

Foster Care Bill of Rights

210.564 RSMO



Foster Care Bill of Rights

No matter the situation, the child's safety and well-being will be our first priority.

“In all circumstances, the best interests of the child shall be the first priority of the Children's Division.”



Foster Care Bill of Rights

“Recognizing the importance of familial stability in foster care and adoption placement, it shall be the practice of the Children’s Division, when appropriate, to support a child’s return to the custody and care of the parents or guardians with whom the child resided immediately prior to state custody”

- **Main Goal:** Keep families together whenever possible
- If a child cannot safely stay with their family, they may need to stay at a temporary (foster) home
- If a child is brought into foster care, we will work with the family towards bringing their child home



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“When restoration of care and custody is not appropriate or possible, the Children’s Division shall attempt to place the child with suitable relatives in accordance with section [210.565](#). The Children’s Division shall further support familial stability by ensuring continuity of foster placement, except in instances where cause for a change in a child’s placement is reasonably found.”

- The Children’s Division will strive to keep children with people they know and trust. Options may include:
 - Grandparents
 - Blood relatives or close family members
 - Kinship or family friend
 - Licensed foster parent



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“... Recognizing the value of familial relationships in foster care and adoption settings, it shall be the practice of the Children’s Division to place siblings in the same foster care, kinship, guardianship, or adoptive placement, unless doing so would be contrary to the safety or well-being of either of the siblings. If siblings are not placed together, it shall be the practice of the Children’s Division to support regular visitation and communication between siblings in state custody, and between children in state custody and their parents and relatives, where not otherwise prohibited or against the child’s best interests.”

- The Children’s Division will keep siblings together in the same home whenever possible
- If it is not possible, there will be regular visits scheduled between siblings



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“The Children’s Division shall work with each child in state custody to develop both a permanency plan and a case plan. These plans shall be developed within twelve months of a child’s entrance into state custody.”

- The Children’s Division will work with each youth and their family to develop goals and a plan
- This will help ensure each child is safe, their needs are met, and they keep the things (and people) that are important to them in their lives



Placement Plan vs. Case Plan

A **placement plan** includes the child's immediate and long term placement goals

A **case plan** looks at a child's specific needs, including medical and emotional needs

Statute Requirements

“The Children’s Division shall support all children 12 years of age or older in state custody to attend any hearings pertaining to the child’s placement, custody, or care, provided that the child is willing and able to attend such hearings, and that attending such hearings is in the best interest of the child.”



- Any youth (age 12+) has the option to attend their court hearing as long as it is in their best interest
- The Children’s Division will make sure each age-eligible child is able to attend their court hearing
- The only time a youth will not be able to go is if it has been determined that it is not in their best interest to attend

Access to The Foster Care Bill of Rights

The Children's Division will ensure each school-aged foster child and their foster parent(s) will receive a copy of an age-appropriate overview of the Foster Care Bill of Rights.

The Foster Care Bill of Rights can also be found:

- On the Children's Division, [Information for Foster Parents](#) webpage
- By going directly to the [Revised Missouri Statute, 210.564](#)
- In all Children's Division offices, residential care facilities, child placing agencies (or any other agency involved with the care or placement of foster children)

Questions



For questions about the rights of a child placed in foster care, please contact the child's case manager directly.

Please reach out to the [Children's Division Office](#) in your county for help with any other questions.

Our Mission



Empower Missourians to live safe, healthy, and productive lives.