



Business leaders. We want to help you:

Attract and keep great business talent.
Be corporately compassionate.
Be socially responsible.

Become a Foster Friendly Workplace.

By creating a Foster Friendly Workplace environment, foster, kinship and adoptive parents feel seen, encouraged and equipped with the time and financial resources they need to become a source of healing in the life of a vulnerable child. **Some of these healing caregivers may already exist in your organization. Do your benefits include them and support them?**

Why do businesses offer benefits for foster care and adoption through foster care?

- "Family Friendly" company image
- Employee goodwill & increased employee retention
- Low cost investment: Less than 1% of employees take advantage of this benefit
- More equitable by acknowledging unique ways employees build their families and serve their communities
- Community goodwill by supporting local vulnerable children and families
- Competitive recruiting advantage by joining the national trend to include foster/adoptive benefits
- Simply put, it's the right thing to do.

Tips & Resources for Creating a FOSTER FRIENDLY HR BENEFITS POLICY

STEP 1: Review current HR policies. Do they include foster & adoptive families? Here are some things to consider:

- Families are created in multiple ways, including foster care and adoption.
- Foster benefits allow employees to bond with their new child(ren), hopefully reducing their stress level at home and work.
- FMLA applies to foster families as well, but few employers actively support them by encouraging leave and/or providing paid leave.
- Foster parents have a unique need for scheduling flexibility to address post-placement challenges, court dates, meetings, and transition periods.
- Have you considered financial reimbursement to help make fostering and adoption through foster care more affordable?

STEP 2: Add foster care and adoption HR benefits to existing policies. Here are some ideas:

- Provide paid or unpaid leave (in addition to FMLA) for foster families.
 - The FMLA includes unpaid leave for foster and adoptive families. Keep in mind that FMLA leave can apply BEFORE a child is placed in the home.
 - If you provide paid maternity leave, please add paid leave for adoptive and foster parents, too. Each represents an additional child added to the family. The federal definition of parent and child includes foster parent and foster child.
 - New tax credit benefits are available to employers who provide paid family and medical leave.
- Provide flexible work schedules/options for foster parents who must attend court dates, doctor appointments and other necessary meetings to foster. **Employer support is crucial to creating a positive fostering culture.**
- Consider a special reimbursement benefit for a new foster child placement to offset initial unexpected costs.
 - Many children arrive with just the clothing on their backs.
 - Fostering is compensated by the government but meets very minimum standards.
 - Families often need additional funding to care for the children.
 - Urgent needs when taking in a new child can be a financial strain for a family. (Vehicle size, clothing, baby gear, bedding, furniture & food needs increase immediately.)
- Consider financial assistance/reimbursement for fostering and adoption fees.

- Adoption through foster care typically costs from \$0 to \$2500.
- Fees can include travel, legal expenses, and home-studies.
- Consider providing additional support for foster/adoptive families who have children with special needs, medical needs and/or need behavioral assistance.

STEP 3: Announce your new foster-friendly benefits!

- Once your company becomes foster friendly, make a public press release announcement to staff, local media, and through social media channels.
- Be sure to promote this new benefit in all of your HR recruiting packages.
- Contact your state chapter of America's Kids Belong so we can celebrate with you!
 - If you aren't sure who to contact, email us at fosterfriendly@amkidsbelong.org
 - Include a copy of your foster care benefit policy, so we can have a record of what your business provides and promote you to the foster care community via our social media.
- Celebrate with any employees who are fostering! This will be a huge morale booster for them.

What else can my business do to be a part of the solution for kids in foster care?

- Educate employees on the foster care crisis through a Lunch & Learn.
- Provide onsite Support Groups for foster parents.
- Launch employee giving campaigns dedicated to foster care.
- Sponsor community outreach projects benefiting foster youth.
- Become a Foster Friendly Corporate Sponsor to help give children in foster care a face and a voice. Contact your state chapter of America's Kids Belong. If you aren't sure who to contact, email us at fosterfriendly@amkidsbelong.org
- Offer discounts to foster families with your product/service as a Foster Friendly Business. Contact your state chapter of America's Kids Belong. If you aren't sure who to contact, email us at fosterfriendly@amkidsbelong.org

Interested in further reading?

- Visit the [Society for Human Resource Management](#) and search for adoption and foster care.
- [FMLA FAQ: Can Foster Parents Take an Additional 12 Weeks of FMLA Leave After They Adopt a Child?](#)
- [Parental leave at sweetgreen is now 5 months](#)
- [Forbes: How to Build a Positive Company Culture](#)
- [Become a Foster Care Friendly Workplace with Foster More](#)

- [Dave Thomas Foundation Adoption-Friendly Workplace Empower Toolkit](#)
- [FMLA Tax Credits](#)

For more information on Family Medical Leave Act, visit these links:

- <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fmla/faq#6>
- <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/WHD/legacy/files/employeeguide.pdf#:~:text=You%20may%20take%20FMLA%20leave%20for%20the%20birth.allow%20intermittent%20leave%20%28for%20example%2C%20a%20part-time%20schedule%29>

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For more information on America's Kids Belong Foster Friendly Communities program, contact us at fosterfriendly@amkidsbelong.org.