

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

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Issue 18-34

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The Emergency Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children

On August 15, 2018, the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children will begin to address one of the Department's top barriers to placing young children in home-based family care, which is lack of immediate access to subsidized child care.

- ***CSWs no longer need to apply for emergency child care subsidies through the DCFS 4213-B special payments process; and***
- ***The Emergency Child Care Bridge Program is separate and apart from, and not to be confused with, the DCFS Child Care Program.***

The need for the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program was born, in part, out of the several weeks needed to determine DCFS Child Care Program eligibility. Without access to immediate child care, timely placements of young children in home-based family care became especially challenging.

Senate Bill 89 (Chapter 24, Statutes of 2017) established the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children ([ACL No. 18-73](#)), which aims to:

1. Increase the number of foster children safely placed and maintained in home-based family care.
2. Increase the capacity of child care programs to meet the needs of foster children.
3. Maximize existing local, state and federal child care funding to support the child care needs of eligible caregivers.

To enhance safety, permanency, well-being, and placement stability, the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program will ensure time-limited, emergency child care services for children, ages birth to 5 years and their siblings, with licensed and license-exempt child care providers located within Los Angeles County. On a case-by-case basis, consideration will be given to children, up to age 12; or with exceptional needs; and/or severely disabled children/youth/NMDs, up to age 21.

"Eligible caregivers" are:

1. **Parenting teens/non-minor dependents** (NMDs) under DCFS supervision who work and/or attend school or a vocational training program; whether or not their children are also under DCFS supervision; and
2. The following out-of-home caregivers who work, attend school or participate in activities beyond the scope of normal parenting duties:
 - (a) **Resource Parents or caregivers, pending RFA approval**, who already have a placed child;
 - (b) **Existing Resource Parents (including FFA-certified)**, who:
 1. Already have a placed child; OR
 2. Request child care as a condition of placement; OR
 3. Request child care to preserve a placement.

Eligible Caregiver's/Parenting Youth's/NMD's Financial Eligibility for Subsidized Child Care

Financial eligibility for the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program AND/OR for the DCFS Child Care Program **is not** contingent upon the eligible caregiver's/parenting teen's/NMD's income level. As long as the eligible caregiver/parenting teen/NMD verifies the hours they work and/or attend school/vocational training, they will not be required to also demonstrate a financial need for subsidized child care.

The Emergency Child Care Bridge Program Referral Process

The Emergency Child Care Bridge Program referral process will not be managed by Child Care Eligibility workers co-located in DCFS Regional Offices. Rather, the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program will be collaboratively administered between DCFS, the Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles, and the local Resource & Referral Agency serving the Regional Office.

Assigned CSWs, SCSWs and Administrative staff will use the automated DCFS Emergency Child Care Bridge Program Portal, available on LAKIDS, to electronically submit referrals for children, ages birth to 5 years and their siblings. On a case-by-case basis, consideration will be given to children up to age 12; or with exceptional needs; and/or severely disabled children/youth/NMDs, up to age 21. CWS/CMS will pre-populate pertinent identifying information onto the referral form. Based on the zip code in which the child is placed, the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program Portal will electronically map the referral to the child care systems navigator employed by the Resource and Referral Agency serving the area.

Within one business day of referral receipt, the child care systems navigator will contact the eligible caregiver/parenting teen/parenting NMD to begin the process of emergency child care service linkage. Based on the needs of the child, as identified on the referral form, the child care systems navigator will identify up to three potential emergency child care providers for consideration by the eligible caregiver/parenting teen/parenting NMD.

Once the eligible caregiver/parenting teen/NMD selects their preferred emergency child care provider, the child care systems navigator will complete the child care placement packet required by the Resource and Referral Agency; facilitate child care arrangements and voucher payments between the emergency child care provider and the eligible caregiver/parenting teen/NMD. The child care systems navigator will then notify the CSW, by email, that emergency child care services are in place; and will remain in contact with the CSW, upon request or as necessary.

During a portion of his/her work week, the Resource & Referral Agency-employed child care systems navigator will establish a working relationship with the Regional Office as a resource to CSWs. While at the Regional Office, the child care systems navigator will be available for consultation and to follow-up, as necessary, on referrals. The amount of time per week in each office will vary, based on the needs of the office.

When Should the Assigned CSW, SCSW or Administrative Staff Issue a Referral to the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program?

The assigned CSW, SCSW or Administrative Staff should refer a child to the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program in the event that an eligible caregiver/parenting teen/NMD requests IMMEDIATE access to child care:

- As a condition of accepting a new placement; OR
- To accept the placement of siblings together in the same home; OR
- To preserve an existing placement because an existing long-term child care arrangement is expiring; OR
- To enable a parenting teen/NMD to immediately enroll in school or accept a job.

An eligible caregiver/parenting teen/NMD is encouraged to identify a preferred emergency child care provider, however, the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program does not require it. In the event that the eligible caregiver/parenting teen/NMD does not identify a preferred child care provider, the child care systems navigator will assist in locating a trained emergency child care provider or identify a licensed child care provider who meets the child's needs, as the child's needs are described on the Bridge Program referral form.

Emergency Child Care Bridge Program eligibility is **short-term**. Child care is approved for up-to six months, with a possible six-month extension, for a total of 12 months, as long as the DCFS case remains open and the child resides in the home of the eligible caregiver/parenting teen/NMD.

Once a CSW makes a referral to the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program and the child is successfully placed with an emergency child care provider, the CSW will no longer need to refer the same child to the DCFS Child Care Program or be responsible for making other long-term child care arrangements. During the emergency child care eligibility term, the child care systems navigator will work to transition the emergency child care provider to an alternative long-term child care subsidy OR to identify another child care provider who can serve the child, long-term. The child care systems navigator will make every effort to ensure continuity of child care with the same child care provider. However, it is possible that, once the full 12 months of Emergency Child Care Bridge Program eligibility are exhausted, a new long-term child care option with another child care provider may be explored.

When Should the Assigned CSW, SCSW or Administrative Staff Issue a Referral to the DCFS Child Care Program?

The assigned CSW, SCSW or Administrative Staff should refer a child to the DCFS Child Care Program in the event that an eligible caregiver/parenting teen/NMD, already caring for a child:

- Requests long-term child care to preserve the child's existing living arrangement/placement; and
- Is amenable to the DCFS Child Care Program's eligibility determination timeframe.

In contrast with the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program, the DCFS Child Care Program requires the eligible caregiver/parenting teen/NMD to pre-identify a preferred licensed child care provider so that the assigned CSW, SCSW or Administrative Staff can note the information in the DCFS 324 child care referral form, submitted to Child Care Eligibility workers co-located in DCFS Regional Offices.

DCFS Child Care Program eligibility is **long-term**. Child care is approved for up-to twelve months, with possible recertification for another 12 months, for a total of 24 months, as long as the DCFS case remains open and the child is placed outside his/her birth home.

DCFS Child Care Program subsidies are payable only upon final eligibility determination. Assigned CSWs, SCSWs or Administrative Staff are respectfully cautioned against presumptively promising DCFS Child Care Program eligibility and/or retroactive reimbursement of a caregiver's/parenting teen's/ NMD's out-of-pocket child care expenses, voluntarily paid prior to and/or throughout the DCFS Child Care Program eligibility determination process.

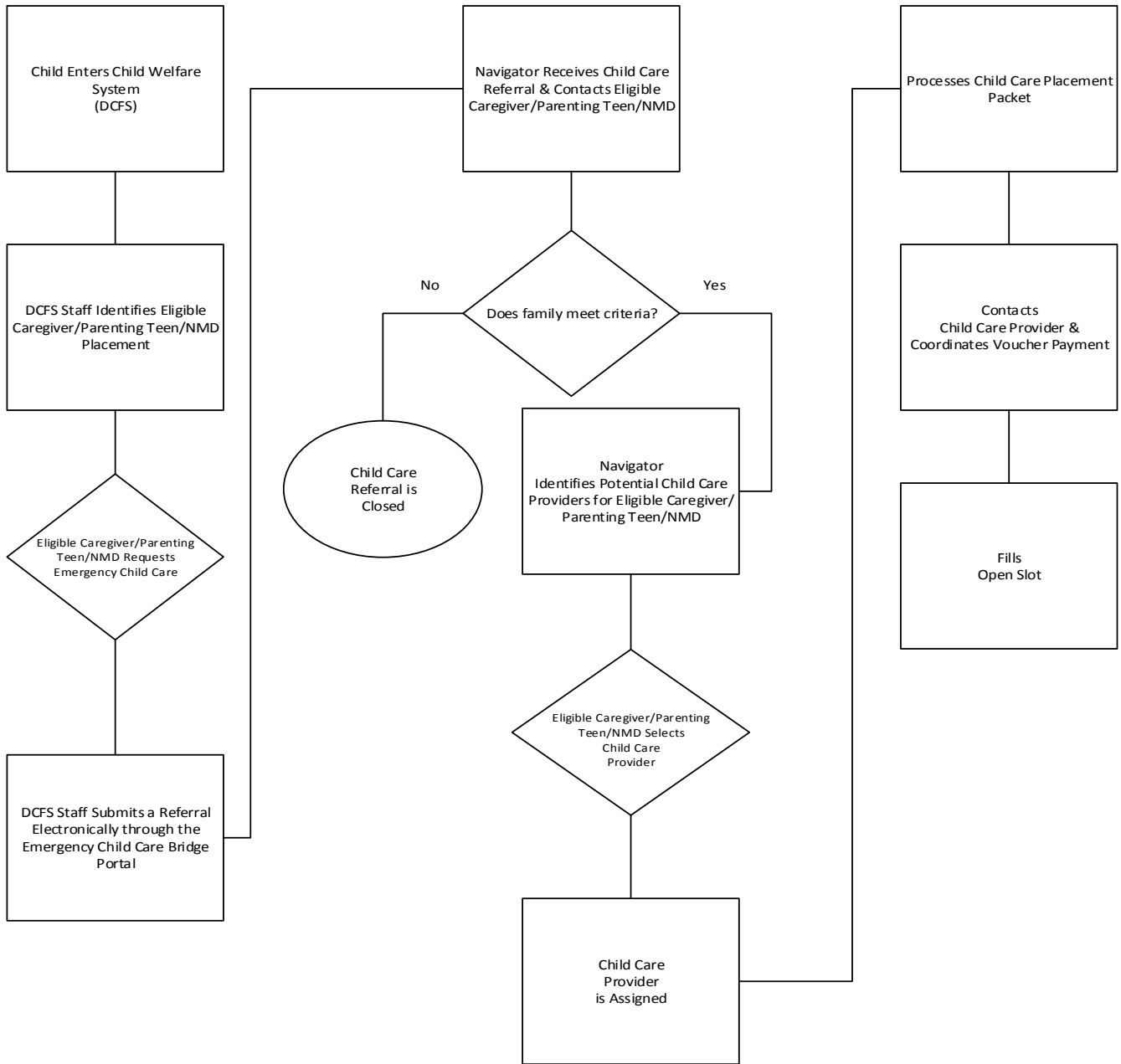


If you have any questions regarding this release please e-mail your question to:

kayeli@dcfs.lacounty.gov

(right click to open footer section and access link)

The below flowchart provides a visual overview of the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program Referral process, detailing the respective roles and responsibilities of DCFS staff; Child Care Systems Navigators and the Resource & Referral Agency.



County of Los Angeles Department of Children & Family Services

Emergency Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children

Child Care Services Referral

The Referral for the Child Care Bridge Program is designed to provide time-limited (6 months – 1 year) emergency child care vouchers for working resource families who request child care as a condition of placement or to preserve the existing placement. This program is for out-of-home caregivers with children ages birth through 5 years and their siblings. Child Care Navigators from R&R agencies will simultaneously work on finding longer-term child care.

PART A

CSW completes this section

Case Name: _____ DCFS Case # _____

Resource Parent / Caregiver/parenting teen/parenting NMD who needs child care: _____

Address: _____

Home / Cell Telephone: _____

Check the language the person(s) the child(ren) lives with speaks: English Spanish Other _____

| LIST ALL CHILDREN IN HOME UNDER THIS CASE NAME | | | NEEDS | | FULL TIME PART TIME HRS OF NEED PER WEEK | |
|--|-----------|---------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|-------|
| FIRST NAME | LAST NAME | DATE OF BIRTH | CHILD CARE | | | |
| 1. | _____ | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| 2. | _____ | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| 3. | _____ | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| 4. | _____ | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| 5. | _____ | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| 6. | _____ | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |

Extraordinary Caregiving Demands (check all that apply)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> An Extraordinary Emotional Demand | <input type="checkbox"/> A victim of Abuse, Neglect or Exploitation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> An Extraordinary Physical Demand | <input type="checkbox"/> Limited Physically, Intellectually, Emotionally |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emotionally Disturbed | <input type="checkbox"/> Other / Additional Needs: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Developmentally Delayed | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prenatally Exposed to Drugs / Alcohol | _____ |

Placement Type:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caregiver / Resource Family | <input type="checkbox"/> Approved Relative or Non-Relative Extended Family Member (pending RFA approval) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Certified Family Home or Licensed Foster Family Home | <input type="checkbox"/> Parenting Youth under Jurisdiction of Juvenile Court |

CSW's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Print CSW's Name: _____ CSW's Phone # _____

CSW's Region #: _____ CSW's Office Address: _____

Print SCSW's Name: _____ SCSW's Phone # _____

SCSW Signature: _____ Date: _____

PART B

Child Care Navigator completes this section

Referred to: _____
Name of R&R

Child Care Bridge Navigator: _____

Child Care Start Date: _____ End Date (if known): _____

**Emergency Child Care Bridge Program
DCFS Offices matched with Resource & Referral Offices**

| DCFS Office | Number of FTE R&R Navigators (Half-Time Navigators are shared between two DCFS offices) | Resource & Referral Office |
|-------------|---|----------------------------|
|-------------|---|----------------------------|

| | | |
|--|---------------------------|---|
| Palmdale Lancaster Van Nuys Santa Clarita West San Fernando Valley | 1 1 1 0.5 0.5 | Child Care Resource Center (Chatsworth) |
| Wateridge North Wateridge South Compton Vermont Corridor | 1 1 1 1 | Crystal Stairs, Inc. (Los Angeles) |
| Belvedere Santa Fe Springs | 1 1 | Mexican American Opportunity Foundation (East Los Angeles) |
| Metro North | 1 | Pathways (Los Angeles) |
| Glendora Pomona | 0.5 0.5 | Pomona Unified School District (Pomona) |
| Pasadena El Monte (and Covina) | 0.5 0.5 | Options for Learning (Baldwin Park) |
| Torrance West Los Angeles | 0.5 0.5 | Connections for Children (Santa Monica) |
| South County | 1 | Children's Home Society (Long Beach) |

**Emergency Child Care Bridge Program
Resource and Referral Agencies assigned to each DCFS Offices**

| Resource and Referral Agency | DCFS Office | Number of FTE Navigators for each Resource and Referral Agency |
|------------------------------|-------------|--|
|------------------------------|-------------|--|

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| Child Care Resource Center - CCRC | Palmdale Lancaster Van Nuys Santa Clarita West San Fernando Valley | 1 1 0.5 1 <u>0.5</u> Total = 4 |
| Crystal Stairs, Inc. | Wateridge North Wateridge South Compton Vermont Corridor | 1 1 1 <u>1</u> Total = 4 |
| Mexican American Opportunity Foundation - MAOF | Belvedere Santa Fe Springs | 1 <u>1</u> Total = 2 |
| Pathways | Metro North | <u>1</u> Total = 1 |
| Pomona Unified School District - PUSD | Glendora Pomona | 0.5 <u>0.5</u> Total = 1 |
| Options | Pasadena El Monte | 0.5 <u>0.5</u> Total = 1 |
| Connections | Torrance West Los Angeles | 0.5 <u>0.5</u> Total = 1 |
| Children's Home Society | South County | <u>1</u> Total = 1 |

