

# Letter of Verification: What is it and why do you need it?

A Foster Care **Letter of Verification** is an official document that shows you were or are in foster care. Sometimes it's called a dependency letter or ward of the court letter.

Basically, it's a way to prove your foster care status (current or formerly) when you need it.

**Why do you need it?** It verifies that you were or are in foster care, usually to establish eligibility for things like: qualifying as an independent student, tuition waivers, or accessing benefits and programs.

**What's in the letter:** The letter typically includes your name, the dates you were in care, and a statement confirming you were in foster care or a ward of the court.

**Who gives you this letter?** The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) offices, a caseworker, or the Foster Care Ombudsmen's office for the state where you were in care (*each state does this a little different*).

## How do I get a Verification Letter?

You can obtain this document by contacting the DCFS office, county social services, or agency that managed your case to request an official letter on agency letterhead.

### PRO TIPS:

- **Know Who to Ask** - Contact your current or former caseworker, ILP or the foster care agency. Still not sure? Check old case files or contact your county or local child welfare office.
- **Have Your Info Ready** - Have a form of identification that includes your name and birthdate ready to share.
- **Follow-up** - Sometimes this process takes time, continue to send friendly reminders.
- **Ask for Digital copy** - Some agencies can send you a digital copy, just ask. Save on your phone or computer for future use.



### TALK TO US!

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