

Foster Care Association of Victoria / Post Placement Support Service Position:

Where the Victorian child protection service or its agent places a child or young person with kinship carers or permanent carers, the carer, subject to an assessment process, is eligible to receive carer reimbursements.

Assessed carers are eligible to receive reimbursements at the home based care general rate relative to the age of each child or young person in their care. In exceptional circumstances where the general rate is insufficient to meet the needs of an individual child or young person, consideration can be given by the Department of Human Services to increasing the reimbursement rate.

Reimbursements for kinship carers and permanent carers can remain in place beyond the period of Child Protection involvement, subject to regular review processes.

Kinship and permanent carers of young people who turn 18 and are attending secondary school are eligible for continued carer reimbursements until the end of the school year in which the young person turns 18, if the young person continues to reside in their care. Further, if these same young people continue their secondary education in the calendar year beyond which they turn 18, and remain with their carer, reimbursements may be extended for a further school year. Carers wanting to find out more information in this regard should speak with their local Child Protection office or the Caregiver Reimbursement Helpdesk (refer below).

Caregiver Reimbursements for 2012-2013

**Home Based Care (HBC) / Adolescent Community Placement (ACP)
General Caregiver Reimbursements**

(Foster Care, Kinship care, Permanent Care & Local Adoption)

	Age	Annual Rates	Fortnightly Rates
HBC General	0 – 7	7,159.00	274.41
ACP General	8 – 10	7,477.00	286.59
	11 – 12	8,439.00	325.51
	13+	11,454.00	439.00

Please Note:

New Placement Loading

\$54.56 per fortnight, per new Home Based Care general placement, paid for up to 6 months (not including Local Adoption arrangements).

Please note these rates are updated annually, and are accurate as of the 2012-13 financial year.

In addition to caregiver reimbursement, an Educational and Medical Allowance of \$2.68 per day (\$978.90 p.a.) is paid to the carers of children and young people in statutory kinship and permanent care on a quarterly basis via the carer reimbursement system. Carers who care for a child or young person for less than the full quarter but for a minimum of 7 days (these 7 days do not have to be consecutive) will receive a pro-rata payment.

It is expected that benefits available via the public health system, and services available to children and young people with Health Care Cards will be utilised by carers. A carer reimbursement is not a salary, and is thus not classified as income, and does not have to be declared as earnings for the purposes of Income Tax, Family Tax Benefit or Child Support through the Commonwealth Government, or housing/personal loan assessments through financial institutions.

The Caregiver Reimbursement Helpdesk (PH) 1300 552 319

This phone number is for any foster, permanent or kinship carers, statutory or non-statutory (caring for children or young people without child protection involvement), and for professionals to call directly. Whilst carers would usually have reimbursement queries answered via their Community Service Organisation or local child protection office, sometimes carers and professionals need to find out quick or specific financial information about the nature of caregiver reimbursements.

The Helpdesk is designed specifically for this purpose. Helpdesk staff can answer your questions about when your payments are starting, when they will cease, any money owed to you or by you, information about indexation and any additional allowances, such as the New Placement Loading (general care category only), or Education and Medical allowance.

The Helpdesk is staffed by Department of Human Services staff. Helpdesk staff are not part of the child protection program and will therefore not be able to discuss child protection related issues, nor are they able to conduct reviews of reimbursement levels.