

FOSTER CARER PAYMENTS EXPLAINED

(Payment starting from 6 April 2024)

Northumberland Foster Carers are paid differently to many private and other local council agencies. A lot of agencies only pay a combined fee and allowance when you have a child staying with you.

Northumberland pays a guaranteed weekly fee per household regardless of whether a child is staying with you. This is a retainer style fee.

When you have children in your care, you receive a weekly allowance per child which is separate from your fee payment.

Current Standard Mainstream Payments:

Band 1 Fee - £105.49 per week

Band 2 Fee - £183.47 per week

Emergency 24 / 7 scheme payments - £396.48 to £501.97 per week

Mockingbird hub carer payment - £740.04 per week

2nd bed fee (payable when two unrelated children are cared for) - £91.77 per week

The fees are under the current tax brackets, so the fee stated will be your 'take home amount'. You will need to complete a self-assessment with HMRC with this role. There is tax / self-assessment support for approved foster carers from Foster Talk and HMRC.

Fees are payable to carers who have signed the relevant foster care agreement and look after children that are not linked to their family.

Example payment:

Band 2 carer with three siblings aged 3, 7 and 11 will receive a basic total of £753.55 per week

This comprises of:

A weekly fee payment of £183.47 as a guaranteed retainer per household.

When a sibling group of three live with them, they will receive basic allowances of:

3-year-old - £170.03

7-year-old - £187.04

11-year-old – £213.01

Therefore, a total of £570.08 per week in allowances, plus one fee payment gives a **total basic of £753.55 per week.**

There may be additional mileage and expense payments applicable depending on the needs of the children.

If the children move back home or to an alternative family, the band 2 carer will continue to receive their weekly fee of £183.47, until another child or children move in with them.

Fee levels:

The service will assess on which banding level you can start your fostering career. This is a review of your general child care experience levels, foster care experience and what resources you are able to offer in terms of age range, flexibility etc..

New carers that have significant skills and fostering experience with children and young people (and meet band 2 service expectations) can qualify to start on band 2 or a specialist scheme.

The service does look to start people off on the highest band possible, however most people new to foster care, will begin on band 1. This will be reviewed as part of your ongoing development.

Fostering Allowances:

Age applicable allowances are paid weekly per child. Please see the table below for the age splits. The allowance covers costs around the child. As well as food, clothing, pocket money etc... a percentage will also go towards their use of heating, lighting, rent and an element of travel costs. There may be additional monies paid, say for example if a child has any additional wellbeing or educational needs. Such needs will be included in the child's care plan.

The allowance is not counted as an income from HMRC.

Four additional weekly allowances are paid to cover expenses for a holiday, birthday, and festival allowances.

Weekly allowances for England for the tax year from 6 April 2024 to 5 April 2025:

[Fostering Allowances Gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/fostering-allowances)

AGE RANGE	FOSTERING ALLOWANCES	
0-2	£165.06 per week	£23.58 per day
3-4	£170.03 per week	£24.29 per day
5-10	£187.04 per week	£26.72 per day
11-15	£213.01 per week	£30.43 per day
16+	£249.06 per week	£35.58 per day
Staying Put	£177.38 per week	£25.34 per day

Mileage: 45p mile (Guidance on claim criteria in the Foster Carer Handbook)

Holidays / Short Break:

Foster carers can choose to take up to four weeks paid holiday; however, it is an expectation that our fostered children would go on holiday with their foster carers, when able to. Additional holiday fees are paid if foster carers do not take holidays.

Bank holiday emergency placement payment:

One off payment of £125 per child (Plus the usual allowances)

Day Care payment – typically used to support other carers to attend training:

£16.00 per day for 1 child or £24.00 per day for multiple children