

Nevada's Foster Youth

BILL OF RIGHTS



The State of Nevada, Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) recognizes the following rights of children and youth in foster care. These rights are intended to guide the child welfare agencies and their providers in the delivery of care and services to foster youth with the commitment to permanency, safety and well being. This Bill of Rights was developed by DCFS in collaboration with Nevada LIFE, the statewide youth advisory board.

You have the right to live:

- ★ *In a safe, healthy, stable and comfortable environment*
- ★ *In a home best suited to meet all your needs*
- ★ *Have adequate and appropriate clothes*
- ★ *Have access to healthy food*

You have the right to be placed:

- ★ *In a home with your siblings whenever possible*
- ★ *In a home of a relative or stay in your own home if safe and appropriate*

You have the right to:

- ★ *Be treated with dignity and respect*
- ★ *Be free from corporal punishment, such as spanking or hitting*
- ★ *Not be locked in any room, physically restrained or be isolated*
- ★ *Be free from unreasonable searches of your personal stuff or other invasions of your privacy*
- ★ *Send and receive unopened mail (unless a judge says someone else can open your mail)*
- ★ *Go to religious services and activities of your choice or refuse to attend religious services*
- ★ *Maintain a bank account and manage your own personal money*
- ★ *Participate in extracurricular, cultural and personal enrichment activities and to have access to transportation, if realistic, for these activities*
- ★ *Make contact with case workers, attorneys, probation officers, CASAs, and anyone else involved in your case (openly or confidentially)*
- ★ *To talk to your caseworker at least once a month*
- ★ *Participate and be included in your case plan and attend court hearings*
- ★ *Be told about any changes in your case plan or placement*
- ★ *Complete an identification kit which includes your photo and other identifying details you would like to include that will be kept in your file by the child welfare agency, please ask your caseworker for more information*
- ★ *To attend Independent Living Program classes (if you are 15 or older)*
- ★ *To work or be trained to work, if 16 or older and it has been authorized by your case worker*

You have family rights too:

- ★ *You can visit and contact your brothers and sisters, parents and other family members (unless a judge says you cannot)*

You have medical and health rights:

- ★ *You must receive appropriate medical care, which includes seeing a doctor, dentist, eye doctor and talking to a counselor*
- ★ *To take psychotropic medications only if it meets all requirements of Nevada law (NRS 432B.197)*

You have school rights. You should be able to:

- ★ *Attend the school that you were enrolled in before coming into foster care, if it is realistic and in your best interests*
- ★ *Have your educational records transferred quickly when you need to attend a new school*
- ★ *Go to school every day*
- ★ *Attend after school and extracurricular scholastic activities that you were enrolled in before being placed in foster care*
- ★ *Get help with school if you need it*
- ★ *Not be identified as a foster child to other students by any one employed at your school*
- ★ *Have access to information about educational opportunities like scholarships for college and vocational school (if you are 16 years or older)*

If you believe that your rights have been violated or that you are being treated differently because of your race, ethnicity, ancestry, national origin, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, mental or physical disability or exposure to HIV, you have the right to have any violations resolved. You can talk about this with:

- ★ *Your foster care provider*
- ★ *An employee of the foster home*
- ★ *An employee of the juvenile court*
- ★ *Your guardian ad litem and or CASA*
- ★ *Your attorney*
- ★ *Your case worker or other employee of the child welfare agency*

Your foster care provider may impose reasonable restrictions on the time, place and manner in which you can exercise your rights if they determine that any restrictions are necessary to keep the order, discipline or safety of the foster home.

As enrolled into Nevada law by Assembly Bill 154 effective October 1, 2011



State of Nevada
Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Child and Family Services