

**POLICY ON LIABILITY INSURANCE, LEGAL REPRESENTATION, LEGAL FEES,
COUNSELING AND LEGAL ADVOCACY FOR FOSTER PARENTS**

The Agency provides legal representation, legal fees, counseling and legal advocacy for foster caregivers for matters directly related to the proper performance of their roles. The Agency currently provides professional liability insurance for foster caregivers. This insurance provides malpractice coverage for foster caregivers in matters related to the performance of their roles and duties. Through this coverage, the Agency provides legal representation and pays for legal fees in the event of a lawsuit. In addition, the Agency provides counseling and legal advocacy for foster caregivers on both an active and proactive basis in order to control and reduce any exposures of risk.

The Agency's provision of professional liability insurance does not replace a foster caregiver's homeowner's policy which should cover property damages caused by a foster child in the home.

The choice of legal representation in the event of a malpractice lawsuit is made by the insurance company. At times, the insurance company seeks and accepts recommendations made by the Agency regarding the choice of counsel. It must be recognized that malpractice lawsuits are serious matters that are often complex and involve competing interests. For the greatest protection in the event of a lawsuit, foster caregivers may also wish to retain their own private counsel at their own expense.

Effective	February 2004	PJJ/RAS
Effective	8-1-09	CLM
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