

Sample: Arizona Rights of Children in Foster Care¹

A. A child in foster care has the following rights:

1. To appropriate care and treatment in the least restrictive setting available that can meet the child's needs according to the best judgment of the foster parent.
2. To live in a safe, healthy and comfortable placement where the child can receive reasonable protection from harm and appropriate privacy for personal needs and where the child is treated with respect.
3. To know why the child is in foster care and what will happen to the child and to the child's family, including siblings, and case plans.
4. Whenever possible, to be placed with a foster family that can accommodate the child's communication needs.
5. To be disciplined in a manner that is appropriate to the child's level of maturity.
6. To attend community, school and religious services and activities of the child's choice to the extent that it is appropriate for the child, as planned and discussed with the child's placement worker and caseworker and based on caregiver ability if transportation is available through a responsible party.
7. To go to school and receive an education that fits the child's age and individual needs.
8. To training in personal care, hygiene and grooming.
9. To clothing that fits comfortably and is adequate to protect the child against natural elements such as rain, snow, wind, cold and sun.
10. To have personal possessions at home that are not offensive to the foster family and to acquire additional possessions within reasonable limits, as planned and discussed with the child's foster parent, placement worker and caseworker, and based on caregiver ability.
11. To personal space, in the foster home preferably, in the child's bedroom for storing clothing and belongings.
12. To healthy foods in healthy portions that are appropriate for the child's age.
13. To comply with any approved visitation plan, and to have any restrictions explained to the child in a manner and level of details deemed age appropriate by the foster parent in agreement with the caseworker and documented in the child's record.
14. If the child is six years of age or older, to receive contact information for the child's caseworker, attorney or advocate and to speak with them in private if necessary.
15. To participate in age appropriate child's service planning and permanency planning meetings and to be given a copy or summary of each service plan and service plan review. The child may request someone to participate on the child's behalf or to support the child in this participation.
16. To attend the child's court hearing and speak to the judge.

17. To have the child's records and personal information kept private and discussed only when it is about the child's care except the foster parent shall have full access to the records to determine if the child will be successful in the home. During the foster placement, if the foster parent requests to view the record upon experiencing problems with the child's adjustment, the full record shall be made available for viewing by the foster parent.
18. To be free of unnecessary or excessive medication.
19. To receive emotional, mental health or chemical dependency treatment separately from adults who are receiving services, as planned and discussed with the child's placement worker and caseworker, as is financially reasonable for the foster parent.
20. To report a violation of personal rights specified in this section without fear of punishment, interference, coercion or retaliation, except that an appropriate level of punishment may be applied if the child is proven to have maliciously or wrongfully accused the foster parent.
21. To be informed in writing of the name, address, telephone number and purpose of the Arizona protection and advocacy system for disability assistance.
22. To understand and have a copy of the rights listed in this section.

B. A child in foster care who is at least sixteen years of age has the following rights:

1. To attend preparation for adult living classes and activities as appropriate to the child's case plan, as is financially reasonable for the foster parent.
2. To a transition plan that includes career planning and assistance with enrolling in an educational or vocational job training program.
3. To be informed of educational opportunities before the child leaves foster care.
4. To assistance in obtaining an independent residency when the child is too old to remain in foster care from the child's caseworker, attorney or advocate.
5. To request a court hearing for a court to determine if the child has the capacity to consent to medical care that is directly related to an illness, disease, deformity or other physical malady.
6. To receive help with obtaining a driver license, social security number, birth certificate or state identification card, except that the foster parent shall have discretion to determine if the child is responsible and mature enough to become a licensed driver.
7. To receive necessary personal information within thirty days after leaving foster care, including the child's birth certificate, immunization records and information contained in the child's education portfolio and health passport.

C. This section does not establish any legally enforceable right or cause of action on behalf of any person.

¹ These rights were current as of February 22, 2018.

See <https://www.azleg.gov/viewdocument/?docName=https://www.azleg.gov/ars/8/00529.htm>