NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

ROY COOPER • Governor

MANDY COHEN, MD, MPH • Secretary

SUSAN OSBORNE • Assistant Secretary for County Operations for Human Services

June 15, 2020

DEAR COUNTY DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

ATTENTION: DIRECTORS, CHILD WELFARE AND ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS, MANAGERS, SUPERVISORS, AND SOCIAL WORKERS

SUBJECT: FEDERAL CARES ACT FUNDING

REQUIRED ACTION: __ Information Only __ Time Sensitive **X Immediate**

PURPOSE

As North Carolina continues to address issues related to the COVID-19 public health crisis, the needs of adults, children, youth, young adults, and families have increased.

To help address these needs, the General Assembly passed Session Law 2020-4, the 2020 COVID-19 Recovery Act, which appropriated federal CARES Act funding to the following program areas, amongst others. These funds are made available effective March 1, 2020 and must be expensed by 12/31/2020.

Supplemental Foster Care COVID Payments - $2.25 million

A supplement of $100 for each child or youth in foster care for the months of April, May, and June.

Eligibility

The amount for each child is $100 per month, regardless of the number of nights the child was in foster care. If the child lived with multiple licensed placement providers during the month, the funds will be divided between the providers proportional to the number of nights each provided for the child's care.

Young adults in Foster Care 18 to 21 should receive the funds in the same manner their board rate is received.

Accessing Funds

Counties must complete the attached Excel form certifying and confirming the data on the PQA-020 report and indicating the children listed will receive supplemental foster care COVID payments. Forms should be completed for each service period of April, May and June and submitted to Tina Bumgarner (tina.bumgarner@dhhs.nc.gov). Payments

will be processed by EFT direct deposit, designated as *COVID19-FC* after certification is complete.

If you have questions or need clarification about the supplemental foster care maintenance payments, please contact your Regional Child Welfare Consultant.

LINKS - $290,000

Funds to the LINKS program shall be used to support youth in the LINKS program who are not receiving foster care assistance payments and need assistance with housing or transitional costs due to COVID-19.

Eligibility

All young adults who aged out of foster care who:

- Are between ages 18 and 21 years and are not currently in the Foster Care 18 to 21 program; and,

- Need assistance with housing or transitional living services due to COVID-19

Use of Funds

- **Transitional Living Services:** These funds are available to support young adults, their successful transition to adulthood, their achievement of one or more of the LINKS program outcomes, and to supplement losses in income or other needs that have arisen related to COVID-19. This includes, but is not limited to, assistance with transportation, access to food, medical and mental healthcare needs not covered by Medicaid or other insurance, utility payments, household goods, items necessary for the care of children, and services to support the young adult's development of life skills.

- **Transitional Housing:** This includes rent, rent deposits, room and board, or down payments on dwellings.

Accessing Funds / Requesting Reimbursement

1. The local child welfare agency determines eligibility for the various funding sources and documents the basis for that eligibility in the case record.

2. When the county establishes the need for access to LINKS COVID funds, the county advances the funds for the expenditure.

3. After the county has advanced funds for the expenditure, the county then requests reimbursement directly through the LINKS Coordinator using the attached Request for Reimbursement of LINKS COVID-19 Funds form. Funds will paid via EFT direct deposit, designated as *COVID19-LINKS*.

4. The requests for reimbursement are to be submitted via email to linksreimbursement@dhhs.nc.gov.

If you have questions or need clarification about COVID-19 LINKS funds, please contact the state LINKS Program Coordinator, Erin Conner at 919-527-6351 or erin.conner@dhhs.nc.gov.

Child Welfare and Adult Protective Services Essential Worker Pay - $8.3 million

Funds allocated to counties to support additional COVID-related expenses associated with Child Welfare and Adult Protective Services activities as workers function as essential personnel.

Use of Funds

Examples include hazard pay, emergency pay, overtime, temporary/time-limited workers and associated PPE, supplies, overhead.

Accessing Funds / Requesting Reimbursement

Counties will receive a Funding Authorization, budgeted proportional to CPS/APS assessments in 2019. These expenses will be claimed through the NC-CoReLS/1571 system. In order to support the variety of costs that may be claimed for reimbursement, separate Part I and Part II codes will be created for counties to utilize, as most appropriate. Further coding detail will follow. Funds are available retroactive to March 1, 2020 but it is anticipated that the surge of expenses will be in the months to come. Counties must maintain documentation to demonstrate appropriate use and expense.

If you have questions or need clarification about these funds, please contact your Local Business Liaison.

Sincerely,

Richard Stegenga
Deputy Director, Business Operations
Division of Social Services

Cc: Susan G. Osborne, Assistant Secretary for County Operations
Zachary E. Wortman, Chief Operating Officer, Human Services
Lisa Tucker Cauley, Deputy Director for Child Welfare Services
Karey Perez, Adult Services Section Chief
Hank Bowers, Assistant Director for Aging and Adult Services

2 Attachments: COVID Foster Care Stipend Form
COVID LINKS Reimbursement Form

BG-08-2020