

# F-202 POCKET MONEY, EMPLOYMENT INCOME AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS OF CHILDREN IN CARE



*In this document, the non implicit gender applies to both men and women.*

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## **Policy**

Staff and foster parents must help children develop their money management, spending, budgeting and saving skills. All personal possessions acquired by a child during his placement belong to him and shall follow him when he moves.

Foster parents are encouraged to give children all money or authorize them to make purchases in the same way they do for their own children of the same age, while taking their special needs into consideration.

Purchasing items by or for a child that endangers his health and/or safety or that of his foster family is forbidden.

All youths are encouraged to find part-time and summer jobs. However, youths attending school full time should not work more than 15 hours per week during the school year so their jobs will not interfere with their studies.

## **Procedure**

### **1. Pocket money and other allowances**

The foster parents must inform a child's welfare worker of their method for allocating pocket money and clothing and discuss it with him. They must also inform him of any temporary or permanent change (withdrawal/reduction) in their method. The Child Welfare Worker must include the way the child will receive pocket money and clothing allowances from his foster parents in his plan of care.

The foster parents may choose any of several methods of giving a child pocket money:

- give the child an allowance in the same way they do it for their own children of the same age;
- set conditions and requirements the child must meet to receive his allowance. For example, the foster parents may assign chores and household duties that are within his capabilities and regularly performed by the foster family's own children;

- give them money when they need it, each week or the entire amount each month;
- retain part of the allowance to reimburse the foster parents or other persons for broken or stolen items, with the consent of the child's welfare worker;
- save part of it for future special expenses or trips;
- deposit part of it in a school fund or a personal bank account in the child's name.

Pocket money allowances and all other money such as Christmas gifts and clothing allowances shall be paid directly to the foster parents unless otherwise instructed by the child's welfare worker. Any different method must be approved by the supervisor and the foster parents. The Child Welfare Worker shall be responsible for ensuring that whatever method is used to manage a child's pocket money, that money is used for the placed child.

## **2. Youths working part time**

Youths are encouraged to find part-time jobs provided they do not negatively impact their studies. Youths who so wish may receive assistance in their search for a summer or part-time job. The foster parents must advise the Child Welfare Worker when a youth takes on a full-time or part-time job.

Generally, youths aged 14 to 18 may keep their allowance in addition to their pay provided they show they can manage their money responsibly. We might ask them to help pay for their transportation to work, if applicable.

When a youth is working, he may help buy his clothes and sports and recreational equipment and pay dues for recreational and cultural activities and trips. The Child Welfare Worker and the foster parents shall determine a reasonable amount for his contribution, if applicable. This decision shall be based on the methods used by the foster parents with their own children and shall take the level of responsibility they want to teach the youth into account. Each situation is different and must be assessed separately.

When a youth reaches 18, his Child Welfare Worker, in consultation with the foster parents, may decide to stop giving him an allowance.

## **3. Use of pocket money or money earned by a child/youth**

Money received or earned by a child/youth shall belong to him. However, the foster parents and the Child Welfare Worker must advise the child/youth and supervise his use of the money. All personal possessions he has at admission or that he buys with his own money shall also belong to him.

Children/youths must develop skills to learn the value of goods and services, prepare and manage budgets and make purchases.

The following factors must be considered before authorizing purchases:

- the child's age and maturity;
- his ability to properly use the items;
- training and licences required;
- complexity of use;

- danger and risk to the youth and other persons;
- level of supervision required;
- need for a vehicle;
- availability of storage.

Foster parents must supervise children's/youths' use of money to ensure they do not buy illegal goods such as cigarettes, drugs or weapons. They must advise the Child Welfare Worker if they do so.

#### **4. Purchase of motor vehicles**

Young people must observe certain conditions when buying a vehicle such as a car, a motorcycle, a snowmobile or an ATV.

Youths must obtain their foster parents' and their Child Welfare Worker's consent before acquiring such items. The Child Welfare Worker and/or the foster parents must inform the youths of these requirements.

Moreover, a youth must show that he has acquired some financial independence by contributing to certain personal needs such as the purchase of clothing and his personal expenses. He must show that he has sufficient ongoing financial resources to buy and maintain the vehicle and to pay for its insurance. He must hold a valid driver's licence and have passed a driving course for that type of vehicle.

#### **5. Youths who are no longer attending school or working full time**

When a young person leaves school or begins to work full time, the Child Welfare Worker, in consultation with the foster parents, must draw up a pocket money maintenance or stoppage plan, which must be approved by the supervisor.

#### **6. Children's personal property**

Placed children/youths come with personal effects: clothes, books, toys, comic books and other items. During their placement, these children, like other children, accumulate other property either by spending their pocket money or through purchases made by the Agency or their foster parents. That property belongs to them and must go with them when they leave the Agency's care or change foster families. The Child Welfare Worker is responsible for ensuring that when a child moves or returns home, he receives all his personal property. The foster parents must fill in clothing and personal items inventory form when a placed child arrives and when he leaves. This form must be given to the child's welfare worker.

## **Definitions, annexes and references**

### **Definition**

**Parents:** Includes biological parents, adoptive parents, step-mother, step-father or all other persons responsible for the child previous to Valoris' involvement.

### **References**

- *Foster Care Licensing Manual*, Ministry of Community and Social Services, 1999:
  - 0203-06: *Daily Chores, Employment and Use of Money*;
  - 0302-06: *Daily Chores, Employment and Use of Money*;

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- *0302-04: Child's Purchase and Possession of Goods;*
- *0203-04: Child's Purchase and Possession of Goods;*
- S-207: Plan of care