

Tips for Success with the Emergency Child Care Foster Bridge Program

The Foster Bridge program at Infant Child Enrichment Services issues an emergency child care voucher to the foster/resource family to receive child care subsidies for 6-months to help with the cost of child care. FB child care funds are limited and it is crucial that social workers communicate with the FB Navigator to ensure funds are used efficiently.

- The process starts with Department of Social Services social worker completing a Foster Bridge referral form and sending it to the ICES FB navigator:
 - Foster/resource parents should be informed that the enrollment process may take 5 to 10 business days (or longer in if they have chosen an exempt provider). In addition foster parents should know the voucher may not cover the entire cost of child care and that they will be responsible for any amount that the voucher does not cover.
 - In order for ICES to invoice DSS for child care costs, each child's C-IV number is needed on the referral form.
 - The "Child's Income" refers to the monthly income the resource family receives from DSS for that child. As this income may be utilized to cover the needs of the child the foster parent may use it to cover any remaining costs of child care.
 - The "Child Care Need" is the schedule of child care needed (days/dates and times of child care). This information is needed in order for ICES to properly invoice DSS for child care costs.
 - To exempt the foster/resource family from (most) child care co-payments the exemption box must be checked on the referral form.
 - The DSS social worker should indicate whether the foster/resource parent is in need of finding a child care provider/program. If there is already a child care provider in place, the name and contact information of that provider should be filled out.
- Once the FB navigator receives a FB referral they will assist the foster/resource parent(s) with finding child care and enrollment process. Once the foster/resource parent is successfully enrolled in the voucher program the FB navigator will notify the social worker. The navigator will also provide support to the child care provider/program to improve the likelihood of the child(ren)'s successful and sustained enrollment in child care.
 - If the foster/resource parent chooses an unlicensed child care provider, the FB navigator will direct them to notify their social worker.
 - Licensed exempt providers must clear a background check and be registered on the Trustline Registry before enrollment in child care subsidy can occur (see separate sheet on that process). The DSS office may issue a prepaid visa card to

the resource parent to cover the cost of the Trustline fingerprinting prior to or retroactively in reimbursement of that process.

- During the 6-month child care voucher authorization period the DSS social worker should contact the FB navigator if...
 - Any changes in foster/resource family placement have occurred for children enrolled in the FB Voucher program.
 - The foster child’s social worker has changed.
 - Foster/Resource parents share concerns with the social worker regarding their current child care placement or have expressed the need or desire to change child care providers.
 - Children enrolled in the FB voucher program are reunified with their biological parent(s) during the 6-month authorization period.
- In the event that a child in the FB program has been reunited with their biological parent(s) the social worker may provide ICES with a CWS child care referral to enable the child to be enrolled in the Alternative Payment Child Care Subsidy Program (as funding is available). That referral enables the family to receive a 12-month child care voucher.
 - The DSS social worker may encourage parents to keep their child enrolled in their existing child care placement if possible. Maintaining the same child care provider gives the child some stability during this challenging transition and can ensure the child’s well-being while supporting the parent(s) individual situation and/or circumstance.

For questions and technical support, please contact Infant Child Enrichment Services with any questions or concerns regarding clients involved in or eligible for the Emergency Childcare Foster Bridge Program.

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