

Education Travel Reimbursement

California Department of Social Services

School Stability Matters

Foster youth transfer schools an average of eight times while in foster care, losing 4 to 6 months of learning each time. As a result of school instability, only 21% of foster youth are proficient in English by 11th grade, and 6% in math. Fewer than 60% of foster youth graduate from high school.

Definition of School of Origin:

▶ A youth's school(s) of origin includes:

- (1) The school the youth attended at the time they entered the foster care and/or probation system(s)
- (2) The school the youth most recently attended
- (3) Any school the youth attended in the preceding 15 months with which they have a connection (e.g., sports team, relationships with peers or teachers).

Feeder Patterns: If youth are transitioning between elementary and middle or middle and high school, school of origin includes the next school within the school district's feeder pattern.

School of Origin Dispute Resolution:

- ▶ If at any time, there is a dispute regarding a youth's right to remain in a school of origin, the youth has a right to remain in that school until the dispute is resolved. Disputes should be referred to the school district's dispute resolution process. A complaint can also be filed on the youth's behalf through the [Uniform Complaint Procedures Act](#).

Transportation Funding:

- ▶ Many foster parents, including relatives, are eligible for funding from their local child protective services agency if they transport a youth to their school of origin after a placement change. See [All County Letter 11-51](#), page 3 and [All County Letter 13-03](#), page 2 for funding rates or see [flyer](#)
- ▶ Under the Every Student Succeeds Act, school districts must work with child welfare agencies to ensure a youth is transported to their school of origin.
- ▶ Each school district's [Title 1 plan](#) must include assurances that the district will collaborate with the state and local child welfare agency to develop and implement procedures for how transportation to school of origin will be provided.

Mileage Rates

Distance from Foster Care Placement to School of Origin (in miles) One Way	Educational Travel Rate per Month per Child
Up to 3 miles	\$0
4 to 8 miles	\$58
9 to 13 miles	\$154
14 to 18 miles	\$250
19 to 23 miles	\$347
24 or more miles	\$443

Public Transportation Rates

- ▶ Educational travel rates may be paid for children taking public transportation to their school of origin. The counties may purchase transportation passes or reimburse the foster parents for purchasing passes.
- ▶ Public transportation passes are reimbursed at the flat rates of \$25, \$50, or \$75 per month per youth, as determined by the placement agency. If the costs of the monthly public transportation pass falls between two levels, reimbursement to the provider or non-minor dependent will always be at the higher of the two levels.

Who is Eligible?

- ▶ The rates previously listed are to be paid to foster family home providers including licensed foster parents, approved relatives, certified foster parents, small family licensees and Non-Related Extended Family Members (NREFMs), for each foster child, whose educational stability plan indicates that the child will remain in the school of origin.

Who is Eligible?

- ▶ The education travel reimbursement is for eligible youth in grades kindergarten through 12th who return to their school of origin.
- ▶ The foster parent reimbursement payment allows for 4 one-way trips (driving foster child to school, driving back home, picking foster child up from school and driving home).
- ▶ This payment would be for a 12 month period and payment does not stop for any reason other than a physical placement move for the child. This payment also requires transport for the child to extra-curricular activities, parent teacher conferences, etc.

The Education Travel Reimbursement Program

Public Law (PL) 110-351 amended Title IV-E of the Social Security Act to require that a case plan includes a plan for ensuring the educational stability of the child while in foster care.

PL 110-351 also provides for the cost of reasonable travel for the child to their school of origin as an allowable foster care maintenance cost.

Assuming that all other eligibility conditions are met, payment begins at the same time as the child's eligibility for a foster care maintenance payment.

For more detailed information see All County Letter 11-51.

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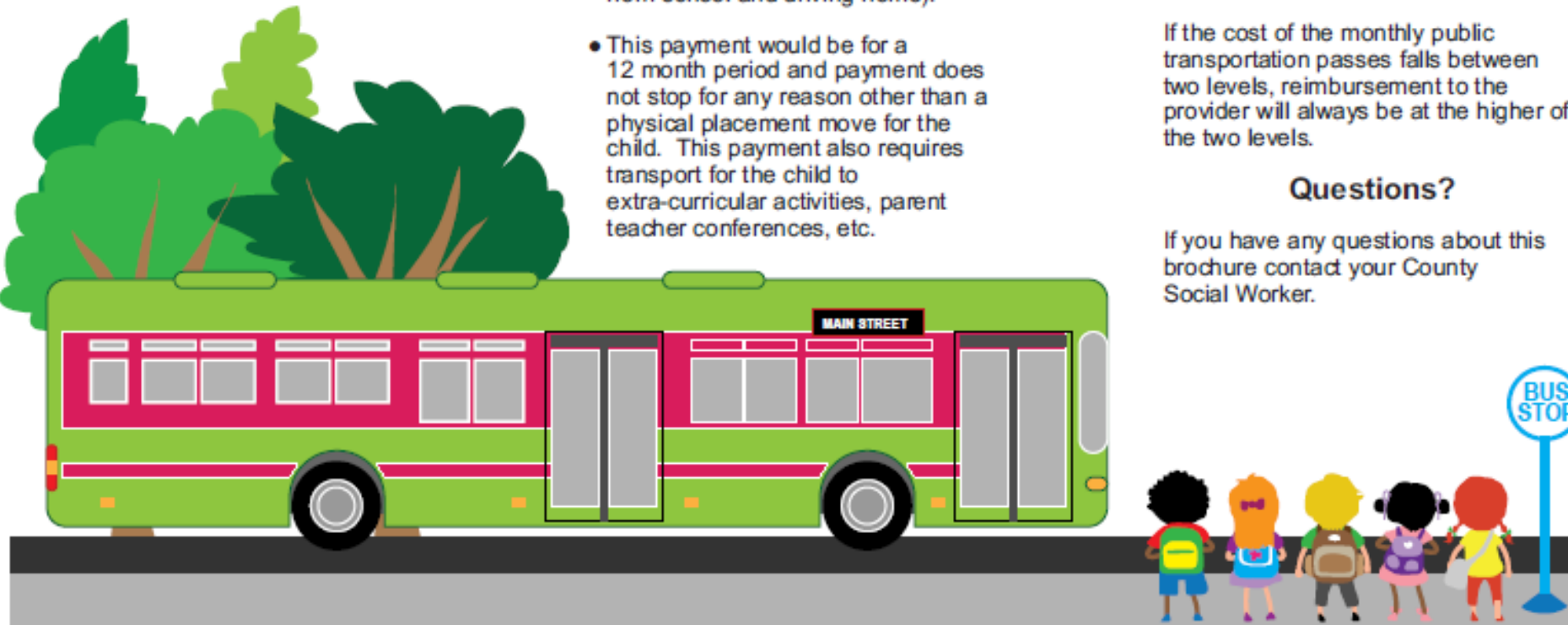
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Questions?

If you have any questions about this brochure contact your County Social Worker.



Resources for Caregivers:

Any questions regarding educational travel rates can be directed to the Foster Care Rates Bureau consultant at (916) 651-9152.

Placement Services & Support Unit
(916) 657-1858

FosterCareEducation@dss.ca.gov

- ▶ [California Department of Social Services Foster Youth Education Resource Hub](#)
- ▶ [The California Department of Education: Foster Youth Services](#)
- ▶ [Alliance for Children's Rights Resource Family Approval Guide & Toolkit](#)
- ▶ [Alliance for Children's Rights Foster Youth Education Toolkit](#)
- ▶ [Alliance for Children's Rights Education Manual](#)
- ▶ [California Foster Youth Education Law Fact Sheets](#)
- ▶ [Foster Youth Education Rights](#)
- ▶ [Foster Youth Services Coordinating Program \(FYSCP\) Contacts](#)
- ▶ [Foster Youth Local Education Agency Program Contacts](#)



RATES PRESENTATION JULY 1, 2021

QUICK POLL

- Are you a:
 - A. Resource family
 - B. Non-related legal guardian
 - C. Relative or Non-related Extended Family Member (NREFM)
 - D. Foster Family Agency (FFA) Home
 - E. Congregate Care Provider
 - F. Advocate
 - G. County SW or Probation
 - H. Other

INTRODUCTION



- Aid to Families with Dependent Children-Foster Care (AFDC-FC) is a federal program which provides benefits to children and non-minor dependents who are in out of home placement.
- The federal law is rather stringent and there are children/non-minors who don't qualify. These children will receive non-federal foster care or another funding program which will be discussed below.

WHOSE MONEY IS IT ANYWAY?

AFDC-FC payments are made on behalf of a child or non-minor dependent (NMD).

AFDC-FC is not income to the home based caregiver and does not have to be claimed on their taxes nor can a tax lien be placed against it.

LEVEL OF CARE RATE DETERMINATION PROTOCOL (LOCP)

- In 2018, a new home based rate structure based on the LOCP was introduced.
- It was limited to new FFA placements.
- The LOCP requires social workers to assess the amount of care and supervision a child is receiving from the current caregiver within 60 days of placement.
- Effective, April 1, 2021, all new entries (including re-entry) and any existing cases with a triggering event became eligible.



TRIGGERING EVENTS

- Requests from a provider
 - Based on changing needs (developing learning disability, medical issue, new behaviors)
- Placement change
 - Even if needs have not changed caregiver's level of provision may have changed

WHO IS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR LOCP?

- Emergency caregivers
- Short Term Residential Therapeutic Programs (STRTP)
- Supervised Independent Living Placement (SILP)
- Non-Related Legal Guardianship established in probate court.

LOCP

- **An assessment matrix is used by a social worker to determine the level of care. Matrix can be found [here](#).**
- **Resource families (RFs) should receive a copy of the completed matrix.**
- **The matrix consists of five core domains: physical, educational, behavioral/emotional, health and permanency/cultural.**
- **A youth can be assessed at the LOC 1, 2, 3 or 4, or Intensive Services Foster Care (ISFC) rate.**

PHYSICAL DOMAIN

RF meets the child's individual daily living needs:

- Food, clothing, shelter, hygiene, and/or
- Community, social functioning and extracurricular activities including teaching age appropriate life skills even when developmental delays are present.
- Does not include specific medical activities (See Health Domain).
- Added RF supervision for Independence skills in place of self-help skills.

BEHAVIORAL/EMOTIONAL DOMAIN

RF engages to promote:

- Resilience and emotional well-being for the child/youth;
- Encourages the child/youth to engage in prosocial behavior and/or
- Activities developing healthy relationships.
- Rating of 7 levels up to ISFC.

EDUCATIONAL DOMAIN

RF promotes:

- Student achievement and/or foster educational excellence and/or
- Equal access to services and/or
- When required, responds to suspensions and/or expulsions.
- Added additional hours and to reflect virtual school/distance learning.
- Domain includes preschool-aged children who attend early childhood educational programs and youth that may attend adult programs.

HEALTH DOMAIN

To promote health, the RF must engage in the following:

- Arranging and facilitating health care, i.e., CHDP wellness check, medical, dental, and vision.
- Medication administration and/or
- Monitoring and ensuring access to services that address any special health care needs.
- Rating of 7 levels up to ISFC.

PERMANENCY/FAMILY SERVICES DOMAIN

RF promotes/facilitates:

- Visitation, communication, the identification, development and/or maintenance of lifelong, support connections with members of the biological and non-biological families and natural support systems.
- Connects the youth with their community of origin including connections with resources, cultural organizations, faith communities, and any other group or organization which promotes a sense of belonging, identity and connection to culture.

LOC RATES EFFECTIVE 7/1/2021

Level	Basic Level Rate	LOC 2	LOC 3	LOC 4
RF Home Rate	\$1,059	\$1,177	\$1,298	\$1,416
FFA Total Rate	\$2,325	\$2,489	\$2,656	\$2,856

INTENSIVE SERVICES FOSTER CARE (ISFC)

- The ISFC rate is intended to accommodate children with special health care or medical needs, or who are in Therapeutic Foster Care (TFC) or other special placements.
 - ISFC is a program that is also an alternative placement option to or a step-down from a residential setting.
 - The ISFC program will give the agency and county more flexibility to tailor the services to the individual needs of a child or nonminor dependent (NMD).
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- ISFC RF RATE: \$2,763
- FFA/County Rate: \$3,682

INTENSIVE SERVICES FOSTER CARE (ISFC)

ISFC Program Resource Family Approval (RFA) Training Requirements

- **ISFC RFs must have a total of 40 hours of training to qualify as an ISFC home, this includes the 12 hours required to become an RFA and 28 additional hours.**
- **The additional 28 training hours should be elective in the categories as follows:**
 - **18 hours in trauma informed care or attachment interventions.**
 - **10 hours of electives that are individualized for the child/NMD's needs.**

ON-GOING/ADDITIONAL TRAINING

- **Ongoing training is required for each year thereafter.**
- **A county or FFA may require more training of the RF, or refresher training to meet the special needs of a child/NMD to provide trauma-informed care.**
- **Additional training questions can be sent to the RFA mailbox on the last slide.**

STATIC CRITERIA/STATIC RATE

- When a child/NMD enters FC with high needs they may qualify under a set of static criteria.
- These children/NMDs will be paid the static rate (equivalent of ISFC rate) while they await LOC assessment.



STATIC CRITERIA

- •Adjudicated violent offenders, significant property damage, and/or sex offenders/perpetrators • Aggressive and assaultive
- • Animal cruelty
- • Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC)
- • Contraction of pandemic viruses, such as COVID-19
- • Eating disorder
- • Fire setting
- • Gang activity
- • Habitual runaway
- • Habitual truancy
- • Medically fragile
- • Special Health Care Needs (SHCN)
- • Psychiatric hospitalization(s)
- • Severe mental health issues-including suicidal ideation and/or self-harm
- • Substance use/abuse

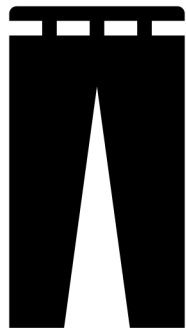
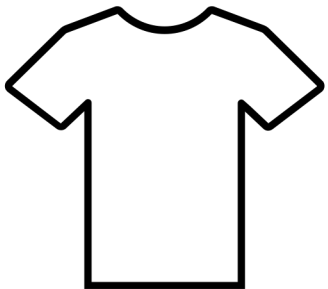
SPECIALIZED CARE INCREMENT (SCI)

- The SCI is an additional payment to address a youth's needs which go beyond the basic rates or levels of care.
- Plans are county specific and not all counties participate.
- A condition specified by one of the LOC levels can also warrant an additional SCI, if the condition goes above what is covered by the LOC rate.
- **Examples:** cerebral palsy, developmental delays, substance use, diabetes, truancy, specialized diet, and learning disability.

SPECIALIZED CARE INCREMENT (SCI)

- If a child is placed in another county, the host county rate must be paid.
- Most plans aren't available on the CDSS website right now due to accessibility issues.
 - sci@dss.ca.gov
- ARC youth are not eligible for SCI, however counties may choose to pay it from county funds.
- Non-minors in SILPs are not eligible for SCI.

CLOTHING ALLOWANCE



- **Optional and varies by county.**
- **Can be one-time, annual, semi-annual or on an as-needed basis.**
- **No state participation after 2011 realignment.**

APPROVED RELATIVE CAREGIVER FUNDING (ARC)



- **Available for youth placed with relatives, who are not eligible to receive AFDC-FC funding.**
- **The caregiver receives the same rate as they would with AFDC-FC; combination of CalWORKs and Foster Care funding.**

KINSHIP GUARDIANSHIP ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (KIN-GAP)

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- Because relatives are often unwilling to terminate the parental rights of another relative, children were languishing in foster care even when they were in a stable home. Accordingly, California created the Kin-GAP program.
 - Supports eligible relative caregivers in California who become legal guardians and exit the child welfare system.
 - The rate for the Kin-GAP program is the same rate the youth was receiving in foster care.
 - Transition from foster care to Kin-GAP is not automatic.

DUAL AGENCY

- **Children and NMDs who are consumers of regional center services and recipients of either AFDC-FC, Adoption Assistance Program (AAP), Kinship-Guardian Assistance Payment (Kin-GAP), or Approved Relative Caregiver (ARC) payments are referred to as “dual agency children and non-minor dependents.”**
- **The regional center is responsible for evaluating foster children/NMDs for eligibility to regional center services and for securing services that are in the child’s Individualized Family Service Plan or Individual Program Plan.**

DUAL AGENCY

Children/NMD in Non-Vendorized Dual Agency Homes

- Rates set in statute
- RF, FFA, NRLG, tribally approved home, licensed or approved foster home, or approved relative/NREFM.
- May be eligible to a supplement to the dual agency rate.

DUAL AGENCY RATES AS OF 7/1/2021

AGE	RATE
Birth up to 3 years.	\$1,241
Three (3) years and older. Children under 3 years are eligible but must be receiving a higher level of services per WIC section 11464.	\$2,771

INFANT SUPPLEMENT



- For a child who is living with a parent who receives **AFDC-FC, ARC or Kin-GAP** benefits.
- **\$900** with potential for an additional **\$200** upon completion of a parenting support plan or a shared responsibility plan.
- Parents of any gender are eligible.

FUNERAL EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

Up to the amount allowed by the California Victim Compensation Board for funeral costs (\$7500 currently), may be reimbursed for funeral expenses.

Only youth in home based foster care are eligible for this reimbursement.

TRANSITION AGE YOUTH/ NON-MINOR DEPENDENTS

- **Supervised
Independent Living
Placements (SILP)**
- **Transitional Housing
Placement Program**
 - Housing Supplement
- TAYPolicy@dss.ca.gov



CONTACTS

- For specialized care increment related inquiries, please contact your county SCI coordinator. If need plan, contact sci@dss.ca.gov.
- For questions regarding the LOC protocol: loc@dss.ca.gov
- For general questions on rates policy: ratespolicy@dss.ca.gov
- For questions on the RFA approval process: rfa@dss.ca.gov