

Foster Carer Expenses – What are you entitled to?

➤ *The child's fostering allowance covers the costs of looking after the child. However, there are some additional costs not normally associated with being a parent. This guidance details the additional costs you are entitled to claim for.*

ACTIVITY	Hourly Rate – of £4.50 can be claimed in the following circumstances:	Mileage of 45p per mile plus parking fees or public transport costs can be claimed in the following circumstances:
1: School & after school activity Transport.	<p>Transporting children to and from their education provision and after school activities is an integral part of the foster carers' role. Foster carers are therefore not usually entitled to an additional hourly rate for this work.</p> <p>However, an hourly rate can be paid when there are exceptional circumstances; AGREED IN ADVANCE by the Fostering Team Manager.</p> <p>For an hourly rate to be considered all the following must apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School is out of local / catchment area • It is calculated and agreed by the professional network and agreed by the Fostering Team Manager that it will usually take more than 40 minutes to travel one way on the school run. <p style="text-align: right;"><u>CLAIMED ON EXPENSES FORM 846</u></p>	<p>The first 3 miles, each way, of the school transport cannot be claimed.</p> <p>Mileage beyond 3 miles each way (6mile round trip) can be claimed.</p> <p>If the child is using public transport the full amount can be reimbursed</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>CLAIMED ON EXPENSES FORM 823</u></p>
2: Supporting the Service in addition to the fostering task.	<p>Co-facilitating training Supporting recruitment events Attending initial visits Attending, ambassador visits Participation in local authority working groups</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>CLAIMED ON EXPENSES FORM 846</u></p>	<p>Travel costs can be claimed for all activities listed</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>CLAIMED ON EXPENSES FORM 846</u></p>
3: Contact	<p>Supporting children to have contact with their family is an integral part of the foster carer's role and foster carers are therefore not usually entitled to an additional hourly rate for this work.</p> <p>However, an hourly rate is payable when the foster carer has been requested to supervise contact, with birth parents or former carers, either in their home or at a contact venue. The hourly rate can also be paid if the foster carer has been requested by the child's social worker to remain at the contact centre for the duration of the contact.</p> <p>An hourly rate up to the cost of the daily fostering rate can also be paid, in exceptional circumstances and when AGREED IN ADVANCE by the Fostering Team Manager, if the distance to the contact venue is too far to reasonably expect the foster carer to return home during the contact <u>CLAIMED ON EXPENSES FORM 846</u></p>	<p>Travel costs can be claimed for all contact arrangements including official sibling contact agreed at placement planning meeting or child care review.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>CLAIMED ON EXPENSES FORM 823</u></p>

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4: Travel for respite or other alternative placements	NOT APPLICABLE	Travel costs can be claimed to take children to and from respite care or alternative placements. <u>CLAIMED ON EXPENSES FORM 823</u>
5: Attendance at meetings	Attending meetings regarding the child e.g. PEP, Stat reviews, supervisions, household reviews, parent’s evenings etc. is an integral part of the fostering role and carers will therefore not be paid an additional hourly rate for this work. However, an hourly rate up to the cost of the daily fostering rate can be paid, in exceptional circumstances and when AGREED IN ADVANCE by the Fostering Team Manager, if the meeting is outside of the usual fostering role. For example, attending a Home Office appointment with a UASC. <u>CLAIMED ON EXPENSES FORM 846</u>	Travel costs can be claimed for attendance at all social care meetings regarding children. <u>CLAIMED ON EXPENSES FORM 846</u>
6: Support Groups	NOT APPLICABLE	Travel costs to Support Groups organised and facilitated by the Local Authority can be claimed. <u>CLAIMED ON EXPENSES FORM 846</u>
7: Training	Attending training is an integral part of the fostering role and carers will therefore not be paid an additional hourly rate for this work. In exceptional circumstances e.g. when carers have been available without a placement the hourly rate can be considered by the Fostering Team Manager. <u>CLAIMED ON EXPENSES FORM 846</u>	Travel costs to attend fostering training organised by or agreed by the fostering team can be claimed. <u>CLAIMED ON EXPENSES FORM 846</u>
8: Hospital and Specialist Health Care appointments	Taking children to GP, health, therapy and hospital appointments is an integral part of the fostering role and carers will therefore not be paid an additional hourly rate for this work. However, an hourly rate (up to the maximum of the day fostering rate) can be paid in exceptional circumstances and when AGREED IN ADVANCE by the Fostering Team Manager if a specialist appointment or hospital stay has created a significant financial or practical impact. For example, overnight stays incurring costs of child minding for other children, taking time off paid employment etc. <u>CLAIMED ON EXPENSES FORM 846</u>	Travel cost for routine health appointments such as G.P., dental, optician cannot be claimed. Travel costs to hospital appointments and other health appointments such as therapy and ‘specialist’ hospital or consultant appointment can be claimed. <u>CLAIMED ON EXPENSES FORM 823</u>
9: Adoption Introductions	Introducing children to adoptive or alternative carers is an integral part of the fostering role and carers will therefore not be paid an additional hourly rate for this work. Introductory visits for adoptive or other placement moves can involve foster carers ‘hosting’ adoptive families: providing lunch / dinner etc. Foster carers can claim up to £5 per person, including additional children ‘hosting allowance’ on days that adopters are visiting during mealtimes. <u>CLAIMED ON EXPENSES FORM 846</u>	All travel costs incurred for adoption introductions can be claimed <u>CLAIMED ON EXPENSES FORM 846</u>
10: Attending Court	The hourly rate, up to the cost of the daily fostering rate, can be claimed for attendance at court if the	All travel costs to transport or support a child to attend court can be:

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	foster carer is giving evidence or requested to attend to support the child. <u>CLAIMED ON EXPENSES FORM 846</u>	<u>CLAIMED ON EXPENSES FORM 823</u> If the foster carer is being asked to give evidence this should be: <u>CLAIMED ON EXPENSES FORM 846</u>
11: Collection of emergency passports	NOT APPLICABLE	Travel costs to get an emergency passport <u>CLAIMED ON EXPENSES FORM 823</u>
12: University visits	If a Child in Care is visiting universities, we encourage their foster carer to be involved. Any additional financial support for this activity needs to be agreed as part of the young person's pathway plan.	A contribution to travel costs will be paid in negotiation with the child's social care team. <u>CLAIMED ON EXPENSES FORM 823</u>

Additional Costs

13: Child day care:

Foster carers are in receipt of an allowance and fee in order to provide full time care for children placed. When foster carers need day care, they should prioritise the use of their family and friends whenever possible. Any financial arrangements for this 'informal' day care remains between the carer and their family member or friend and should be paid out of the allowance that is already being paid to the foster carer.

If family or friends are not viable, foster carers are encouraged to seek support from other foster carers or, as a last resort, use registered child minders for all day care. Essex will pay for this child day care when the foster carer is undertaking fostering business e.g. meetings, training etc.

The **foster carer providing the day care is responsible for claiming** these child care costs. The carer requesting the child care should not pay.

An hourly rate of £6 is payable for the first 4 hours of day care.

After 4 hours the daily fostering rate is payable. (e.g. 2019 rates - £25.24 for children under 11)

If a registered child-minder is the only option for day care the foster carer will be responsible for paying the child minder and can claim back up to £6 an hour or the equivalent of the day rate (see above). Receipts would be required.

- **Child day care:** Travel costs can be claimed for dropping and collecting a child from day care when undertaking fostering business.

Foster carers are responsible for their own/ birth children's childcare; therefore, this cannot be claimed for. If there are exceptional circumstances this should be discussed with your supervising social worker.

- **Foster carers cannot claim expenses when their own family network provides day care.**

Any arrangements outside of this need to be agreed by the team manager

CLAIMED ON EXPENSES FORM 846

14: Childrens Activities

Any activities related to the Children in Care Council travel costs can be claimed.

All expenses for children's activities are included within the fostering allowance. If there are exceptional expenses associated with a child's hobby or activities this should be discussed at the placement planning meeting/child's review and agreed by the child care team manager.

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15: Additional clothing payments

When a child is first placed, and they arrive with unsuitable or inadequate clothing a small additional payment can be agreed by the child care team manager this would not normally be over £50.

School Uniform

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When child is first placed and they immediately need a new school uniform or if the child is having to change schools and allowance is already spent on previous school uniform, additional money can be agreed by the child care team manager.

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