

Joe Lombardo
Governor



Richard Whitley, MS
Director

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

DIVISION OF CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES
Helping people. It's who we are and what we do.



Marla McDade
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MTL # 1603 – 09202024

TO: Jill Marano, Director – Clark County Family Services
Betsey Crumrine, Social Services Manager V – DCFS – District Offices
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Ryan Gustafson, Division Director – Washoe County Human Services Agency

FROM: Betsey Crumrine, Interim Deputy Administrator, Division of Child and Family Services

POLICY DISTRIBUTION

Enclosed find the following policy for distribution to all applicable staff within your organization:

1603 Oversight of Statewide Specialized Foster Care Program

This policy is/was effective: 09/20/2024

- This policy is new. Please review the policy in its entirety
- This policy replaces the following policy(s): MTL # _____ - _____ Policy Name: _____
- This policy has been revised. Please see below for the type of revision:
 - This is a significant policy revision. Please review this policy in its entirety.
 - This is a minor policy revision: (List page number & summary of change):
 - A policy form has been revised: (List form, page number and summary of change):
- This policy has been reviewed for statewide compliance.

NOTE:

- Please read the policy in its entirety and note any areas that are additionally required by your agency to be in compliance with the policy enclosed.
- This is an **ALL STAFF MEMO** and it is the responsibility of the person listed above to disseminate the policy enclosed to appropriate staff within his/her organization and to ensure compliance.
- The most current version of this policy is posted on the DCFS Website at the following address: <http://dcfs.nv.gov/Policies>
Please check the table of contents on this page for the link to the chapter you are interested in.

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1603 Oversight of Statewide Specialized Foster Care Program

Policy Approval Clearance Record

<input type="checkbox"/> Statewide Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Administrative Policy <input type="checkbox"/> DCFS Rural Region Policy	<input type="checkbox"/> New Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Modified Policy <input type="checkbox"/> This policy supersedes:
Date Policy Effective:	04/30/2020
Attorney General Representative Review:	
DCFS Deputy Administrator Approval	09/20/2024
DMG Original Approval	04/15/2016
DMG Approved Revisions	04/24/2020

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Policy Statement and Purpose:

The purpose of the Specialized Foster Care Program is to obtain better quality outcomes for children and youth in the custody of a Child Welfare Agency, who suffer from severe emotional disturbance (SED). The statewide Specialized Foster Care Program helps ensure children and youth with SED are being appropriately placed and receiving proper care and services to meet their needs through ongoing monitoring of child placements and evaluation of child progress.

AUTHORITY

NRS: [NRS 424](#); [NRS 432B.2155](#); [NRS 424.030](#); [NRS 424.0365](#); [NRS 424.0385](#); [NRS 424.042](#); [NRS 424.210](#)
NAC: [NAC 424](#); [NAC 424.620](#) – [NAC 424.632](#); [NAC 424.710](#) – [NAC 424.728](#)

Other:

DEFINITIONS

Agency which Provides Child Welfare Services: A county whose population is less than 100,000, the agency is a local office of the Division of Child and Family Services; or in a county whose population is 100,000 or more, the agency of the county, which provides or arranges for necessary child welfare services. May also be referred to as "Agency" or Child Welfare Agency".

Administrator: The Administrator of the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS).

CCFS: Clark County Family Services

DCFS: The Division of Child and Family Services of the Department of Health and Human Services of the State of Nevada.

Director: Child Welfare Agency Director in a county whose population is 100,000 or more.

Fiscal: The fiscal unit located within the Division of Child and Family Services.

NRS: Nevada Revised Statutes (as enacted by the Nevada Legislature).

PEU: The DCFS Children's Mental Health Planning and Evaluation Unit.

SED: Severe Emotional Disturbance.

Specialized Foster Care Program (SFCP): Foster homes used in the SFCP must be trained in, and utilize, the evidenced based Together Facing the Challenge model or other nationally recognized treatment foster care model approved through the Division Administrator. Child welfare agencies may use foster homes contracted through a Foster Care Agency and/or utilize family foster homes whose licensees have completed the enhanced training necessary to become a SFCP foster home.

State: An alternate word for the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) or Family Programs Office (FPO).

Together Facing the Challenge © (TFTC): Is an evidenced-based treatment model used by all foster homes caring for children placed within the Specialized Foster Care Program.

Trauma Informed Care (TIC): An approach of care that is sensitive to a child's trauma history.

WCHSA: Washoe County Human Services Agency.

STANDARDS/PROCEDURES

Specialized Foster Care Program (SFCP) – Proper Care and Services Together

Facing the Challenge

The Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) will ensure that all entities providing specialized foster care in Nevada are implementing the Together Facing the Challenge (TFTC) model, an evidence-based model of treatment foster care, which provides specific and measurable behavior management strategies within a trauma-informed care (TIC) approach. See [FPO 1603B – TFTC Addendum](#) for full details on TFTC implementation in Nevada.

Use of Other Nationally Recognized Treatment Foster Care Model

1. A Child Welfare Agency may only use a nationally recognized, alternative model of treatment foster care after the Agency has received prior written approval for its use through the DCFS Administrator.
2. The Child Welfare Agency must submit to the DCFS Administrator documentation which demonstrates the model's efficacy for positive child outcomes that equal or exceed those of the Together Facing the Challenge model.
3. The Child Welfare Agency must identify, through written documentation, how all SFCP data requirements within this policy and [FPO 1603A – Evaluation Protocol](#) will be captured and tracked by the Child Welfare Agency in a manner that is compatible and consistent within the statewide SFCP.
4. All fidelity requirements within the alternative model must be met and documented by the Child Welfare Agency. This documentation will be used to assist in assessing if children placed within the SFCP home are receiving proper care.
5. The SFCP foster parents, SFCP clinical staff and/or SFCP supervisor, will attend any outside meetings that focus on the needs of the child/youth admitted to the program.

Child and Youth Target Program

1. Children and youth must be in the custody of the Child Welfare Agency and meet at least one of the following criteria:
 - a. Are entering the foster care system and have identified behavioral or mental health needs that cannot be met in traditional family foster care;
 - b. Are struggling to maintain placement and make progress in traditional family foster care due to the child's heightened behavioral and emotional needs;

- c. Are in treatment level care who have disrupted from a placement within the past six (6) months and are placed in emergency shelter or congregate care due to behavioral and mental health needs; or
- d. Are returning or stepping down from residential treatment centers or other higher level of care placements.

Admission Criteria

1. Admission to the program will be determined by the local Child Welfare Agency when it is deemed appropriate for an eligible child. No more than thirty (30) days prior to admission into the Specialized Foster Care Program, children and youth will need to have undergone an assessment process utilizing a comprehensive biopsychosocial assessment. All the following criteria must be met to determine a child/youth eligible for admission:
 - a. Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) or Diagnostic Classification of Mental Health and Developmental Disorders of Infancy and Early Childhood (DC:0-3) diagnosis;
 - b. Qualifies as SED; and
 - c. Prior less restrictive placements or interventions, such as traditional family foster care and/or community treatment services, have not been successful.

Child Welfare SFCP Information Tracking and Reporting Process

1. Child/Youth Standardized Tracking Elements:
 - a. Monthly demographic/placement information
 - b. Hospitalizations
 - c. Placement stability/runaways
 - d. Psychotropic medication usage
 - e. Permanency status
 - f. Performance on clinical standardized assessment tools
 - g. Educational information
 - h. Legal status/delinquency information
 - i. Other information as indicated on attachment, [FPO 1603A – Evaluation Protocol](#).
2. Information to complete the evaluation will come from a variety of sources:
 - a. Data and demographics will be provided by the local Child Welfare Agencies. It is mandatory to utilize all necessary sources of information to fulfill all required data points.
 - b. The Planning and Evaluation Unity (PEU) will identify within policy attachment, [FPO 1603A – Evaluation Protocol](#), all authorized instruments to be administered and the required timelines for data collection and submission.
3. Monthly demographic/placement tracking criteria:
 - a. On or before the 10th of each month, each Child Welfare Agency will ensure the following SFCP child/youth information has been entered into UNITY; any child who has been admitted into the Child Welfare Agency's SFCP, continues in the SFCP or has been discharged from the SFCP. The following information is required for the DCFS monthly UNITY SFCP Child Report:
 - i. Date of SFCP entry;
 - ii. Child/youth I.D. number;
 - iii. Child/youth name;
 - iv. DOB;
 - v. Age;
 - vi. Case I.D. number;
 - vii. Placement location;
 - viii. Date of placement entry;
 - ix. Date of placement discharge;
 - x. SFCP discharge date;
 - xi. Child/youth's Medicaid number;
 - xii. SFCP discharge placement family.

Documentation:

UNITY Documentation (electronic)

Applicable UNITY Screen	Data Required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health Information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child Information: Current Diagnoses Current SED Determination Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facility Maintenance Detail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caregiver – TFTC Training Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Representative Maintenance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current PLR – Name
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health Screen-Medication Maintenance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PLR Consent Date for Medication

JURISDICTIONAL ACTION

Child Welfare Agency Annual Expenditure Reporting Requirements

- Annual Expenditure Report** – On or before **August 1st of each year**, each Child Welfare Agency will submit to the DCFS and the Fiscal Analysis Division of the Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB) a report listing all expenditures relating to the placement of children in the Specialized Foster Care Program for the previous fiscal year.
 - The Child Welfare Agency will provide the report in a format indicated by the DCFS.

STATE RESPONSIBILITIES

DCFS Oversight of Target Population and Admission Criteria

- Per [NRS 424.042](#), the DCFS will review the placement of children and youth in the Specialized Foster Care Program to ensure they are appropriately placed, that they meet eligibility criteria for the target population and admission standards, as well as receive appropriate care and treatment. Periodic record reviews can include but may not be limited to:
 - Demographics of children who are placed in the SFCP;
 - Information from clinical evaluations of children who are placed in SFCP, which justifies the child’s clinical need for placement in the program;
 - Relevant Medicaid data submitted to the Department of Health and Human Services pursuant to the State Plan for Medicaid;
 - Case files and records maintained by the Agency which provides Child Welfare Services for children who are placed in the SFCP; and
 - Any other information or data necessary to ascertain program suitability as determined by the DCFS.
- Reviews indicating that children and youth are being served but do not meet criteria for SFCP and/or are not receiving the care and services that they need, will be submitted to the DCFS Administrator for referral to the Agency Director for immediate action and resolution. Non-compliance could result in a corrective action plan pursuant to [NRS 432B.2155](#).

POLICY CROSS REFERENCE

Policies: N/A

History and Updates: This policy was effective as of 4/15/2016 with approved revisions completed on 9/16/2016, 04/30/2020, 9/20/2024 and supersedes the policy effective 9/16/2016.

ATTACHMENTS

- [FPO 1603A – Evaluation Protocol](#)
- [FPO 1603B – TFTC Addendum](#)
- [FPO 1603C – TFTC Memo: Specialized Foster Care Data and Documentation Request](#)