

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

FYI	FYI	FYI	FYI	FYI	FYI	FYI	FYI	FYI	FYI
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The Emergency Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children

On August xx, 2018, phased-in implementation of the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children will begin in order to address one of the top barriers to the placement of young children in home-based family care, which is lack of immediate access to child care.

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 successfully placed 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 resource families.

To enhance safety, permanency, well-being, and placement stability, the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program is intended for the short-term provision of child care vouchers for working Resource Parents who request child care as a condition of placement OR to preserve an existing placement; and for parenting teens enrolled in school or a vocational training program. During the time that emergency child care vouchers are issued, child care systems navigators will work to identify long-term subsidized or unsubsidized child care options in order to transition Resource Parents from the time-limited Emergency Child Care Bridge Program. Vouchers will be approved for an initial period of up-to six months, with another six-month option to extend as long as the DCFS case remains open and the child(ren) are placed outside their birth homes.

The Emergency Child Care Bridge Program will ensure that emergency child care services, with licensed and license-exempt child care providers located within Los Angeles County, are made available to the following out-of-home caregivers with DCFS-placed children, ages birth to 5 years and their siblings*:

- (a) Resource Parents, pending RFA approval, who already have a child placement;
- (b) Existing Resource Parents (including FFA-certified), who already have a child placement or are considering a placement; and,
- (c) Parenting Teens/Non-Minor Dependents under DCFS supervision.

**On a case-by-case basis, consideration will also be given to children up to age 12; children with exceptional needs; and/or severely disabled children/youth/NMDs, up to age 21.*

The Emergency Child Care Bridge Program is separate and apart from, and not to be confused with the DCFS Child Care Program. Without access to immediate child care, timely placements of young children in the homes of working Resource Parents became especially challenging. The need for the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program was born, in part, out of the several weeks needed to determine eligibility for the DCFS Child Care Program.

When should a CSW issue a referral to the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program?

In the event that a working Resource Parent requests IMMEDIATE access to child care:

- As a condition of accepting a new placement; OR
- In order to accept the placement of siblings together in the same home; OR
- In order to preserve an existing placement because existing long-term child care arrangements are expiring.

CSWs will no longer need to apply for emergency child care subsidies through the 4213-B process.

The Emergency Child Care Bridge Program does not require that the Resource Parent identifies a specific child care provider. If the Resource Parent is unable to identify a preferred child care provider, the child care systems navigator will assist the Resource Parent in locating a trained emergency child care provider or identify a licensed child care provider who meets the child's needs, as described on the Bridge Program referral form.

Emergency Child Care Bridge Program eligibility is not contingent upon the Resource Parent's income level.

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, during which a child care systems navigator works with the Resource Parent to transition the same 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 will have to be explored.

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 not need to also refer the same child to the DCFS and/or any other Child Care Program again for long-term child care arrangements.

When should a CSW issue a referral to the DCFS Child Care Program?

In the event that a working Resource Parent, who has already accepted a child placement:

- Requests long-term child care to preserve the existing placement; and
- Is amenable to the eligibility determination timeframes involved in the existing DCFS child care program.

The DCFS Child Care program requires that the Resource Parent identifies the licensed child care provider to the CSW, for inclusion in the DCFS 324 child care referral form.

DCFS Child Care Program eligibility is income-contingent, in that, the Resource Parent, who must be working or attending school, also demonstrates a financial need for subsidized child care.

Most importantly however, DCFS Child Care Program eligibility is ***long-term***. Child care is approved for up-to twelve months, with possible recertification for continued care for another 12 months, for a total of 24 months, as long as the DCFS case remains open and the child(ren) are placed outside their birth homes.

The Emergency Child Care Bridge Program Referral Process

The Emergency Child Care Bridge Program referral process will not be managed through the 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.

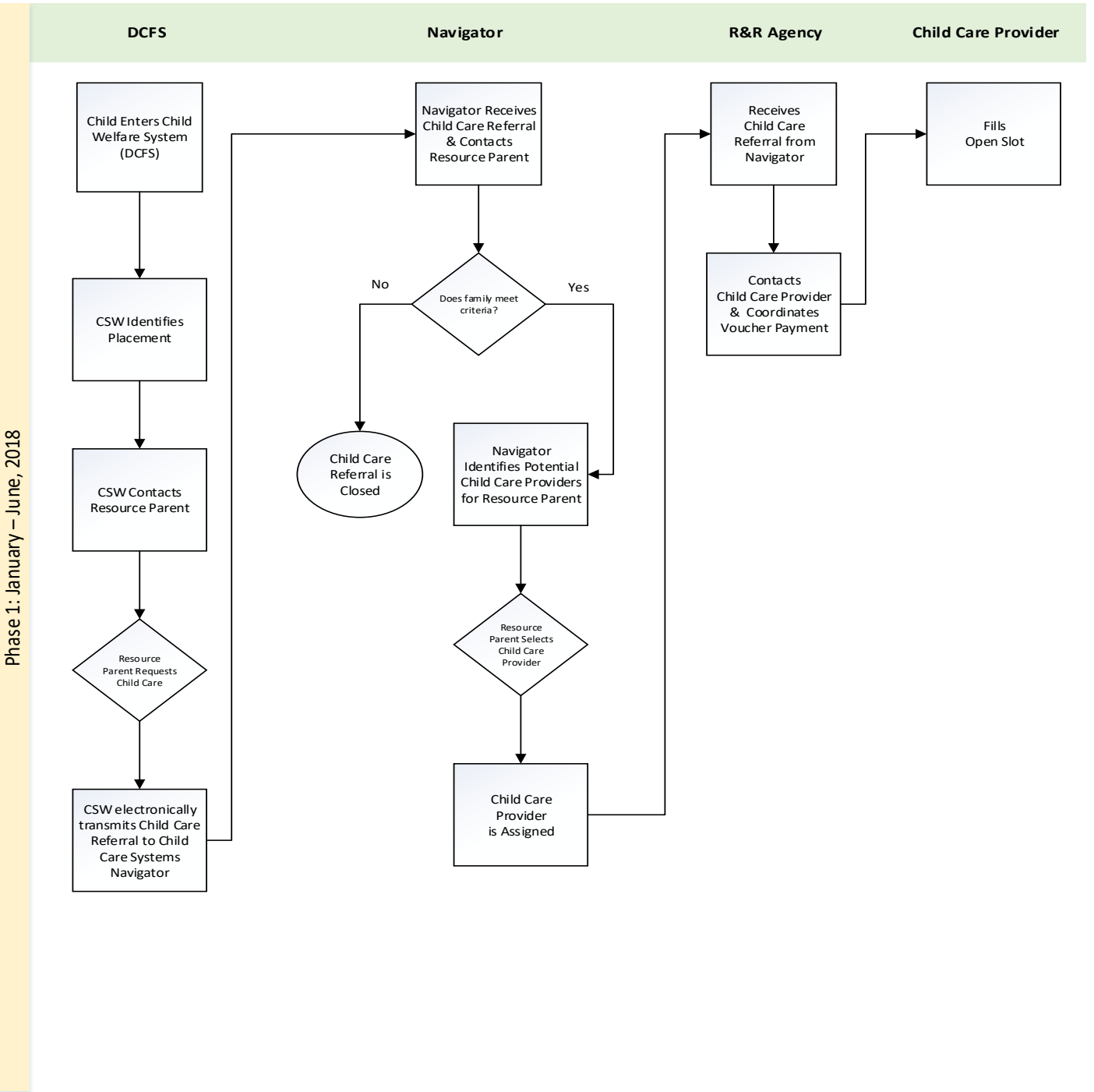
CSWs will use the attached referral form to electronically issue referrals to the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program through the DCFS Referral Portal. All of the yellow-highlighted fields on the Bridge Program Referral form will be pre-populated through CWS/CMS. The remaining information that does require completion is exactly the same as that which appears on the DCFS 324 form for the DCFS child care program, thus requiring no additional training.

The DCFS Referral Portal will electronically map the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program referral, by the zip code in which the child is placed, to a child care systems navigator employed by the

Resource and Referral Agency serving the area. Within one business day of receipt, the child care systems navigator will contact the Resource Parent to begin the process of emergency child care service linkage. Based on the needs of the child(ren), 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 Resource Parent. Once the Resource Parent selects the emergency child care provider, the child care systems navigator will complete the child care placement packet required by the Resource and Referral Agency and facilitate the child care arrangements between the emergency child care provider and the Resource Parent. The child care systems navigator will then notify the CSW, by email, that emergency child care services are in place; and 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. The amount of time per week in each office will vary, based on the needs of the office. While at the regional office, the child care systems navigator will be available for consultation and to follow-up, as necessary, on referrals.

The flowchart below describes an overview of the referral process and roles of CSWs, Navigators, R&R Agency, and child care provider when placing a child in the State Bridge Program.



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 who needs child care: _____

Address: _____

Home / Cell Telephone: _____

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

Table with 7 columns: LIST ALL CHILDREN IN HOME UNDER THIS CASE NAME, FIRST NAME, LAST NAME, DATE OF BIRTH, NEEDS CHILD CARE, FULL TIME, PART TIME, HRS OF NEED PER WEEK. Rows 1-6.

- Extraordinary Caregiving Demands (check all that apply)
 An Extraordinary Emotional Demand
 An Extraordinary Physical Demand
 Emotionally Disturbed
 Developmentally Delayed
 Prenatally Exposed to Drugs / Alcohol
 A victim of Abuse, Neglect or Exploitation
 Limited Physically, Intellectually, Emotionally
 Other / Additional Needs: _____

Placement Type:

- Caregiver / Resource Family
 Certified Family Home or Licensed Foster Family Home
 Approved Relative or Non-Relative Extended Family Member (pending RFA approval)
 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): _____

