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What CSWs Should Know About the Continuum of Care Reform

What is the Continuum of Care Reform?

Effective January 1, 2017, California's Continuum Care Reform (CCR) or Assembly Bill 403 calls for a comprehensive approach to improving the experience and outcomes for children and youth in foster care by reducing use of congregate care placement settings; increasing use of home-based family care; and decreasing the length of time to achieve permanency.

Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Program

- As of January 1, 2017, all Group Homes (GH) will begin transitioning to as Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Program (STRTP).
- Children in STRTPs should transition into lower levels of care (home-based setting) within 6 months of placement, if appropriate (A request for an extension should be discussed during the Child and Family Team and approved by the Deputy Director).
- Most GHs have requested an extension of their RCL license as they transition to STRTP. Youth currently placed in non-contracted GHs may remain in their placement if the GH has received an RCL extension or STRTP license.
- STRTP referral processes are currently being updated and will likely resemble the RCL 14 and Community Treatment Facilities placement processes - Interagency Placement Committee (IPC).
 - IPC liaisons will support CSWs with the collection of Mental Health and DCFS required paperwork needed for STRTP entrance and will guide CSWs to the most appropriate STRTP that best meets the youth's mental health needs and fosters community connections.

Rates – Phase I (effective January 1, 2017)

- **The Home-Based Family Care rate of \$889 will replace the current basic foster care rate** - No additional paperwork needed.
- STRTP Rate = \$12,036 per child/per month.
- FFAs will continue age-based rates until further notice.

Resource Family Approval

- RFA establishes a new family-friendly approval process for families (related and non-related) to become caregivers for children and youth in foster care.
- All families will be referred to as "Resource Families" and are evaluated the same way.
 - To be approved all caregivers must complete 12 hours of pre-approval training and have a psychosocial assessment. **These are new requirements for relatives.** All RFA approved homes will require an annual update which includes the completion of 8 hours of training.
- DCFS has until December 31, 2019 to "convert" all existing caregivers to an approved Resource Family.
- Emergency placements can still be made with relatives and NREFM prior to RFA approval.
- The ASFA and Adoption Divisions will be reorganized to support the implementation of RFA.

Recruitment, Retention, and Support

- January 2017 - "Emergency Stipend" (\$400 per child) for relatives/NREFMs from 30 days to 90 days.
- January 2017 - Implementing an improved Respite Care Program – includes FFA families.
- Expanding "Tangible Supports" to additional regional offices, i.e. Palmdale, Vermont, Van Nuys, Compton, Covina, and Lancaster.