

# **FOSTERING FRIENDLY POLICY (Draft)**

**Issued by – Human Resources  
February 2025**

# TENDRING DISTRICT COUNCIL

## Contents

1. INTRODUCTION .....	3
2. AIMS AND SCOPE OF THE POLICY .....	3
3. LEAVE AND THE PROCEDURE FOR REQUESTING TIME OFF .....	3
3.1 Time off .....	3
3.2 Fostering to Adopt .....	4
3.3 Procedure for requesting time off .....	4
4. BENEFITS OF THIS POLICY .....	4
5. FURTHER ADVICE AND SUPPORT .....	4

## **FOSTERING FRIENDLY POLICY**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Tendring District Council recognises and values the contribution that foster carers and supported lodgings carers make to society and especially the lives of children and young people in care. We understand that foster carers will need some flexibility in their working arrangements in order to meet the needs of their fostered child or young person.

The Council is committed to support any staff member who is a foster carer approved connected person's carer, supported lodgings carer or an approved kinship carer (*known hereafter as foster carers*).

We will do this, wherever possible, by creating a fostering friendly organisation that offers flexible working arrangements which respond to the needs of all foster carers.

We recognise that the process of seeking approval to become foster carers is a lengthy one and places a number of reasonable but demanding expectations upon prospective carers, particularly in relation to the training, assessment and approval process.

Wherever possible we will try to extend the terms of this policy to prospective foster or kinship carers who have begun the formal process of seeking approval and registration as carers.

### **2. AIMS AND SCOPE OF THE POLICY**

The Council offers staff the opportunity to work flexibly where this is compatible with the demands of their job. Our flexible working, emergency time off for dependents and parental leave policies all apply to foster carers.

This policy applies to staff who have three months or more employment service with Tendring District Council, and:

- Are applying to become a foster carer or supported lodgings carer;
- Are an approved foster carer or supported lodgings carer and have a child / young person in placement (or have had a child / young person in placement for 75% of the previous twelve months);
- Are an approved connected persons carer.

### **3. LEAVE AND THE PROCEDURE FOR REQUESTING TIME OFF**

This policy sets out the additional time off that we will offer prospective and existing foster carers.

#### **3.1 Time off**

The Council values and will support foster carers and approved kinship carers by giving paid time off in any 12-month rolling period, as follows:

- Assessment and initial training prior to approval as a foster carer - up to three days;
- Attendance at panel for approval – one day;

- Child review meetings, annual foster carer review meeting and training – up to five days.

If you need more time off to foster a child you may be entitled to unpaid parental leave, carers leave, or dependents leave if it is an emergency.

### **3.2 Fostering to Adopt**

If you are fostering a child with a view to adopting them, you may be entitled to adoption leave and pay.

The line manager will approve the leave on a discretionary basis taking into account the individual circumstances of each case and operational requirements of the service. The leave will be considered and approved on a pro rata basis.

### **3.3 Procedure for requesting time off**

The employee should speak to their manager as soon as they can if they need time off to attend an appointment, meeting or training.

The employee should send the leave request to the line manager for authorisation. The line manager should forward the request to HR to be recorded appropriately on the Payroll / HR System.

The request for time off should outline the reason and the amount of leave required. Where more than the maximum entitlement of paid leave is requested (*as outlined above*), the line manager and the staff member should discuss other means available e.g. annual leave, carers leave time off in lieu, parental leave.

## **4. BENEFITS OF THIS POLICY**

Potential benefits of this policy include:

Supporting staff helps build morale, this could help with staff retention.

Recruiting more foster carers and supported lodgings carers and supporting the carers we have means more children and young people will be able to stay connected with the people and places that matter most to them. By becoming a Fostering Friendly Employer, Tendring District Council can be part of the solution (*Fostering Network Website 2025*).

Implementing this policy will help support employees who wish to foster, strengthen our organisation and ultimately benefit vulnerable children in our community needing foster carers.

## **5. FURTHER ADVICE AND SUPPORT**

The Fostering Network - [www.thefosteringnetwork.org.uk](http://www.thefosteringnetwork.org.uk)