



TEXAS
Department of Family
and Protective Services

Report on Federal Funds Maximization

Semi-Annual Update

**As Required by Senate Bill 1, 87th Legislative Session, 2021
(Article II, DFPS, Rider 37)**

March 1, 2023

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Introduction

Rider 37 of Senate Bill 1, 87th Legislative Session, requires the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) to submit progress reports related to the agency's efforts to maximize federal funds, including identifying the strategies DFPS has implemented and any successes and challenges in maximizing funding, as well as how the agency can maximize federal funds by program and funding source. Progress reports are required to be submitted by September 1 and March 1 of each year to the Legislative Budget Board and the Governor.

Relevant federal funding updates since the [September 2021 report](#) are only included in this progress report which serves as a companion to the September report.

Section I: Update to Federal Funding to Address COVID-19

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) Supplemental Funds

Since the September 2021 report, the agency has assessed needs across all eligible program areas and has developed a plan that supports the grant's intent. The spending plan includes the following:

- Services to support child abuse and neglect prevention,
- Services for youth and young adults with lived foster care experience,
- Advancing work to assess and address disproportionality,
- System improvements to support matching of children and youth to prospective adoptive families, and
- Implementation of a more efficient background check process.

Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV)

Since the September 2021 report, DFPS has implemented round one of MIECHV ARPA funding which will conclude September 30, 2023 and received a second round of MIECHV funding that will largely carry forth the activities of the first round of funding through September 30, 2024. Those are detailed below.

[MIECHV Round 1 \(\\$2.6 million\)](#)

- Evidence-based training program for prevention of postpartum depression for MIECHV providers;
- IT enhancements to improve online options for completing enrollments, assessments, and surveys virtually;

- Technology and connectivity (for home visitors and families) to support remote home visits;
- Retention/incentive pay for front-line direct service workforce to retain home visitors and other direct service staff;
- Training to support staff in providing remote home visits; and
- Funding to community grantees to provide emergency supplies for families, including diapers, wipes, infant formula, cleaning supplies, non-perishable food, and gift cards for perishable food items.

MIECHV Round 2 (\$ 5.2 million)

PEI continues to allocate the majority of funding directly to MIECHV grantees to support activities to advance COVID-19 response efforts, support the home visiting workforce, and benefit families as described above. Incentive/retention pay for front-line staff continues as the priority use of ARPA funds. In addition, PEI is funding one dedicated contracts position as a temporary position for the duration of the grant. The position will help to manage and track budget spending to ensure expenditure of funds, and support expense analysis and reporting.

Section II: Update to Other Federal Grants

Kinship Navigator Grants

DFPS is using approximately \$1,831,732 in federal grant funds to implement the 4 Kinship Navigator Program approaches developed in Fiscal Year 2021. The Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) division providers began the pilot implementation phase October 2021. A portion of these funds will be used to conduct a cross-site evaluation of the Kinship Navigator Program. Another portion of these funds (\$531,202) are used to support current Kinship caregivers with either costs associated with the verification or adoption process, as well as for concrete services needed to support the current placement.

National Electronic Interstate Compact Enterprise (NEICE)

DFPS anticipates the work on the NEICE system to be completed and deployed on February 23, 2023.

Section III: Update to FY 2022-2023 Active Projects

Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTP) Pilot

The QRTP Open Enrollment Procurement documents and all required supplemental documents were published on Friday April 1, 2022. The information is posted on the Electronic State Business Daily site where potential providers can view necessary information to apply to become a contracted QRTP provider.

Implementation details for internal and external processes have been established and shared with DFPS staff and external stakeholders through meetings, webinars, workgroups and cross training sessions which were conducted throughout the months of April, May and June 2022. DFPS achieved readiness to serve the first youth by July 1, 2022, however, at this time, there are no established QRTP contracted providers. DFPS is working with several providers to add QRTP to their operations.

Prevention Pilots

Rider 48(c)

DFPS receives federal funds in each fiscal year of the biennium for the Nurse Family Partnership to expand capacity as allowed by the FFPSA;

- The Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) division coordinated with the NFP National Service Office to implement these additional services and added funds to four NFP contracts in Fiscal Year 2022 and an additional four NFP contracts in Fiscal Year 2023 for a total of eight expanded NFP programs.

House Bill 3041 Texas Family First Pilot

DFPS receives federal funds to support Rider 48 (a) and (b) which provides funding to pilot services and intervention for children who are at imminent risk of being removed. DFPS released the grant funding opportunity for the HB 3041 Pilot to all current Single Source Continuum Contractors (SSCCs) on March 18th, 2022. All four current SSCCs have an active contract for and are implementing the Texas Family First Pilot in their areas. DFPS and the SSCCs are working together to find ways to engage more families into the Texas Family First Pilot and communicating regularly. As of February 13, 2023:

- In Region 1, St. Francis (SSCC) is currently working with 5 families
- In Region 2, 2INGage (SSCC) is currently working with 5 families
- In Region 3W, OCOK(SSCC) is currently working with 5 families
- In Region 8B, Belong (SSCC) is currently working with 2 families

Rider 48(e)

DFPS receives federal funds each fiscal year of the biennium to support the transition of family-based safety services to evidenced-based programs under FFPSA.

- PEI added capacity to existing evidence-based programs to serve a portion of families in family-based safety services. PEI identified SafeCare and Parents as Teachers (PAT) as the most appropriate FFPSA approved evidence-based models for this project.

Update the Random Moment Time Study (RMTS)

DFPS selected Public Consulting Group (PCG) as the contractor to assist with the implementation of a new Random Moment Time Study for the Community-based Care (CBC) Catchment Areas. This will be a multi-year process which entails developing new activity codes, developing appropriate time study processes, and training staff in CBC Catchment Areas about the RMTS processes. The project will also implement an RMTS in the CBC Catchment Areas as the Catchment Areas come online over the next several years. The new RMTS process will ensure DFPS receives necessary reimbursement of federal funds for the work conducted in the CBC Catchment Areas.

Section IV: Update to Foster Care Rate Methodology Examination and Modernization

In September 2021, DFPS published the [Foster Care Rate Modernization Report: Preliminary Service Descriptions](#), which included:

- Background information on the Texas Service Level System/rate methodology and the legislative change;
- The goals, objectives, and parameters of the current Rate Modernization Project;
- Information detailing the approach DFPS utilized to arrive at the preliminary service descriptions contained in the report;
- DFPS's preliminary new service descriptions; and
- An overview of project next steps for the fall of 2021.

On December 31, 2021, DFPS published [Foster Care Rate Modernization Report: Final Service Descriptions](#), which provides information on several significant changes made to the preliminary service descriptions released in September 2021. The report includes details on:

- New service add-ons;
- Use of evidence-informed (as opposed to evidence-based) treatment models;
- Potential for gradation of foster care rates within each service add-on; and
- Implementation of a developmentally appropriate universal Human Trafficking training and prevention model for children, youth, and young adults in foster care.

DFPS worked with the Institute for Child and Family Well-being at University of Texas on a provider survey and met with numerous providers and advocacy groups to inform the assumptions for the final service descriptions.

Pursuant to the 2022-2023 General Appropriations Act, Senate Bill 1, 87th Legislature, Regular Session, 2021 (Article II, Special Provisions Relating to All Health and Human Services Agencies, Section 26 (c)(13-15)) DFPS submitted the *“Opportunities to Increase Claiming IV-E Funds through Foster Care Rate Modernization* report in February 2023. Through this work DFPS:

- Reviewed opportunities to increase the Title IV-E eligibility rate.
- Established a plan to increase kinship licensing.
- Included enhanced Title IV-E administrative claiming strategies for General Residential Operations (GRO) and Residential Treatment Center (RTC) placements as a part of Foster Care Rate Modernization. And
- Identified methods to claim costs associated with (the) child (as a part of child specific contracts and exceptional care).

DFPS and Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) are currently working to finalize a report to be submitted to the 88th Legislature that will include the proforma modeled rates using the new methodology, including the fiscal estimate.

Section V: Update to Title IV-E Funds for County Legal Services

As of January 2023 report, there are 20 counties participating in this opportunity. In addition, DFPS continues to work with the Children’s Commission on expanding awareness, access, and utilization of this funding stream.

Conclusion

DFPS is making all efforts to maximize the drawdown and use of federal funds. With significant systemic changes in the child welfare system including Community-Based Care, the Family First Prevention Services Act and one-time COVID-19 funds for specific initiatives, federal funding remains critical to assisting DFPS with helping the agency implement its mission. DFPS will continue to focus on efficient and effective management of multiple federal funding streams.