supervising social worker, and by foster carers to avoid a longer stay or a move to another Emergency Bed foster carer. Exceptions can only be agreed by the Children and Young People Service Manager for the foster carer’s area, and any agreed extended placements must not end of a Friday.

**Emergency Bed Foster Carers**

* Are not be responsible for collecting unknown children from police stations etc
* Will only receive children into their homes accompanied by social workers with the appropriate placement information and consent forms completed;
* Will accept all placement referrals based on the placing social workers’ risk assessment;
* Will attend any Child Protection conferences, Statutory Reviews, or other professionals meetings as required.

**Placing Social Workers**

* Will give careful consideration to approaching Emergency Bed foster carers when there are identified risks of fire starting or significant violence;
* Will use Signs of Safety language when determining risk and placement viability – what is worrying, what is positive about this child or young person, what needs to be done to keep him/her safe.

**If foster carers want to be considered as Emergency Bed Foster Carers**

**CALLING ALL FOSTER CARERS**

**We need more Emergency Bed Foster Carers So please get in touch with your**

**Fostering Supervising Social Worker**

**if you are interested**

* You will need separate bedroom available for emergency placements.
* You must be ready to provide appropriate care for children and young people in what are usually difficult and sometimes traumatic circumstances;
* You must meet all reasonable transport needs for the children and young people in your care;
* You must carry a mobile phone to ensure that you can be contacted at all times, including all through the night;
* You must advise your fostering supervising social worker or their team’s duty worker immediately if it is your turn and you are unable to take an emergency placement through illness or something else;
* You must keep a daily log or diary of each emergency placement and provide a brief written or verbal assessment report of the child when requested to, and provide an end of placement report;
* You must inform your fostering supervising social worker as soon as possible of any change in some circumstances which may impact on your Emergency Bed fostering role;
* You are expected to give 28 days notice if you no longer wish to be an Emergency Bed foster carer.

And in return

* You will receive regular supervision and continue to access learning and development opportunities as part of the foster carer training pathway;
* You will continue to have Annual Reviews and a minimum of one unannounced visit a year;
* You will receive the normal maintenance payments, and twice the fee element according to the age of the child when a child is in placement;
* You will receive a regular payment (a retainer) of the 16-18 fee element when there is no child placed with you;
* Saying ‘no’ to a placement requested by the placing social worker will put your role as an Emergency Bed foster carer and/or your retainer payment for that week at risk.

**The child’s social worker**

* Must complete/check the placement plan and authorisation for a placement as a priority for all children and young people allocated to them;
* Must make every effort to supply the foster carers with full and accurate information on each child or young person;
* Must make sure the information includes any relevant medical/health information, and the necessary consents and other delegated responsibilities;
* Must ensure that a Placement Planning Meeting takes place **within 3 days** of the placement starting.

**The fostering supervising social worker**

* Must check Liberi for placement start and end dates and Emergency Bed foster carers’ details, and input as appropriate.

**Placements**

* Access to the placements provided by Emergency Bed foster carers during the day is via the Area Fostering Support Teams.
* After hours it is via the Area fostering service duty worker until midnight and weekends when access will be via the County Out of Hours team.
* Although Emergency Bed placements will be searched for first in the child’s area, it is possible for Area teams to use Emergency Bed foster carers in other areas.
* Support will be provided to emergency placements by fostering supervising Social Workers, and/or by a Social Work Assistants (Fostering Support Officers) from the foster carers’ local area.

**On message**

We are currently achieving more than 85% of our placements with ‘in-house’ foster carers, as opposed to residential care placements or placements with Independent Fostering Agencies (IFA) foster carers.

We think that in house placements – for the most part – serve our children and young people in our care better, and the use of Emergency Bed foster carers helps us achieve better outcomes for children.

So thank you, E-Bed carers.

**Geoff Gurney**

**Interim Assistant Director for Corporate Parenting, September 2015**

**Email me if you found this procedure in a nutshell helpful.**