

Question on Notice

No. 126

Asked on 6 February 2020

MR D BATT asked the Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence (HON D FARMER)—

QUESTION

With respect to foster and kinship allowance—

Will the Minister provide (a) the number of children in foster and kinship care who are of age 17, 18 and 19 for the last three financial years (reported separately) and (b) the average allowance paid to each foster and kinship carers per fortnight per child for the last three financial years (reported separately)?

ANSWER

- (a) In February 2019, I was pleased to announce that Queensland's foster and kinship carers' allowance would be extended for children who turn 18 while still at school. The Queensland Government has committed \$369.4 million over four years from 2019-20 to continue existing reforms to strengthen Queensland's child protection system.

From 1 July 2020, the allowance will be extended until the age of 19, regardless of a young person's educational status.

While as adults, young people aged 18 and 19 can, and do, remain with their foster or kinship carers, this information is not currently reported as it is essentially a private arrangement. With the implementation of changes from 2020-21, department data reporting will be expanded to record 18-year-olds, when the allowance is claimed.

The numbers of children aged 17 and in a foster or kinship care placement as at 30 June for the last three years is reported below.

Children in foster and kinship care aged 17	as at 30 June 2017	as at 30 June 2018	as at 30 June 2019
	257	263	288

- (b) Queensland's hard working volunteer foster and kinship carers are supported with a range of allowances. The base allowance is paid fortnightly in arrears, at different rates, depending on the age of a child. Carers receive the allowance per child in their care and can receive a dual allowance to support planned carer breaks.

In addition to the base carer allowance, and depending upon the complexity of care required for each child, and the timing and location of the placement, the carer may also receive a regional and remote loading, an establishment allowance, a start-up allowance, a high support needs allowance and a complex support needs allowance.

In addition to any allowances paid to carers, it should also be noted that foster and kinship carers can receive Child Related Costs reimbursements for eligible costs they may incur such as travel, education and medical expenses.

The allowance rates available to support a foster or kinship carer over the last three years are provided below. The range of changing circumstances stated above, and the age and number of children and the length of time that children may remain in a foster or kinship carer's care determine the total allowance paid to an individual carer. As a result, an accurate average fortnightly allowance per financial year cannot be determined.

Allowance rates are adjusted annually at the beginning of the calendar year, in line with movements in the Brisbane Consumer Price Index. For this reason, the information below is provided by calendar year rather than financial year.

Foster and Kinship Care Allowance	2018	2019	2020
Fortnightly Caring Allowance (0-5 years)	\$484.54	\$493.36	\$502.74
Fortnightly Caring Allowance (6-10 years)	\$521.92	\$531.44	\$541.66
Fortnightly Caring Allowance (11+ years)	\$567.42	\$577.64	\$588.70
Fortnightly Regional and Remote Loading (0-5 years)	\$48.44	\$49.42	\$50.40
Fortnightly Regional and Remote Loading (6-10 years)	\$52.22	\$53.20	\$54.32
Fortnightly Regional and Remote Loading (11+ years)	\$56.70	\$57.82	\$58.94
Establishment Allowance (same for all ages, one-off)	\$521.96	\$531.44	\$541.66
One-off Start-up Allowance (same for all ages, one-off)	\$104.41	\$106.40	\$108.50
Fortnightly High Support Needs Allowance (same for all ages)	\$170.38	\$173.46	\$176.82
Fortnightly Complex Support Needs Allowance – Level 1 (same for all ages)	\$220.64	\$224.70	\$229.04
Fortnightly Complex Support Needs Allowance – Level 2 (same for all ages)	\$441.28	\$449.26	\$457.80
Fortnightly Complex Support Needs Allowance - Level 3 (same for all ages)	\$661.92	\$673.96	\$686.84