

Family, Children and Adult Services Procedure Letter No. 383

To: Family, Children and Adult Services Manual Holders

From: Matt Damschroder, Director

Subject: **Funding Opportunity for Recruitment and Retention of Foster Homes**

Background

Amended Substitute House Bill 110 of the 134th General Assembly (HB 110) included an allocation of funding to the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS), Office of Families and Children (OFC), to support statewide efforts for recruitment and retention of foster caregivers. The funding amounts allocated to OFC for this purpose are \$5 million in each State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2022 and 2023.

Funding Opportunity to Support Recruitment and Retention of Foster Homes

OFC is offering these funds as a grant opportunity to be provided in each SFY 2022 and 2023 to support agencies in their efforts of recruitment and retention of foster caregivers. While this funding is available to support recruitment/retention of both family and specialized foster caregivers, our office will prioritize funds, if needed, to recruit/retain treatment foster caregivers and to develop/implement/enhance new services/programs/activities to support to treatment foster caregivers.

The following are some examples of the types of recruitment and retention services that can be supported with this funding opportunity:

Recruitment of Foster Homes

- Develop/implement or enhance/expand a targeted recruitment strategy aimed at recruiting families able to foster harder to place youth and/or treatment level youth
- Hire staff responsible for recruiting foster caregivers
- Hire staff to guide and support foster care applicants, from initial inquiry through certification, to increase the number of foster caregivers who complete the process to become certified
- Provide incentives to existing foster caregivers who refer others who become certified foster caregivers and take placement of at least one youth for a minimum period of time
- Other recruitment activities detailed in an agency's application for funding and approved by ODJFS

Retention of Foster Homes

- Develop/implement or enhance/expand a peer-to-peer mentorship program for foster caregivers
- Develop/implement or enhance/expand other supports for foster caregivers, including support groups/social media groups
- Develop, purchase, or enhance trauma training for foster caregivers and/or for agency staff
- Develop/implement the use of a trauma informed treatment model
- Offer incentives to foster caregivers who recertify and have had at least one placement in their current certification period (or additional criteria established)
- Offer incentives to family foster caregivers who become certified as treatment foster caregivers
- Offer incentives to foster caregivers who foster teens or large sibling groups
- Develop or enhance/expand foster caregiver recognition activities that could include community businesses offering free or discounted services to foster caregivers and youth
- Develop/implement or enhance/expand an agency 24/7 crisis prevention/intervention program to support foster families to prevent crisis or to offer support during times of crisis
- Become a Nationally Accredited foster care agency
- Other retention activities detailed in an agency's application for funding and approved by ODJFS

A budget listing and detailing how the funds will be utilized must be provided by agencies with their application. Agencies receiving these funds will need to retain receipts, invoices and documentation for auditing purposes. Additionally, agencies approved for these funds will be required to submit a progress report in June 2022 in order to receive any SFY 2023 funds. Progress reports will also be required in SFY 2023.

Eligibility

All certified or licensed public and private foster care licensing agencies including public children services agencies (PCSAs), Private Child Placing Agencies (PCPAs), and private non-custodial agencies (PNAs) are eligible to apply for this funding opportunity. Agencies involved with enforcement in their foster care licensing program are not eligible.

Application

Eligible agencies must apply for this funding opportunity through the Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Association (OCCRRA) dashboard at <https://registry.occrra.org/>. Applications will be accepted beginning on February 10, 2022 through February 28, 2022. Applications will be approved or denied by March 15, 2022.

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Applications will need to address all of the following:

- Total funds requested. Amount approved will be based on two factors, the number of agencies that apply and are approved and the details in your plan. A maximum of \$200,000 each SFY will be awarded.
- Details regarding the services/activities to be provided including whether the services/programs are:
 - New services/activities or,
 - Existing services/programs – if they are existing services/programs explain how the funds will be used to enhance the existing services/programs.
- Population to be served including the types of homes and youth to be served.
- Measurable outcome goals to be achieved by implementing new or enhancing existing services/programs.
- Detail how your agency will sustain these new services/programs/staff after SFY 2023.
- Provide a budget breakdown of how the funds will be used for each SFY for each activity selected. Agencies are permitted to contract with other agencies for any activity.
- Contact person including an e-mail address to discuss application if needed.

INSTRUCTIONS:

The following chart indicates what materials should be deleted from the Family, Children and Adult Services Manual (FCASM) and what materials are to be added in the FCASM.

| LOCATION | REMOVE AND FILE AS OBSOLETE | INSERT/REPLACEMENT |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| PROCEDURE LETTERS | | FCASPL No. 383 |