



State of South Carolina

Department of Social Services

Policies and Procedures: Child Welfare Services

Subject:	506 Difficulty of Care Board Rate for Children in Foster Care
Authority:	26 U.S. Code § 131
Standards:	Guiding Principles and Standards (GPS) Practice Model
Application:	Child Welfare Services Staff
Purpose:	
To explain requirements related to establishing a child's eligibility for a Difficulty of Care Board Rate in a non-therapeutic foster family home.	
Policy Statement:	
The South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) may pay an enhanced foster care board payment, known as a Difficulty of Care Board Rate (DCBR), to a non-therapeutic foster family home that is caring for a foster child with complex physical, mental, behavioral, or emotional health needs.	
Policy Administration:	
The Office of Child Health and Well-Being is the owner of this policy. The Director of Child Health and Well-Being, or the director's designee, shall review this policy annually.	
Procedures:	
A. Eligibility for DCBR Payments	1. To initiate the DCBR process, at least three of the statements below must be true: a. The foster parent notifies the case manager that the child is receiving necessary, costly, and continual additional supervision or care; b. The case manager and team leader have conducted a case consultation to review and assess the child's current needs by updating the CANS information gathered from foster parents and service providers; c. The foster parent requests a DCBR application; or d. The foster parent submits a notice of removal and a placement CFTM is conducted and the outcome of the CFTM includes a recommendation to complete a DCBR application. e. Therapeutic foster care placement services have been explored for this young person, if applicable, and determined to be inappropriate (documentation of how this determination was made is required in initial application materials). f. DSS is expending additional funds to maximize the child's well-being. 2. The child is exhibiting behaviors that require intensive or therapeutic services requiring frequent appointments or involvement with community agencies, for example medical, therapy, educational support, DJJ, DMH or DDSN.

Subject:

	3. The child has complex physical, mental, behavioral, or emotional health needs as indicated by (not an exhaustive list): - Frequent therapy appointments; - Frequent doctor appointments; - Needing assistance to complete daily living activities, including, but not limited to, in-home therapeutic practice as directed by a licensed professional therapist (e.g. OT, PT, Speech); - Multiple calls from school or frequent school conferences; - Extreme outbursts, physical threats, or other difficult or inappropriate behaviors; or - A special diet or dietary restrictions, or specialized personal care items. Note: As used here, 'frequent' is defined as at least once per week and 'multiple' is defined as at least four calls within a 30-day period that results in missed time from work and/or school by the foster parent.
B. DCBR Application	- The case manager works with the foster parent to complete the DCBR application. The case manager submits the DCBR application in CAPSS and emails any supporting documentation to the DCBR unit at dcbrunit@dss.sc.gov. For details see DSS Form 35755: Difficulty of Care Brochure for Case Manager. - The caseworker then informs the foster parent(s) of the decision and the effective date within 72 hours of receiving the decision.
C. Supporting Documentation for the DCBR Application	The following documentation must be attached to the DCBR application, if applicable: - Documentation demonstrating that the Foster Care case manager educated the foster family about the option to be a licensed therapeutic foster home through a licensed Child Placing Agency and reason this was not pursued; - A written summary that includes any assistance the foster parent provides that exceeds the expectation of a regular level foster parent; - IEP or 504 Plan; - Any psychological reports, at least one of which was completed within 6 months of the application; - Mental health or other counselor reports, include frequency of visits; - School reports or discipline notes; - Documentation of other therapy services (e.g. occupational, speech or physical therapy) include frequency of visits, at least one of which was completed within six months of the application; - Medical Reports such as a well child visit summary, at least one of which was completed within six months of the application; - Names, dosages, and frequency of medications;

Subject:

	10. SSI verification, if applicable. This can include an award letter from Social Security; however, if that is not available, the DCBR liaison will verify the necessary information in the Bendex mainframe system; 11. Reports from DDSN, Babynet, or other developmental assessments; and 12. The most recent CANS assessment. Note: Supporting documentation must be thorough. Missing documentation may result in a delay in processing or ineligibility.
D. DCBR Liaison Responsibilities	1. A DCBR liaison will review the referral, case record, and supporting documentation to determine identified needs, and projected additional care costs. The DCBR liaison will follow up with the case manager regarding any further documentation needed. 2. Following receipt of the DCBR application, a DCBR liaison reviews the case record and other supporting documentation to determine which level of care the child qualifies for and the level of need. DCBR levels are determined from a review of the child's behavioral health, medical, psychological, educational, and other documentation as requested by the DCBR liaison. 3. The DCBR liaison determines the level of need and rate of reimbursement for each DCBR applicant. Criteria considered are based upon supporting documentation and are related to the type of behaviors the youth exhibits, the frequency of medical and behavioral health appointments, transportation needs, and other identified medical or behavioral health service needs. 4. The eligible monthly foster care board rate is encompassed within the DCBR rate, which may be adjusted as the federal foster care board rate changes in accordance with the age of the child. 5. The DCBR liaison informs the case manager of the decision within 72 hours of receiving the application, if all the necessary documentation is included when the application is submitted. 6. Once a final determination of eligibility is made, if the licensed foster home is managed by a Child Placing Agency (CPA), the DCBR liaison will notify the CPA of the decision in writing and the DCBR liaison informs the case manager and team leader of the decision in writing by memorandum, indicating the level of DCBR care approved, and the effective date of the approval. 7. Once the case manager and team leader receive the final decision via memorandum, the case manager and/or team leader will schedule a time to discuss the results of the review with the foster family within five business days.
E. Non-Transferable DCBR Approval	1. Once eligibility is established, DCBR approval is specific to the foster family home provider and the child. DCBR eligibility is not transferable from one placement to another or from one child to another.

Subject:

	2. The DCBR office reviews approvals on an annual basis. The review and approval is documented in CAPSS under the funding eligibility tab. 3. If a placement transition occurs for a previously approved DCBR child or youth, a streamlined DCBR process may be applied to a new foster family home provider if the prior DCBR application was approved within 180 days of submitting a current DCBR application for the new placement. The following information must be submitted on a new DCBR application under this streamlined process: a. The current DCBR application must highlight any changes of situation or impact to the family compared to the previous DCBR application and family impact. b. The documentation accompanying the current DCBR application must ONLY substantiate any changes in need compared to the previous DCBR application and family impact.
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Forms:	DSS Form 1493: Child Health and Well-Being Inter Agency/State Level Staffing Referral DSS Form 37559: Request for a Difficulty of Care Board Rate (DCBR) DSS Brochure 37570: Difficulty of Care DSS Brochure 35755: Difficulty of Care Brochure for CASE MGR
Related Management Reports:	Yearly Reviews

Glossary:
504 Plan: a plan developed by an elementary or secondary educational institution for a child with a physical or mental health disability that impacts the child's daily activities. The plan addresses accommodations or services the educational institution will provide to remove barriers thereby making it possible for a child to attend school. Difficulty of Care Board Rate (DCBR) Level: is the cost of care supplement to the eligible monthly foster care board rate that covers additional daily supervision and extra care time provided by the foster parent to meet the child's identified problems and care needs. Foster Parent: an individual who provides care for children in foster care in a foster family home licensed by DSS. Individual Education Plan (IEP): a legal document under United States law that is developed for each public-school child in the U.S. who needs special education. The IEP is created through a specific team of the child or youth's parents and district personnel who are knowledgeable about the child and disabilities that effect their learning. IEPs must be reviewed every year to keep track of the child's educational progress. South Carolina homeschooled students may be eligible for special education services by their district for free by contacting the school district to determine what services are offered and begin constructing an IEP, if necessary.

Subject:

Child and Adolescent Needs and Services (CANS): a multiple purpose information tool that is designed to support care planning and level of care decision making, to facilitate quality improvement initiatives, and to allow for the monitor of outcomes of services.