

Caregiver Supports Project

Project Update Presentation

January 2024

www.dcyf.wa.gov



Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

Welcome

- **Caregiver Supports Project:** Implement a continuum of placement resources that enable safe, stable, and supported placements for children and youth in foster care.
- **Project Website:** <https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/foster-parenting/caregiver-supports-project>
- Part of the [Thriving Families campaign](#).
- Today's presentation
 - Caregiver Support Level Determination

Old System Pain Points Addressed with Caregiver Supports

- The previous rate assessment process was 20 years old and needed to be reviewed and updated
- Old process was subjective and not transparent
 - Reliability is difficult to establish without objectivity
 - Unfair
 - Caregiver time spent caring for a child does not identify a child's needs
 - Cannot evaluate systemic bias
- Old process does not identify a child's needs
 - Hard to link caregivers with supports for the child's needs
 - Cannot focus recruitment efforts on meeting needs of children in care
 - Difficult to develop contracted resources structured to support caregivers in caring for children
- Substantial gap between BRS and foster care basic (82%)
 - Risk of kids failing up into more intensive services

Caregiver Supports Model

Project Website: <https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/foster-parenting/caregiver-supports-project>

	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5	LEVEL 6	LEVEL 7
New Support Levels	Basic Maintenance Foster Care	Support Needs: Adolescent Low Needs	Support Needs: Chronic Physical Health	Support Needs: Developmental Disability	Support Needs: Developmental Disability & Chronic Physical Health	Support Needs: Moderate Mental Health	Support Needs: Complex Mental Health
Placement Supports for Licensed and Unlicensed Caregivers – includes Case Aides for levels 3-7							
Rates for Caregiver Support Levels Based on Age (Licensed Caregivers) – Level Rates include Basic							
Age: 0-5	\$722	N/A	\$1,407	\$1,749.50	\$2,092	\$2,434.50	\$2,777
Age: 6-11	\$846	N/A	\$1,531	\$1,873.50	\$2,216	\$2,558.50	\$2,901
Age: 12+	\$860	\$1,202.50	\$1,545	\$1,887.50	\$2,230	\$2,572.50	\$2,915

Caregiver Supports Project Goals

- Create a transparent and data-driven payment methodology for reimbursement
- Make resources available at the time of placement
- Resources based on needs of children and youth, serves diverse population all the way up to BRS needs
- Increase placement stability
- Parity in resource support



Informing the Caregiver Supports Project

- DCYF contracted with DSHS Research and Data Analysis (RDA) to research the needs of children at the time of placement into out-of-home care
 - Medical claims and administrative data for 25,638 children who were in care from 2015 to 2018
 - Analyzed how observed variables cluster together in order to identify subgroups within a population
- RDA Research report available at [research-7-124.pdf \(wa.gov\)](#)
- RDA findings informed the current model that identifies 7 distinct categories of support needs



Caregiver Support Level Determination

- DCYF can only determine a level based on documented diagnoses and documented conditions that meet the criteria in the level determination tool
- DCYF staff complete the caregiver support level determination tool to identify the support needs of children and youth
 - Interview sources such as the parents, the youth themselves when appropriate, school, medical treatment providers, caregivers
 - Review health related information available to DCYF: completed screens, database information, report / discharge paperwork
- In addition to the tool, DCYF will also review health history data from the Health Care Authority for the child to make sure all known needs are part of the level decision
- Exceptional Cost Plans (ECPs) can be requested when there are needs outside of the supports offered by the model
- Note that Tribes may opt to use the tool to determine the caregiver support level for Tribal jurisdiction children or they may ask DCYF staff to do the level determination
 - DCYF will reach out to Tribes to understand needs but will not collect documentation



Identified Support Needs

- Chronic Physical Health
 - Conditions expected to last at least one year and requires increased use of health care and ongoing treatment to control the condition that is debilitating either continuously or episodically – Diabetes, Cancer, Organ Transplant, Cerebral Shunt, etc.
- Developmental Disability
 - Learning Disability, Down Syndrome, Motor or Tic Disorder, DDA services, etc.
- Developmental Disability & Chronic Physical Health
- Moderate Mental Health
 - Mental Health Prescriptions, Bi-Polar/Mania, Depression, Anxiety, ADHD, Oppositional Defiance Disorder, Trauma (PTSD, Adjustment Disorder, Dissociative Disorder, Conversion Disorder, etc.)
- Complex / Acute Mental Health
 - Suicide attempts or self-harm, Crisis mental health services, Inpatient services, polypharmacy
- Other Factors: SAY, Substance Use Disorder, Running away behavior

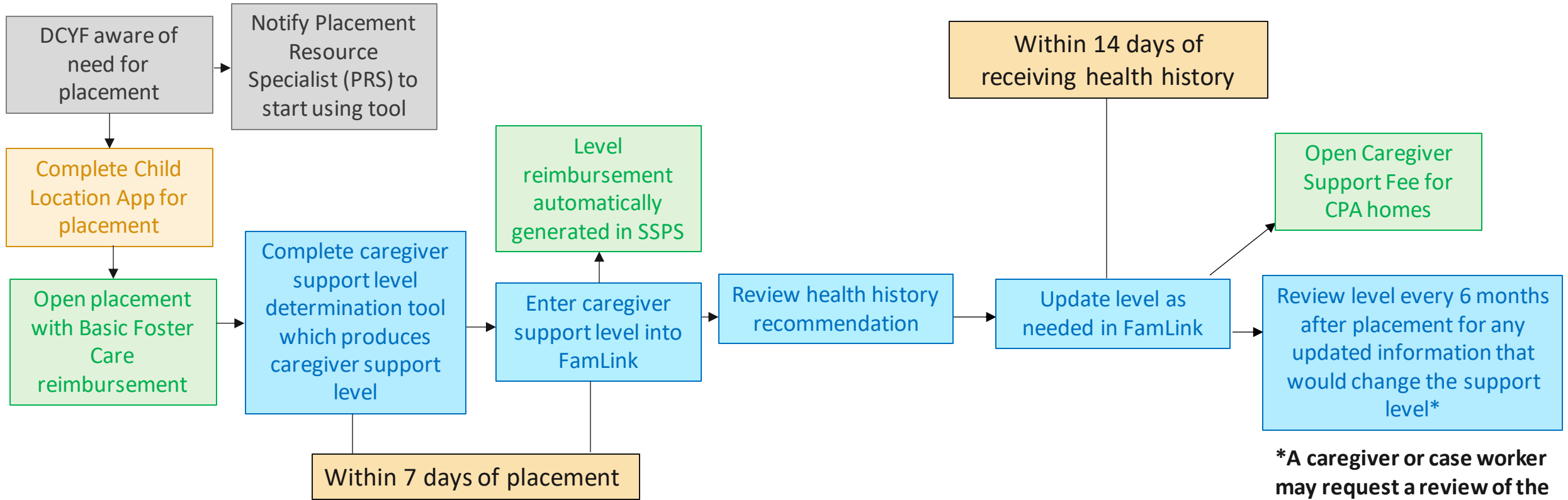


CAREGIVER SUPPORT LEVEL DETERMINATION PROCESS

(implemented January 1, 2024)

RESPONSIBLE POSITION KEY

Green = DCYF Fiscal
 Gold = Placement Desk
 Blue = Placement Resource Specialist (PRS)



***A caregiver or case worker may request a review of the level at any time if the needs of the child change**

Upcoming Communications

- Check out the project website for up-to-date information:
<https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/foster-parenting/caregiver-supports-project>
- Visit the [DCYF Rules Filing](#) page for information about WAC changes (see Foster Care Rate Assessment)
- Review relevant policy: [4265. Caregiver Support Level and Foster Care Rate Assessment Determination | Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families](#)
- Caregiver Connections messages
- Thriving Families communications
- Check the website regularly for new, pre-recorded project updates like this one that will be located in the Previous Communication section at the bottom of the page



Tribal Engagement

- Tribes have the option to complete their own rate assessments on tribally dependent children (Phase 1) and to provide placement supports to their own members instead of using a contracted provider in their catchment area (Phase 2)
- If you would like to meet with DCYF to discuss the Caregiver Supports Project and impacts to your Tribe, email Mandy Morlin at mandy.morlin@dcyf.wa.gov
- View the Caregiver Supports Project Presentation for Tribes on the [project website](#)



Thank you!

Please send all questions and comments to: DCYF.CaregiverSupports@dcyf.wa.gov

