

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS 2012 DCS Rates and Invoicing Changes

RATES AND THEIR EFFECTIVE DATES

How were the new foster care rates determined?

See Ball State Study on the DCS website at <http://www.in.gov/dcs/2982.htm> for an overview of the methodology for the basic foster care rate. See [Public Consulting Group Memorandum on Enhanced Foster Care Payment Rates](#) on the DCS website at <http://www.in.gov/dcs/2334.htm> for an overview of the methodology for the “enhanced supervision” rates (foster care with services and above).

Will foster parents with LCPA’s be able to get different rates?

LCPA’s may not pay less than the identified rates to their foster parents. If they want to pay a higher rate to foster parents, they will have to raise the funds independently, as DCS will only be paying the identified amounts to pass through to LCPA foster parents.

How will rates be determined for probation placements?

Most Probation departments do not utilize the CANS assessment tool. Thus, foster parents caring for probation youth will receive the therapeutic rate until/unless a CANS is done by a community mental health center that shows a different level.

How will a foster parent know the category of supervision and corresponding rate for a child?

The family case manager will generate a document called an Individual Child Placement Referral, or ICPR, which will list the category of supervision, as well as the rate and billing information.

What is the rate at initial placement until the CANS is completed?

The foster parent will receive the standard foster care rate until a CANS is completed, which is required within 5 days of placement. If the CANS shows a different rate, the new rate will be effective on the 6th day of placement (even if the CANS is done on day 2-5, it is still effective on day 6). It is NOT retroactive to the first day of placement. If a CANS is completed on day 1 of placement, the rate will be effective on day 1.

Will two ICPR’s be generated if the child’s initial category of supervision increases? i.e. an ICPR for the first five days and another ICPR beginning on the 6th day?

Yes, there will be an initial ICPR from the beginning of placement, and another ICPR effective day 6 if an increase occurs.

What if the FCM does not get the CANS completed within the first five days?

If the FCM needs additional time to complete a thorough CANS assessment, the category of supervision will be determined by the result of the assessment when completed. If the result warrants an increase in the foster parent per diem rate, that rate increase will be retroactively effective on the 6th day of placement.

If a Short CANS is completed and placement is made at that level, if the Comprehensive CANS is completed within 30-45 days thereafter and results in a higher category of supervision, will the higher rate be honored? If so, what will be the effective date?

The new rate would be effective on the date the Comprehensive CANS was completed.

When a CANS is completed at a critical case juncture or at the 180 day mark, and it shows a higher category of supervision, what is the effective date for the new rate?

The new rate will be effective on the date that the new CANS was completed.

If the CANS category of supervision decreases, will the foster parent per diem decrease accordingly?

The Provider Manual states that we will not decrease the foster care rate until 2 consecutive CANS shows the lower category of supervision. The "2 consecutive CANS" indication is intended to refer to CANS that are completed routinely every 180 days in conjunction with Case Plan updates. This is to ensure that the child is stabilized before the category of supervision and corresponding rate is reduced. This does not include CANS that are done outside of case plan review periods, such as those done at critical case junctures or in response to a review request by a foster parent or LCPA.

If a teenage foster child has a baby that is not a ward of DCS, how will the foster home be reimbursed for the cost of the child? What if the baby is a ward of DCS?

If the baby is NOT a ward of DCS, the foster parent will receive one (1) ICPR with \$18.88 added to the rate of the teen mom. If the baby is a ward of DCS, the foster parent will receive two (2) ICPRs – one (1) for the teen mom and one (1) for the baby, each based on the determined category of supervision.

If the child's age changes mid-month to an age associated with a rate increase, what will be the effective date of the rate change, and will a new ICPR be needed?

The effective date of the rate change will be the date of the child's birthday. A new ICPR is needed to show the new rate. KidTraks will generate a tickler to the FCM to remind them of the age change to assist the FCM in tracking when a new ICPR will be needed.

Since DCS will not assign a category of supervision until the CANS is completed, does that mean that all placements will be made at the lowest rate for the first five days of placement? What about unplanned emergency placements (specifically after hours)?

In most circumstances, the regular foster care per diem will be the initial rate for placements. The only exceptions to this would be if DCS already has a current CANS assessment on the child with a higher recommendation, if there is an obvious (serious physical or medical disabilities, pronounced Autism, etc) indication that the child has significant needs likely to result in a CANS recommendation of Foster Care with Services or above, or if the child is being placed as an emergency placement in an emergency foster home.

For Emergency Foster homes, does the rate associated with the CANS go retro to the 6th day or the 8th (as EFH rate is good for 7 days)?

If a child is placed within a designated emergency foster home as an emergency placement, they would be eligible to receive the EFC rate of \$50 up to the seventh day in placement. When the CANS is completed, if it recommends a different category of supervision, the resulting rate will be effective after the emergency placement period on the 8th day.

CANS/GENERAL

When completing the CANS, what time frame for behaviors and functioning are FCM's using?

DCS staff are trained on the CANS standard of evaluating behaviors, functioning and risk during a previous 30 day window when completing the assessment.

What if I do not get a copy of the completed CANS assessment?

If you do not receive a completed copy of the CANS, you should request one from the child's Family Case Manager. If you do not have success at that point, you should either contact the FCM's Supervisor or ask your Foster Care Specialist to assist you in obtaining it.

Is the CANS assessment a medical/health record? If so, how can it be shared under HIPAA?

Foster parents are DCS designated caregivers/guardians of the children. As they have primary care and responsibility for the children we place with them, this information would be necessary to foster parents in meeting the safety and well-being needs of those children. Additionally, HIPAA privacy standards only apply to "covered entities." Under HIPAA regulations, child welfare agencies are not covered entities. For more information, see the following link:

<http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/understanding/consumers/index.html>

CANS/CATEGORIES OF SUPERVISION

What is "Foster Care with Services"/what types of kids might fall in this category?

It is hard to make generalizations because of the individualized nature of the CANS tool. This category should not be interpreted literally. Many kids who come into care have some degree of trauma, due to pre-removal conditions and the stress associated with removal from their homes. It is not uncommon for DCS to put low intensity services, such as outpatient therapy or a First Steps evaluation with basic follow up, in place for many children to prevent exposure to trauma from having lasting effects to their functioning. The child may have no current symptoms/functional impairment or mild current symptoms/functional impairment. These scenarios will generally not rise to the level of Foster Care with Services. Children in that second level of care are generally presenting with some moderate current symptoms or functional impairments and require an increased intensity of service to manage. All children who come into care will likely have some type of services, even those in regular foster care.

How can a foster parent who does not have a "therapeutic" or "special needs" license accept placements of children in those categories?

A regularly licensed foster parent may have children with higher needs placed with them after a thorough assessment of the strengths and needs of the foster home in caring for the child. Issues that will be assessed are whether the home may need additional training or resources to meet the needs of the child and adjusting the capacity of the foster home to allow for the enhanced supervision the child will need. The foster care specialist should make this assessment prior to the placement and should put the training/capacity changes in place prior to or after placement.

Can siblings be placed together in one foster home when each has a different CANS category of supervision and the placement will result in exceeding the capacity of 2 that may be required if one of them is at a therapeutic category of supervision?

Yes, placing siblings together is a priority when it can be done with no compromise to safety. If a member of a sibling group has a therapeutic category of supervision that will create capacity issues when placing him/her with the siblings, a "child-specific" exception may be requested based on the fact that in most cases, the benefit of the siblings remaining together outweighs potential capacity considerations.

Will there be a special process for establishing a category of supervision for medically fragile children, since the CANS occasionally doesn't reflect their unique needs?

In isolated situations in which the Child and Family Team and relevant providers deem a child's unique medical needs to be poorly reflected in the CANS recommendations, the family case manager may staff this with his/her supervisor to see if a higher category of supervision is appropriate. This type of override will require the approval of the local office director, and these decisions will be monitored for integrity.

CANS/CHILD AND FAMILY TEAM

Will the CANS assessment be reviewed in detail at CFTM's or with foster parents?

The CANS is a tool for communicating and assessing the strengths and needs of a particular child and family. As the strengths and needs of a child/family are appropriate topics for a CFTM, elements of the CANS tool may be discussed based on how those strengths and needs can be utilized or addressed to assist in service and case planning. You should NOT expect an FCM to bring a CANS tool into a CFTM and review it item by item.

What happens if any of the members of the CFT or other relevant people or providers does not agree with the CANS results?

The CANS is a communication tool designed to assist the FCM in identifying the child's strengths and needs. This tool is used not only for placement, but to assist in identifying the types of services a child and family need. The FCM gathers information from various parties prior to completing the CANS, so hopefully the perspectives of all have been taken into consideration. If any of the members of the CFT or other relevant people or providers do not agree with the CANS results upon completion, the FCM will have a discussion with relevant parties and determine which items there may be differing perspectives about that have a potential impact on the results. If so, the FCM will take that information to a staffing discussion with their Supervisor and revise the CANS as appropriate.

Will the foster parent per diem rate be discussed at the CFTM, since that is where the child's placement and service needs will be discussed?

No, the CFTM is not a rate setting forum. Team members should not be discussing the rate or the category of supervision review process in the CFTM.

REQUEST FOR REVIEW OF CATEGORY OF SUPERVISION

What will happen during the face-to-face meeting for review of the category of supervision?

During a meeting to review the category of supervision, the foster parent will meet with the FCM and the Local Office Director or their designee. The foster parent will have an opportunity to present information that supports a different category of supervision. The meeting will adjourn after all the information is heard. No decision will be reached during the meeting. The foster parent will be notified in writing within 5 business days of a decision.

What happens if a foster parent notices increasing behavioral issues after the first 30 days of placement?

A foster parent noticing increased needs or behavioral acting out on a child's part should always discuss these concerns with the FCM to determine if the changes constitute a "critical case juncture" and thus warrant a CANS re-assessment. After discussing with the FCM, if there remains a disagreement regarding the issue, the foster parent may utilize their one opportunity for requesting a review during the first six months. NOTE: A critical case juncture is a point at which there appears to be a significant change in the needs of the child or family that may warrant a change in the intensity of service or supports being provided.

If a foster parent wishes to request a review of the category of supervision after the child is first placed, the foster parent has 30 days to do this. When does the 30 days start?

The 30 days starts when DCS sends the ICPR to the foster parent. The ICPR contains a "certificate of service" at the bottom that has the date of delivery. The 30 days start on this day.

If the category of supervision changes as a result of the review process, what will be the effective date of the rate change?

Within five calendar days after a meeting to review the category of supervision, the Local Office Director or their designee will notify you in writing of their decision as a result of the information provided. The date on that Notice will serve as the effective date for a resulting rate change.

What category of supervision/rate prevails if, after the LOD review process, the category of supervision determined is less than what is being reviewed?

The stabilization concept that applies generally would also apply in this situation. The rate will not lower until two consecutive CANS completed 180 days apart show a decrease in the category of supervision.

Will the ICPRs include the notice of review or will these have to be pulled from the web separately?

Information about the process for review of category of supervision does not need to be provided with the ICPR. All information pertaining to that process can be obtained on the website or from DCS Staff. If a review is conducted, the Notice regarding the decision will be mailed separately from a new ICPR.

Why is the "Chief PO" on the request for review letter?

Foster parents who have probation youth placed with them will also have the opportunity to request a review of the category of supervision. In these circumstances, the foster parents would submit the Request form to the Chief PO, who will be responsible for conducting those reviews.

INITIAL CLOTHING ALLOWANCE

What if a foster parent realizes the need for an initial clothing allowance after the first 30 days of placement?

An initial clothing allowance can be accessed within the first 60 days of placement. An initial clothing allowance will be received either in the way of a voucher or a referral. If a voucher is received, it must be redeemed within 30 days. If a referral is received, the foster parent will purchase the clothing and then invoice DCS (receipts are required).

Is the initial clothing allowance available for subsequent placements if there is no clothing provided to a foster parent at a placement move?

Clothing that is needed after the initial 60 days from the child's removal episode would require a request to the FCM/Supervisor, who would then seek approval through an internal appeal to the Regional Manager. Once approved, a voucher or service referral for clothing could be provided.

Can a foster parent utilize an initial clothing allowance to get clothing for seasonal changes?

Outside of the time frames listed previously, the initial clothing allowance is not intended for these purposes. Ongoing clothing needs are captured within the per diem the foster parent receives for the child(ren). The FCM can appeal for additional funding in unique circumstances.

Are children in relative placements eligible for the initial clothing allowance?

*Children in **licensed** relative homes will be eligible for a clothing allowance as determined in **Policy 8.19 Clothing, Personal Items and Permitted Per Diem Expenses**. Children in **unlicensed** relative homes will be eligible for a clothing allowance as determined in **Policy 4.24 Assistance to Unlicensed Relative Placements**.*

PERSONAL ALLOWANCE

When does the personal allowance reset or start over?

The personal allowance runs on a calendar year and resets every January 1st.

Is a second referral required if the actual amount spent on an approved item exceeds the amount indicated on the referral for personal allowance?

No, a second referral is not necessary. The referral is an authorization to purchase, and the amount on the referral is an estimate. The attached receipt verifies the actual dollar amount expended, so it will be processed for reimbursement based on the amount indicated on the receipt.

What if someone needs to use personal allowance funds that will exceed the \$300 amount?

*The only way for personal allowance to be utilized in excess of the \$300 cap is through an appeal to the Regional Manager. If approved by the RM, the appeal would be forwarded to the invoice unit for processing. The amount on the appeal may **not** be an estimate. It should reflect an exact amount, which is what will be reimbursed.*

Since any item purchased using the personal allowance is the property of the child, what happens when an age specific item is purchased that is no longer needed when the child leaves the foster home?

The FCM or Regional Foster Care Specialist should assess whether the biological family could use the item (if the child is being reunified), if the local office has space to store it for another family or if the foster home would like to retain it. This is at the discretion of the local office.

May personal allowance funds be spent on Driver's Education, expenses related to learning to drive or pursuing a Driver's permit/license?

*These are permissible expenses for personal allowance funds, **unless** the youth is eligible for emancipation Goods & Services Funds.*

Can/will foster parents be reimbursed for sales tax on items purchased and then invoiced for?

Foster parents are not tax-exempt. They will pay sales tax for items purchased and will be reimbursed for the complete amount spent on approved items.

Are children in relative placements eligible for the personal allowance?

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FOSTER PARENT LIABILITY INSURANCE

Can DCS and LCPA foster parents obtain foster parent liability insurance through IFCAA? Does the foster parent need to be a member of IFCAA?

*All foster parents can obtain the liability insurance, DCS and LCPA. The foster parent does **NOT** need to be a member of IFCAA to obtain the insurance.*

What does the liability insurance cover?

Contact IFCAA or refer to their website for details about the insurance and what is covered by the policy. DCS pays the premiums. The deductible for an incident is paid for by the foster parent.

Is Liability Insurance optional for foster parents?

Yes, liability insurance is an optional benefit to foster parents.

TRAVEL

Does the allowable travel include trips for a child's extra-curricular activities?

No, the allowable travel does not include travel to and from a child's extra-curricular activities.

Can foster parents invoice travel for children separately?

Yes, foster parents may invoice separately for the children in their care by completing one invoice per child. Foster parents should be advised that there will be more work involved in this, because they will have to divide out the mileage across children for trips that pertained to more than one child. In general, there won't be much advantage to this. The one circumstance in which it might be beneficial to invoice children separately is when there is a child or sibling group that requires significantly more travel in comparison to the others.

Are relatives (even if not actual relatives but ordered as placement by court) eligible for travel reimbursement?

If it's a non-relative, court-ordered placement, DCS would have them seek licensure, and they would be eligible for travel reimbursement as determined in **Policy 8.19 Clothing, Personal Items and Permitted Per Diem Expenses**. If they are relatives who remain unlicensed, they would be eligible for travel reimbursement as determined in **Policy 4.24 Assistance to Unlicensed Relative Placements**.

For travel for visitation, how does the foster parent claim when the visitation is for several hours?

For travel to visitation, the claimable mileage depends on the length of the visit.

- a. If the visit is for two (2) hours or less, one (1) round trip may be claimed (i.e. from home to the visitation location and back to home).
- b. If the visit is for more than two (2) hours, the foster parent may claim two (2) round trips from home to the visitation location (i.e. from home to the visitation location and back home for drop off and from home the visit location and back home for pick up) . If the foster parent travels somewhere other than home between drop off and pick up for visitation, the foster parent must claim that travel if it is a shorter distance. For example, if the foster parent drops off the child at visitation and drives to the shopping mall, which is 10 miles closer to visitation than their home, then the foster parent must claim the shorter distance.

LCPA-Specific Questions

Will the LCPAs still provide supervised visitation?

If DCS wishes the LCPA therapist to provide therapeutic supervised visitation, then the FCM must select this option when making the referral in KidTraks. DCS will pay an hourly rate for the LCPA therapist to supervise the visit.

With LCPA's who has review right, the LCPA or the individual foster parent?

If an LCPA foster parent wants to request a review of the category of supervision, they should speak with their LCPA. It is the LCPA who will submit the Request form and attend the review meeting. They may choose to have the foster parent accompany them to the review meeting.

Will service referrals go directly to LCPA's or to LCPA foster parents?

Service referrals will be delivered to the LCPA through the KidTraks Vendor Portal.

Will LCPA foster parents complete and submit the Claim for Support of Children to DCS for reimbursement, or will the LCPA submit on their behalf?

LCPA's will submit the Claim for Support of Children to DCS on behalf of LCPA foster parents. It is at the discretion of the LCPA whether foster parents or the LCPA completes the document.

Do LCPA foster parents submit travel invoices directly to DCS, or can LCPA's sign off and acknowledge it as accurate and submit to DCS?

The LCPA should sign and submit all invoices on behalf of their foster parents.

Within what time frame should LCPA providers expect to receive ICPR's?

As LCPA's are registered with the KidTraks Vendor Portal, obtaining the ICPR should be easier than it has been in the past. Once approved by the supervisor, ICPR's will deliver automatically to the Vendor Portal for LCPA staff to view and print.

Will LCPA's initiate completion of their own CANS, and will this be useful or used for DCS?

DCS has no expectation that LCPA's complete CANS assessments on the children in their care, as FCM's will complete one for every child. If the LCPA chooses to complete their own CANS and notes discrepancies, those discrepancies should be discussed with the FCM to determine if there is information that the FCM did not have access to in completing his/her CANS assessment. To the degree that a discrepancy remains after discussions and sharing of information, the assessment completed by the FCM will be the primary CANS considered in determining the category of supervision.

Will LCPA's be provided a copy of the Short CANS at placement?

If a Short CANS is completed initially, a copy should be provided to the LCPA within a reasonable amount of time. When a short CANS is completed, a Comprehensive CANS must be completed at initial case planning within 30-45 days, so a copy of the Comprehensive CANS would also be made available within a reasonable time frame thereafter.

Beginning January 1, 2012, will it be required for LCPA's to receive a CANS document from DCS, and will this be a document that is audited?

Yes, DCS will supply a copy of each completed CANS assessment for children in their care to the LCPA's. DCS will monitor the overall numbers of children that fall into each category of supervision, but there is no formal audit process planned for CANS assessments at this time. Concerns about the findings/recommendations of a CANS assessment should first be discussed with the FCM or addressed through a request for a Review of Category of Supervision meeting.

What is the means for LCPA's to give input on subsequent CANS assessments?

LCPA's and their foster parents should communicate with the family case manager regarding their observations and assessment of the child's needs and strengths. The FCM will utilize all information, including that shared from LCPA's and foster parents, in completing CANS reassessments.

If an LCPA offers liability insurance that is more comprehensive than the policy offered through IFCAA, can they provide it to foster parents by reducing the foster parent maintenance rate to cover the monthly premium?

DCS will only pay for the liability insurance that is offered through IFCAA. Liability insurance is not an appropriate use of maintenance rate funds. The total maintenance rate, as determined by the child's category of supervision, must be passed through to the foster parents.

Will the LCPA be paid an administrative rate from the date of placement?

Yes, an LCPA will receive an administrative rate starting at day 1.