

**RCW 74.14C.010 Definitions.** Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter.

(1) "Community support systems" means the support that may be organized through extended family members, friends, neighbors, religious organizations, community programs, cultural and ethnic organizations, or other support groups or organizations.

(2) "Department" means the department of children, youth, and families.

(3) "Family preservation services" means in-home or community-based services drawing on the strengths of the family and its individual members while addressing family needs to strengthen and keep the family together where possible and may include:

(a) Respite care of children to provide temporary relief for parents and other caregivers;

(b) Services designed to improve parenting skills with respect to such matters as child development, family budgeting, coping with stress, health, safety, and nutrition; and

(c) Services designed to promote the well-being of children and families, increase the strength and stability of families, increase parents' confidence and competence in their parenting abilities, promote a safe, stable, and supportive family environment for children, and otherwise enhance children's development.

Family preservation services shall have the characteristics delineated in RCW 74.14C.020 (2) and (3).

(4) "Family resource center" means a unified single point of entry where families, individuals, children, and youth in communities can obtain information, an assessment of needs, referral to, or direct delivery of family services in a manner that is welcoming and strength-based.

(a) A family resource center is designed to meet the needs, cultures, and interests of the communities that the family resource center serves.

(b) Family services may be delivered directly to a family at the family resource center by family resource center staff or by providers who contract with or have provider agreements with the family resource center. Any family resource center that provides family services shall comply with applicable state and federal laws and regulations regarding the delivery of such family services, unless required waivers or exemptions have been granted by the appropriate governing body.

(c) Each family resource center shall have one or more family advocates who screen and assess a family's needs and strengths. If requested by the family, the family advocate shall assist the family with setting its own goals and, together with the family, develop a written plan to pursue the family's goals in working towards a greater level of self-reliance or in attaining self-sufficiency.

(5) "Imminent" means a decision has been made by the department that, without intensive family preservation services, a petition requesting the removal of a child from the family home will be immediately filed under chapter 13.32A or 13.34 RCW, or that a voluntary placement agreement will be immediately initiated.

(6) "Intensive family preservation services" means community-based services that are delivered primarily in the home, that follow intensive service models with demonstrated effectiveness in reducing or avoiding the need for unnecessary imminent out-of-home placement,

and that have all of the characteristics delineated in RCW 74.14C.020 (1) and (3).

(7) "Out-of-home placement" means a placement in a foster family home or group care facility licensed pursuant to chapter 74.15 RCW or placement in a home, other than that of the child's parent, guardian, or legal custodian, not required to be licensed pursuant to chapter 74.15 RCW.

(8) "Paraprofessional worker" means any individual who is trained and qualified to provide assistance and community support systems development to families and who acts under the supervision of a preservation services therapist. The paraprofessional worker is not intended to replace the role and responsibilities of the preservation services therapist.

(9) "Preservation services" means family preservation services and intensive family preservation services that consider the individual family's cultural values and needs.

(10) "Secretary" means the secretary of the department. [2021 c 39 s 2. Prior: 2017 3rd sp.s. c 6 s 511; 1996 c 240 s 2; 1995 c 311 s 2; 1992 c 214 s 2.]

**Intent—Findings—2021 c 39:** "(1) This act is intended to provide a common definition for family resource centers across Washington state in an effort to establish a core set of principles for existing and newly forming family resource centers.

(2) The legislature finds that family resource centers are effective in supporting communities when adhering to the following principles:

- (a) Equality;
- (b) Mutual respect;
- (c) Families are resources to other families and the community;
- (d) Strengthening families' cultural, racial, and linguistic identities;
- (e) Embedding programs in the community;
- (f) Fairness;
- (g) Responsiveness;
- (h) Accountability;
- (i) Mobilization of formal and informal resources; and
- (j) Flexibility.

(3) The legislature further finds that families and parents are primarily responsible for supporting children's development and well-being at all ages and stages, and for preparing a child for success in school and life. However, many families may benefit from voluntary preventative or enriching support. (4) The legislature finds that family resource centers play a critical role in:

- (a) Preventing child abuse and neglect;
- (b) Strengthening children and families;
- (c) Connecting family-impacting agencies and programs;
- (d) Creating opportunities for community-level coordination; and
- (e) Creating connections to resources and support systems." [2021 c 39 s 1.]

**Effective date—2017 3rd sp.s. c 6 ss 102, 104-115, 201-227, 301-337, 401-419, 501-513, 801-803, and 805-822:** See note following RCW 43.216.025.

**Conflict with federal requirements—2017 3rd sp.s. c 6:** See RCW 43.216.908.