

To: DCF/DMCPS Administrator
DCF Area Administrators
Child Placing Agency Directors
Child Welfare Agency Directors
County Departments of Community Programs Directors
County Departments of Human Services Directors
County Departments of Social Services Directors
Group Home Providers
Tribal Social Service/Indian Child Welfare Directors
Private Child Placing Agencies
Residential Care Center Providers
Shelter Care Providers
Tribal Chairpersons

From: Wendy Henderson
Administrator

Re: **Wisconsin Act 260 Foster Parent Grants for Fiscal Year 2021**

PURPOSE

The purpose of this memo is to inform county agencies, tribal agencies, and non-profit organizations of a grant opportunity to support foster parents and normalcy opportunities for children in out-of-home care set forth in 2017 Wisconsin Act 260.

BACKGROUND

This memo provides detailed information on one of the Foster Forward Acts, 2017 Wisconsin Act 260, which provides a grant opportunity to county agencies, tribal agencies, and non-profit organizations to support foster parents and normalcy opportunities for children in out-of-home care.

INFORMATION SUMMARY

2017 Wisconsin Act 260 provides \$400,000 in funding per fiscal year to the Department of Children and Families for grants to support foster parents and normalcy activities for children in out-of-home care.

Allowable Costs

The grant opportunity is open to all county agencies, tribal agencies, and non-profit organizations. Agencies may apply for up to \$75,000 in funding in one of the following three topic areas:

- Incentives for the retention of foster parents;
- Foster parent training activities; or
- Reimbursement to foster parents for foster care related expenses that allow for normalcy opportunities for children in out-of-home care.

Costs related to the retention of relative and/or non-relative foster parents may include, but are not limited to, the following activities:

- Respite for foster parents.
- Foster parent support groups.
- Closet or pantry for placement needs such as diapers, clothing in varying sizes, and other non-perishable items that foster parents may utilize at the time of placement.
- Foster parent appreciation events, such as a foster parent banquet, picnics, gift cards, etc.

- Hosting a family day for foster families at a waterpark, local ballgame, movie theatre, etc.
- Offering a “date night” for foster parents and providing them with childcare.
- Organizing and partnering with community groups to support foster families, which may include making meals, providing needed items for families accepting emergency placements (i.e. groceries, diapers, formula, clothes, etc.), and check-ins with new foster families.

Allowable costs for reimbursement to foster parents for expenses related to normalcy for children in out-of-home care are outlined in the DCF-P-PFS0142 [Understanding the Uniform Care Rate](#). Funds shall be used to reimburse the share of the exceptional payment made by the agency with placement and care responsibility, or extraordinary payment costs requested by a private child placing agency.

Reimbursement for foster parent training expenses under the grant shall not be used to supplant the current foster parent training structure, which allows for reimbursement through the Title IV-E Foster Parent Training Pass-Through or the administrative rate provided to private child placing agencies. Reimbursement for foster parent training expenses shall exceed the reimbursement received through the current foster parent training structure.

Application Process:

One-time foster parent grant funding is being awarded via a competitive grant process for the purpose of supporting counties, tribes, and non-profit organizations to implement new activities that they would not otherwise be able to accomplish without financial assistance. The Department will review grant applications and grants will be awarded to those agencies that thoroughly provide the information requested in the attached grant application. Agencies may apply for up to \$75,000 in funding to support the development of new activities.

Agencies may apply for grant funding to reimburse for qualifying expenses under more than one of the three topic areas. Agencies need not request reimbursement for each qualifying expense, if the agency does not intend to participate in activities under that category. Agency activities must contribute to the ongoing improvement and success related to support of foster parents and normalcy opportunities for children in out-of-home care. This is a one-time funding opportunity and grants must be spent by June 30, 2021.

The attached Foster Parent Grant application packet specifies the grant requirements, including information on each of the three topic areas. Applications for state fiscal year 2021 will be accepted until July 24, 2020. In addition to a completed application and responses to the required questions, all approved applicants shall submit an exit summary to the Department by September 1, 2021 demonstrating the effectiveness of the use of the awarded funds.

Reimbursement provided to agencies through the grant program shall be reimbursed up to \$75,000, as funds allow, and up to \$400,000 total statewide in state fiscal year 2021. Agencies that receive the grant shall allocate the funding they receive within state fiscal year 2021 and the funds shall be spent by June 30, 2021.

CENTRAL OFFICE CONTACT: Program & Policy Analyst-Adv.
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MEMO WEB SITE: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/cwportal/policy>

LINKS: Foster Parent Grant Application
<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/cwportal/fc/doc/2020-22i-application.docx>

DCF-P-PFS0142 Understanding the Uniform Care Rate
<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/publications/pdf/0142.pdf>