

Subject: Support a national campaign for council tax exemptions for foster carers

Dear [MS's name],

I am writing to you as a constituent of [your constituency] to ask for you to support The Fostering Network campaign to introduce council tax exemptions for foster carers.

***Some points you can include in the main section of your email:**

- Foster carers provide a vital role to society; they provide care within stable and loving homes for babies, children and young people.
- Providing them with council tax exemptions will show that they are respected and valued and will therefore improve with retention.
- It will increase local placements, meaning children and young people will not have to move away from their support network.
- Allowances and fees are still not covering the full cost of fostering, along with essential living costs, so this will offer financial relief.
- Fostering placements are cheaper than residential care placements, therefore it creates long-term savings.
- There are currently 11 out of 22 (50%) local authorities in Wales that already give exemptions/discounts, 5 local authorities offer up to 100% reductions. This shows it is possible, but also means there are inconsistencies for foster carers living nearby or in neighbouring local authorities.
- The Fostering Network has estimated that there needs to be 400 more foster carers in Wales and its State of the Nations' 2024 survey found that 21% of services said finances, including council tax exemptions was the most effective thing they do to retain foster carers.
- In The Fostering Network's State of the Nations' survey 2024, 56% of foster carers in Wales said they had considered resigning from fostering, with 26% citing financial difficulties as a contributing factor.
- Please add the impact this lack of financial support is having on you (if you are a foster carer) or your retention and recruitment of foster carers (if you are a service) and how you think this could change if the government or your local authority exempts foster carers from paying council tax.

Therefore, I am kindly asking you to:

- Advocate for the Foster Wales National Commitment to include a clear exemption for foster carers from paying council tax to ensure consistency across Wales.¹
- Speak to the local authorities in your constituency and ask them to consider exempting foster carers from council tax.

¹ <https://fosterwales.gov.wales/fostering-allowances-and-support-in-wales/>

- Raise the issue in Senedd and with the Deputy Minister for Social Care, Mental Health and Women's Health.

This change would not only ease the financial burden on foster carers but would also help recruit and retain more foster carers.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing your views and what steps you will take to support this.

Yours sincerely,