

PAYMENTS TO FOSTER CARERS PROCESS

Children's Social Care



Staff using a paper copy of the policy document must ensure they are using the most recent copy which is located at: S:\Social Services\Documentation\Policies and Procedures\Children's Social Care Policy Docs\13. Administrative and Finance

I Introduction

- I.1 Three core forms are needed to set up Foster Carers for Payments, the SS117, SS120 and the SS120a.
- I.2 Additional forms, SS118 and SS119 are also used in specific circumstances. The table below provides details of all these forms:

| Form Ref | Purpose of form | Completed by | Location | Processed by | Timescale |
|----------|---|--|---|---|----------------------------|
| SS117 | Records admission to care, discharge from care or change of service package, legal status or placement and any associated <u>regular</u> allowances. | The child's Social Worker | Kept in Child Care teams at Midland House and Ballard House | Payments Team within Carefirst | Within 24 hours |
| SS118 | Records respite in respect of client breaks from home (children with disabilities) and from permanent Foster Carers. Records start, end and change of service package, legal status and placements and any associated <u>regular</u> allowances | The Supervising Social Worker unless respite is provided in an independent placement. In this case the Child's Social Worker will complete the SS118 | Kept in Child Care teams at Midland House, Douglass House and Ballard House | Payments Team within Carefirst | After respite has occurred |
| SS119 | All additional payments made subsequent to a child being admitted to care, mostly one-off payments e.g. clothing for a child placed in an emergency placement. | Child's Social Worker or the Supervising Social Worker. | Kept in Child Care teams at Midland House, Douglass House and Ballard House | Payments Team within Care first, Purchasing or petty cash | Processed upon receipt |

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|--------|---|---|--|---------------|-----------------|
| SSI20 | Records approval of carers, terms of approval or changes of terms of approval i.e. Skills to Foster Payment Bands or amount of children able to foster | Supervising Social Worker | Microsoft Word/file/new/on my computer/More Tab/Social Services/SSI20 | Payments Team | Within 24 Hours |
| SSI20a | Used to obtain bank details of newly approved Foster Carers or to record changes to bank details. In addition may also be used for payments to Connected Person carers, young people, un-approved lodgings, and preventative type placements. | Supervising Social Worker or 16+ Personal Advisor | Microsoft Word/ file/new/on my computer/ More Tab/ Social Services/ SSI20a | Payments Team | Within 24 hours |

2 Setting up a Carer for Payments

- 2.1 All Foster Carers must be set up in Carefirst in order to receive payment.
- 2.2 The Payments Team and the Creditors Team will work together with the Fostering Service to set up Foster Carers for approved payments. To avoid any delays in payments these tasks are to be completed within one working day of receipt.
- 2.3 On completion of Initial Contact Form Stored in 'Recruitment Form Templates' (Fostering SAN) the Prospective Foster Carer is put on the system and assigned a Carefirst ID.
- 2.4 The SSI20 form must be completed by a Supervising Social Worker who will then pass the form to a Fostering Service Clerical Officer who will input this information from the form on to the Foster Carer's Carefirst record.
- 2.5 Before payments can be made an SSI20a must also be completed by the Supervising Social Worker which will then be sent by the Fostering Clerical Officer to the Payments Team for inputting into Carefirst. A creditor's reference number is to be requested by the Payments Team via email.
- 2.6 Once a creditor's reference number has been assigned and sent back via email, the Payments Team Clerical Officer is to input the creditor's reference number in the 'Account Pay Reference' field on the Foster Carers Carefirst record.
- 2.7 Once a child is placed with a Foster Carer the SSI 17 is to be completed by the child's Social Worker and processed by the Payments Team through Carefirst to initiate payments to the Foster Carer.
- 2.8 Foster Carers will then receive their regular allowance every week until such time as the child leaves their care or the Foster Carer's service package changes.

- 2.9 As per the table above, the SSI17, SSI18 or SSI19 are to be completed by the relevant social worker and processed by the Payments Team through Carefirst wherever necessary.
- 2.10 Original forms must be retained by the Payments Team for audit purposes with the exception of the SSI20 and SSI20a forms completed by the 16+ team. These originals are kept within the 16+ team and copies are retained by the Payments Team.
- 2.11 Where an incident occurs which affects the function of payments to Foster Carers the Departmental Recovery Plan for 'Boarding Out Payments' is to be followed. This document is held by the Business Support Manager for Children Social Care.