

**JOB DESCRIPTION FOR FOSTERING PANEL MEMBERS**

**JOB TITLE:** Panel Member

**LOCATION:** As advertised

**JOB PURPOSE:** To act as an independent member of the National Fostering Agency Panel. The fostering panel provides independent oversight of the Recruitment, assessment and review of foster carer's and makes reasoned decisions on the approval status of applicants.

**KEY ORGANISATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS**

**Accountable to:** Registered Manager and Panel Chair

**Links with:** Internal – Registered Manager, Panel Chair, Panel Colleagues and Panel Administrator  
External – Foster Carers

**KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES:**

To read the circulated papers carefully before the meeting and to attend the meeting prepared to raise issues and to contribute to the panel discussion.

To take responsibility for participating in the making of a recommendation, on each case, drawing on both personal and professional knowledge and experience.

To be prepared to attend additional panels if possible, if requested.

To participate, with other panel members, in advising on fostering policy and procedural matters as required.

Ensures that NFA's Equal Opportunities Policy underpins all the work, in order to provide the best opportunities for all the children placed with our foster carers.

To safeguard the confidentiality of all panel papers and panel discussions.

To participate in panel induction and in panel training, which will be at least one day per year.

To participate constructively in the annual review of their panel membership.

To declare an interest before discussion begins if the panel member has previous knowledge of the case to be presented to panel.

Works, at all times, in accord with the policies and procedures of NFA and statutory regulations applicable to fostering services, observing the strict rules of confidentiality appropriate to the post.

**PERSON SPECIFICATION / EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS**

- Experience, either professionally or personally or both, of the placement of children in adoptive and foster families or of children being cared for away from their birth family.

**KNOWLEDGE**

- An appreciation of the effect of separation and loss on children.
- Awareness of the richness of different kinds of families and their potential for meeting children's needs.
- Some understanding of the purpose and function of the panel and of the agency which the panel is serving, or a willingness to learn.

**ABILITIES**

- Good listening and communication skills
- The ability to read, process and analyse large amounts of complex and sometimes distressing information.
- The ability to make an assessment and to form a view, based on the written and oral information presented to panel, and the confidence to articulate this at panel.
- The ability to use personal and/or professional knowledge and experience to contribute to discussion and decision-making in a balanced and informed manner.
- The ability to work co-operatively as part of a large multi-disciplinary panel
- The ability to attend at least 75% of panel meetings, arriving on time, and having read the papers.
- The ability to recognise one's own training needs and to attend at least one panel training day per year.

**ATTITUDES**

- A commitment to keeping children within their own family or community where this is possible and to maintaining contact between children living in adoptive families and their birth families where this appears to be in the child's best interest.
- A commitment to fostering as a way of meeting a child's need for permanence, where this appears to be in the child's best interests.

- A valuing of diversity in relation to issues of ethnicity, religion, gender, disability and sexuality.
- An understanding of, and a commitment to, the need for confidentiality
- A willingness to increase knowledge and understanding of issues through reading, discussion and training
- A willingness to contribute constructively to the annual review of their panel membership if this is an agency requirement and, as required, to that of other panel members and the Chair.