

**Guide to Foster Care Child Care in FY2020
for a Child in DCF Custody Place Out of Their Home (aka “in Foster Care”)
Effective 10/1/19**

Starting 7/1/19, child care benefits for children in foster care will be processed by DCF-Economic and Employment Support Services (EES) division. The foster parent, relative, or non-related kin will complete an application that will be submitted through the Case Management Provider or the sponsoring Child Placing Agency. Child care benefits are issued on an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card, used like a debit card, to the foster caregiver.

The child care benefit for children in foster care is specially designed to give the greatest benefit allowable to foster caregivers:

- The EES supplement benefit was recently increased so that approximately 65% of the child-care providers charge at or below the EES benefit rate. The number was previously at 40%, so this increase means there are more providers for whom the EBT card benefit will cover their charges in full.
- Foster caregiver’s benefits will be issued without regard to their income meaning the family share deduction is waived.
- If a foster caregiver was income- and resource-eligible and using regular child care benefits for their own children, once they apply for child care for a foster child, their family share deduction (if any) is waived for the benefit on their own children as well as the foster child. The foster caregiver must remain income- and resource-eligible to continue receiving child care benefits for their own children, but their income and resources would not be considered for child care benefits for the foster child alone.
- Foster caregiver’s benefits will be issued by blocks of time, rather than by the hour, to help maximize their benefit. The full-time blocks issue 50 hours of child care per week; half-time blocks issue 25 hours per week. If using a licensed child care provider (not available for approved relative child care providers), additional hours over 50 per week may be requested if justification is provided.
- For licensed foster homes, the new DCF base rate now incorporates \$109.50/month for child care the foster parent can use to cover costs above the amount paid through the EBT card; relatives and pre-temp-licensed NRKin will have up to \$109.50 paid by the CMP (who will be reimbursed by DCF). Any additional amount over the \$109.50 is the responsibility of the foster caregiver, so it will be prudent of the foster caregiver to choose an enrolled child care provider that falls within their budget.
- As Foster Care Grantees interview relatives of the child in foster care for possible placement opportunities, they will be asked to keep in mind all *qualifying* relatives as potential child-care resources. Relatives of the child in foster care only need to be enrolled by DCF, no KDHE licensing is required. This type of child care increases the child care resources available to a foster caregiver. (*Qualifying* relatives for child care would need to be the grandparent, great-grandparent, aunt, uncle, or adult sibling to the child and not live in the same physical home of the foster caregiver.)

Who Can Apply?

The following caregiver placements can apply for Foster Care Child Care:

- 1) a licensed foster parent;
- 2) a relative; or,
- 3) a non-related kin seeking foster home licensure; AND,

IF the following is true: they have a job or attend school/training and any other adults in their home also work or are incapable of providing child care while applicant works or attends school.

Are any foster children excluded?

If the child in foster care is not a U.S. citizen or eligible alien, do not fill out the *FC-Child Care Application*. They would fall under the exceptions listed below.

What should the Case Management Provider know?

As a Case Management Provider, your responsibilities regarding child care, are:

- Provide the *FC-Child Care Application* to placements who need child care to attend work or education/training;
[applications located: <http://www.dcf.ks.gov/services/PPS/Pages/PPSservices.aspx>]
- Accept completed *Applications* from the caregiver;
- Sign the completed application which acknowledges your verification that child care is needed (verification meaning you obtained a copy of the needed documentation submitted by the foster caregiver); keep documentation and signed applications for your records;
- Scan and e-mail completed *FC-Child Care Application* & documentation to: DCF.FosterCareCC@ks.gov, include a cc to the foster caregiver.

NOTE: As the case manager, when you identify possible relative placements, keep in mind relatives that may also want to provide child care, should it be needed. Relatives of the child in foster care only need to be enrolled by EES-Provider Enrollment, no KDHE licensing is required.

All *eligible* child care expenses experienced by the Case Management Provider shall be reimbursed. For reimbursement:

- Submit encounter data to SCRIPTS when a child-care-cost exception (described below) occurs that causes you to pay for child care costs; and,
- Submit encounter data to SCRIPTS when a Kansas custody child is placed out of state and has child care expenses for which you paid.

(*Eligible* child care expenses are those covered by a child-care-cost exception.)

What should the Child Placing Agencies know?

As a Child Placing Agency, your responsibilities regarding child care are:

- Provide the *FC-Child Care Application* to foster parents you sponsor (and non-related kin awaiting licensure) who need child care to attend work or education/training; [applications located: <http://www.dcf.ks.gov/services/PPS/Pages/PPSservices.aspx>]
- Accept completed *Applications* from the caregiver;
- Sign the completed application which acknowledges your verification that child care is needed (verification meaning you obtained a copy of the needed documentation submitted by the foster caregiver); keep documentation and signed applications for your records;
- Scan and e-mail completed *FC-Child Care Application* and documentation to: DCF.FosterCareCC@ks.gov, include a cc to the foster caregiver.
- If a foster parent has out-of-pocket expenses related to child care, and the reason for that expense is listed in the Child-Care-Costs Exceptions below, contact the Case Management Provider for the child in foster care so the foster parent can be reimbursed.

Will a foster parent/caregiver have out-of-pocket expense regarding child care?

The foster parent/caregiver could have non-refunded out-of-pocket expense if they choose a child care provider that charges more than the allowed benefit. When this occurs, the first action the foster caregiver should take is ask their child care provider if their rate can be reduced to their EBT card monthly benefit. There are exceptions (see below) that allow for the Child Care Provider to refund the expense to the foster parent/caregiver, or for the Case Management Provider to pay for the child care and then DCF will reimburse the Case Management Provider.

What is involved for a foster parent/caregiver to apply for child care assistance?

The process involves the foster caregiver following these steps:

Step 1 – They choose a DCF enrolled child care provider.

If the foster caregiver already has a relationship with a DCF enrolled child care provider, the foster caregiver should contact them to make sure they have availability for their foster child.

If they need to find a provider, they can look online at www.ks.childcareaware.org.

Step 2 – They fill out the *FC-Child Care Application* and gather required documents.

The foster caregiver needs to make sure to complete all parts of the application. They will make a copy of their last paycheck stub or school/training enrollment/schedule to include with the application.

Step 3 – They Submit the Application to the CMP or their CPA

The foster caregiver gives the completed application, along with verification of employment or enrollment to the child's CMP or their own Child Placing Agency.

Step 4 – The CMP or CPA e-mails the scanned application

The CMP or CPA scans and e-mails the application to: DCF.FosterCareCC@ks.gov, including a cc to the foster caregiver.

What is involved to end child care assistance because the foster child leaves the home or to make a change to a current child care plan?

When Child Leaves a Home – The DCF-FCCC Specialist will be notified daily via SCRIPTS of moves as reported in CareMatch.

When a New Child Enters Home or Other Change – The foster caregiver will complete a *Change Application* (Changes for Foster Care Child Care Benefits), give it plus needed documentation, if applicable, to the CMP or CPA who will sign it and e-mail a scanned copy of the application and documentation to DCF.FosterCareCC@ks.gov, cc'ing the foster caregiver. As soon as the e-mail is sent (the foster caregiver will know it has been sent by being cc'd on the e-mail), the child care provider can be used in most cases (see summary chart at end of document).

Child-Care-Cost Refunds and Exceptions

Refunds

The following are scenarios when the foster caregiver may have an out-of-pocket cost that can be refunded by the child care provider.

1. **Foster Caregiver's Initial Application** - An initial *FC-Child Care Application* can take up to 30 days to process. The foster caregiver can start using their chosen provider right away in most cases. Once the provider is enrolled, benefits will be back-dated to the date the application was received. If their provider wants them to make a payment before their benefit is available, they should have their child-care provider agree to refund them, up to the amount of benefit placed on the card, any payments made once there is a benefit on their card.
2. **Child Care Provider Needs DCF Enrollment** - If the child care provider chosen by the foster caregiver is not a DCF-enrolled child care provider, enrollment can take 30+ days to process. The foster caregiver can start using their provider as soon as their child care request is submitted to the DCF.FosterCareCC@ks.gov mailbox; benefits will be back-dated to the date the foster caregiver's request for foster care child care was received in most cases. If the child care provider wants the foster caregiver to make a payment before the benefit is available, the foster caregiver should have their child-care provider agree to refund any payments made once there is a benefit on their card.

Exceptions

The following are scenarios when the Case Management Provider can be reimbursed for child care expenses through the encounter data process for a child referred to them.

1. **\$109.50 Reimbursed to Relatives/pre-temp-license NRK** – When a relative or a non-related kin (prior to receiving their temporary foster home license) has out-of-pocket expense for a child care provider who charges more than the EBT card benefit, they can receive up to \$109.50/month to help cover those additional costs. Case Management Providers will need in place a process that allows them to pay those child care costs directly and then submit an encounter, using procedure code (**FCCC_REL**), to SCRIPTS for reimbursement.

Exceptions Where Daytime Respite is Utilized:

Daytime Respite is respite that involves no overnight stays by the child or by the provider of the service. It is provided by a person who has passed background checks and is provided in the child's foster home placement, in a business that does not qualify as a regular child care provider paid through the FC-CC program, or in another licensed foster home (considered part-time respite which must follow licensing regulations).

Rate is negotiated with the CMP and the person/business providing the service. CMP shall use the same fiscal guidelines used for services they don't get reimbursed for when negotiating a rate for this service.

2. **Provider denied enrollment by EES.** Although this is a rare occurrence, a licensed child-care provider can be denied enrollment by DCF-EES. When this happens, the foster caregiver may have incurred child-care expenses that will not be refunded by the child care provider. And, the CMP may need to procure child care with that licensed child care provider so service can continue. Case Management Providers will need in place a process that allows them to pay those Daytime Respite costs directly and then submit an encounter, using procedure code (**Respite_DAY**), to SCRIPTS for reimbursement.
3. **Foster child not eligible for FC Child Care Benefit.** If the child in foster care is not a U.S. citizen or eligible alien or is living out of state, they are not eligible for Foster Care Child Care through DCF-EES. Case Management Providers will need in place a process that allows them to pay those Daytime Respite costs directly and then submit an encounter, using procedure code (**Respite_DAY**), to SCRIPTS for reimbursement.
4. **Chosen provider has a temporary license through KDHE.** When the chosen provider is not licensed with KDHE, but has applied and been issued a temporary license, the provider can be used for child care services under the label of Daytime Respite. Case Management Provider's will need in place a process that allows them to pay those Daytime Respite costs directly and then submit an encounter, using procedure code (**Respite_DAY**), to SCRIPTS for reimbursement.
(NOTE: Benefits will not be placed on the EBT card until the provider is DCF enrolled.)
5. **No enrolled child care provider available.** If no enrolled provider is available near a foster parent's home/work, the Case Management Provider's will need in place a process that allows them to pay those Daytime Respite costs directly and then submit an encounter, using procedure code (**Respite_DAY**), to SCRIPTS for reimbursement.
6. **Provider applied to KDHE, but no temp license issued yet.** When a chosen provider is seeking child care licensure through KDHE, but has not yet been issued a temporary license, the provider cannot be used for child care. The foster caregiver should contact their sponsoring agency to set up Daytime Respite and the Case Management Provider's will need in place a process that allows them to pay those Daytime Respite costs directly and then submit an encounter, using procedure code (**Respite_DAY**), to SCRIPTS for reimbursement.

SUMMARY OF FC-CHILD CARE BENEFITS AND PROVIDERS

Child Care Provider...	Child Care BENEFIT May Be Issued?	Can Child Care PROVIDER Be Used Now?
is licensed by KDHE and enrolled with EES.	Yes	Yes
is licensed by KDHE and has applied for enrollment with EES	Yes*	Yes
is a qualified relative of the child in foster care and has applied for enrollment with EES	Yes	Yes
has been offered a KDHE temp license	No	Yes CMP will pay until Provider fully licensed with KDHE
is licensed by KDHE only—does not want to enroll with EES.	No	No Locate another provider
has applied to KDHE for licensure, but no temp license issued yet	No	No Consider respite
is a qualified relative of the child in foster care--does not want to enroll with EES.	No	No Locate another provider

*Once provider is enrolled with EES, the child care benefit will be back-dated to the date application was submitted; the foster caregiver should work with their provider to see if the provider will wait to be paid until the benefit appears on the EBT card. If they will not wait, the foster caregiver will need to pay for the care and ask the child care provider to refund to them the amount paid out of pocket (up to the amount of the benefit) once the benefit is put on the card.