
Children, Youth & Families Committee

HB 1347

Brief Description: Concerning exceptional foster care maintenance payments.

Sponsors: Representatives Caldier, Robertson, Davis, Simmons, Senn and Berg.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Department of Children, Youth, and Families to provide foster maintenance payments that are at least one third of the payment that a qualified residential treatment program would receive for children exhibiting certain behaviors.

Hearing Date: 2/1/21

Staff: Luke Wickham (786-7146).

Background:

Foster Parent.

When a child is placed in out-of-home care pursuant to a dependency court process, the child may be placed with relatives or in foster care. Foster parents are licensed by the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) to provide 24-hour temporary care to children placed in out-of-home care.

Individuals can apply for a foster parent license directly to the DCYF or through a child-placing agency (CPA). The CPAs are licensed by the DCYF and can certify that an individual meets the foster licensing requirements before the application is sent to the DCYF. The CPAs also provide ongoing case management to foster families.

To receive a foster parent license, an individual must:

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- be age 21 or older;
- complete the following training, along with individuals age 18 or older in the household:
 - first aid;
 - age-appropriate adult and/or infant cardiopulmonary resuscitation;
 - human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome; and
 - blood borne pathogens;
- pass, along with certain household members, a background check;
- submit, along with individuals age 18 or older in the household, a negative tuberculosis test or an X-ray;
- submit proof of current immunization status for any children living on the premises, not in out-of-home care;
- to serve foster children under age 2, submit proof of pertussis and influenza immunizations for all people living in the home;
- pass an assessment demonstrating an ability to provide a safe home and to provide the quality of care needed by children placed in the home; and
- complete other training.

Foster Care Maintenance Payments.

Foster care maintenance payments are intended to assist licensed foster parents in meeting the needs of the foster child. There is a basic foster care maintenance payment and three levels of supplemental foster maintenance payments (Level 2, 3, and 4) that are paid to foster parents who care for children with varying degrees of physical, mental, behavioral or emotional conditions that require increased work, care, or supervision above those required for a typically developing child. The DCYF uses a standardized assessment tool that assesses the needs of the child and the foster parent's ability and time required to meet the child's needs to determine the foster care rate.

The monthly foster parent maintenance payments are as follows:

Age of Child	Basic Foster Maintenance Rate	Level II	Level III	Level IV
0-5 Years of Age	\$672	\$849.92	\$1,195.51	\$1,474.30
6-11 Years of Age	\$796	\$973.92	\$1,319.51	\$1,598.30
12 and Older	\$810	\$987.92	\$1,333.51	\$1,612.30

Child care costs are covered for foster parents when the caregivers are working and no caregiver is at home to care for the child.

Foster children receive medical and dental coverage while in foster care.

Two hundred dollar clothing vouchers are available for children following the child's initial placement. An additional clothing voucher up to \$200 may be available each year after a child's initial placement when there is an exceptional clothing need.

Treatment foster care, behavioral rehabilitation services (BRS), and qualified residential treatment programs (QRTP) provide services for children and youth with high-level complex needs.

Therapeutic or treatment foster homes have been identified to care for extremely behaviorally or emotionally disturbed children who cannot function in a family home without specialized treatment and expertise. Therapeutic foster homes have specialized skills in managing the youth in their care.

Foster youth may be referred to a contracted BRS provider when the youth has:

- a high-level complex service need;
- a completed Wraparound with Intensive Services screen;
- been assessed to need BRS level of care; and
- received approval following a BRS referral.

A BRS can be provided in a foster family home or in a QRTP. A QRTP is a program licensed as a group care facility that also qualifies for funding under the Family First Prevention Services Act and meets additional requirements.

The BRS therapeutic foster care monthly rate is \$8,266.48, The BRS in-home rate is \$4,918.52, and the QRTP rate is \$12,803.72. If a child's supervision needs exceed the BRS level of care, the DCYF may approve a child specific contract rate unique to that child and above the standard rate.

Summary of Bill:

The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) must provide foster parent maintenance payments that are at least one third of the payment that would otherwise be provided to a qualified residential treatment program for foster parents caring for a child when the caseworker is aware of any of the following:

- developmentally inappropriate sexually aggressive behavior on the part of the child;
- potential for the child to hurt animals or a history of the child hurting animals;
- suicidal ideation on the part of the child within the last year;
- self-harm behaviors on the part of the child within the last year;
- aggressive behaviors on the part of the child within the last year;
- a requirement that the child remain in a room alone during periods of the day to maintain the safety of the child or others;
- a prohibition on the child being around children age 2 or younger;
- the child experiencing 15 or more placements in the preceding six months;
- homicidal ideation on the part of the child; or
- a history of arson on the part of the child.

After a foster parent has provided care for the child for six months, and every six months

thereafter, the DCYF must negotiate an appropriate maintenance payment with the foster parent caring for a child meeting the description above with the goal of maintaining stability for the child.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 28, 2021.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.