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Foster/Adoptive Parent Recruitment and Retention Plan 2024-2025

August 1, 2024

This report summarizes the 2024-2025 Foster/Adoptive Parent Recruitment and Retention Plan. It is required pursuant to Nevada Revised Statutes 424.087, which specifies that child welfare agencies project the number of foster homes each community will need each year to meet the safety, permanency, and well-being of youth in foster care. This plan identifies the foster parent needs for the Rural Region (RR), Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS), Nevada's Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and identifies goals for how the child welfare agency plans to meet those needs. Furthermore, this report identifies the youth who have been placed outside of Nevada for more than 15 days and goals to improve placement options to maintain foster care youth in Nevada.

The DCFS – RR will develop and update this plan annually, on or before August 1. The updates will include an evaluation of the implementation of the plan, procedure for placing children in foster homes that meet the needs of the children, ensure resources are being used efficiently, and address any gaps in services or barriers to placing children in foster care.

This plan for recruitment and retention of foster homes outlines the requirements pursuant to Nevada Revised Statutes [424.087](#):

NRS 424.087 Plan for the recruitment and retention of foster homes.

1. An agency which provides child welfare services shall adopt, publish on an Internet website maintained by the agency and update annually a plan for the recruitment and retention of foster homes which must include, without limitation:

(a) A determination of the number of foster homes needed in the area served by the agency. When making that determination, the agency must consider the needs of children in foster care in the area served by the agency with respect to:

- (1) The ages of the children;
- (2) Accommodating siblings to remain together;
- (3) Serving children who have intellectual or developmental disabilities and who have other special needs; and
- (4) Addressing the needs of children in foster care to receive care provided in a racially and culturally competent manner.

(b) Specific goals for the number of foster homes needed in the geographic area served by the agency.

(c) If the agency failed to meet the goals established pursuant to paragraph (b) for the immediately preceding year, a description of the measures that the agency plans to take to ensure that the agency meets those targets during the immediately following year.

(d) A plan to ensure that, to the extent possible, a foster home in which a child is placed pursuant to [NRS 432B.550](#) is located in:

- (1) The same community as the home from which the child was removed; and

(2) The zone of attendance of the public school that the child was attending when he or she was removed from that home, if applicable.

(e) Strategies for recruiting foster homes in geographic areas with a high rate of placement of children in protective custody.

(f) An identification of resources available to support foster parents.

2. An agency which provides child welfare services shall appoint one or more employees to:

(a) Develop and carry out the plan adopted pursuant to subsection 1.

(b) Evaluate the implementation of the plan, the degree to which existing procedures for placing children in foster homes meet the needs of those children and use resources efficiently, any gaps in services for children placed in protective custody or foster care and any barriers to placing children in accordance with paragraph (d) of subsection 1.

3. On or before August 1 of each year, an agency which provides child welfare services shall publish on an Internet website maintained by the agency a report which includes, without limitation:

(a) Information relating to whether the agency achieved the goals established pursuant to paragraph

(b) of subsection 1 for each quarter of the immediately preceding year;

(b) The number of children placed outside this State for more than 15 days during the immediately preceding year, including, without limitation, the number of children placed in residential treatment facilities outside this State for more than 15 days during the immediately preceding year;

(c) The reasons for the placements described in paragraph (b);

(d) A summary of changes that could prevent the placements described in paragraph (b); and

(e) A summary of changes or actions necessary to allow children who are currently placed outside this State to return to this State.

(Added to NRS by [2019, 2183](#))

Response to NRS 424.087(1)(a)

The following information responds to the requirements of NRS 424.087(1)(a), which requires a determination of the number of foster homes needed in the area served by the agency to include the following requirements:

(1) The ages of the children;

(2) Accommodating siblings to remain together;

(3) Serving children who have intellectual or developmental disabilities and who have other special needs; and

(4) Addressing the needs of children in foster care to receive care provided in a racially and culturally competent manner.

There are 5 district offices which are comprised of multiple counties for each. District 1 covers Elko, Eureka, Lander, and White Pine counties. District 2 covers Carson, Douglas, and Storey counties. District 3 covers Pershing, Mineral, Churchill, and Humboldt counties. District 4 covers Nye, Lincoln, and Esmeralda counties while District 5 covers Lyon County.

The DCFS – Rural Region currently has 126 licensed beds, and the agency estimates a total need of 389 beds to accommodate youth in need of placement. DCFS estimates a deficit of 263 beds to meet the needs of youth based on the following data elements.

- As of 3/08/2024, there were 319 foster youth within the DCFS - RR population.

Foster Youth Population Age Group

	0-5		6-10		11-13		14+	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
<i>Rural Counties</i>	134	23%	74	13%	40	7%	71	12%

- As of 03/08/2024, there were 226 sibling groups within the DCFS – RR population.
- As of 03/08/2024, there were 67 youths with significant mental or physical health needs, 22 of whom are eligible for adoption and part of a sibling group. Additional considerations are made for youth who have intellectual or developmental disabilities, physical impairments, or other special needs; such youth are in placements of Advanced Foster Care (AFC), Specialized Foster Care (SFC), and Medically Fragile youth. As of 4/28/2024, there were 17 youth placed in these advanced placement options.

Foster Youth in Paid Placements of AFC, SFC and Medically Fragile as of 03/11/2024

	AFC	SFC	Medically Fragile
<i>Rural Counties</i>	6	6	5

- When considering race/ethnicity within the DCFS-RR population as of 03/08/2024, the populations consisted of 319 youth and 417 foster parents. Explanation of race/ethnicity methodology: Although youth may be multiracial/multiethnic, they are only counted once using methodology provided by the DHHS State Biostatistician based on guidance from the National Center for Health Statistics. Additionally, all race/ethnicities in the table below other than Hispanic are non-Hispanic.

Foster Youth Population Race/Ethnicity by Jurisdiction

<i>Jurisdiction</i>	American Indian	Asian	Black	NHPI*	White	Hispanic	Unknown Race/Ethnicity
<i>Rural Counties</i>	2.6% 15	0.0% 0	3.6% 21	0.3% 2	38.0% 221	9.8% 57	0.5% 3

Foster Parent Population¹ Race/Ethnicity by Jurisdiction¹

<i>Jurisdiction</i>	American Indian	Asian	Black	NHPI*	White	Hispanic	Unknown Race/Ethnicity
<i>Rural Counties</i>	2.2% 9	1.2% 5	19.0% 19	0.5% 2	78.4% 327	13.2% 55	0.0% 0

¹ The foster parent population reflects caregivers for Family Foster Homes (identified via AFCARS data element #41 - value 2) and/or Relative Family Foster Homes (identified via AFCARS data element #41 - value 3). These foster placements may be licensed or unlicensed. Some homes may have only one caregiver while others may have two caregivers. In this analysis, the race/ethnicity data for all caregivers for these placements are combined in the summary table.

*NHPI - Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

5. The agency identified the current count of family foster, relative, kinship homes in each district via a hand count as of 7/7/24:

Office Locations	Homes	#Beds	#Vacant Beds
District 1 <i>(Elko, Ely)</i>	6	14	3
District 2 <i>(Carson)</i>	17	28	9
District 3 <i>(Fallon, Winnemucca)</i>	8	21	7
District 4 <i>(Pahrump)</i>	8	30	10
District 5 <i>(Fernley, Yerington)</i>	12	33	4
Total	51	126	33

Vacant beds may be due to family request, respite, adoption only, Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (ICPC) holds or restrictions on ages of children who can be placed in a home due to licensure, sex of children who can be placed per request of family and Nevada Administrative Code.

Response to NRS 424.087(1)(b)

This section identifies the specific goals for the number of foster homes needed in the geographic area served by the agency as required by NRS 424.087(1)(b).

These specific foster home attainment goals for each district are based on current placements, out of county placements, Interstate Compact for Placement of Children (ICPC), adoption and removal trends.

District Office	Goal for new homes
District 1 (Elko, White Pine, Lander, Eureka counties)	66 total homes, of which at least: 5 homes for large sibling groups 3 homes for medically fragile children 2 homes for sexually reactive children 3 homes for males with mental health/Severe Emotional Disturbance 2 homes for females with mental health/ Severe Emotional Disturbance
District 2 (Carson, Douglas, Storey counties)	70 total homes, of which at least: 3 homes for large sibling groups 3 homes for sexually reactive children 2 homes for medically fragile children 3 homes for males with mental health/ Severe Emotional Disturbance 2 homes for females with mental health/ Severe Emotional Disturbance

District Office	Goal for new homes
District 3 (Pershing, Mineral, Churchill, and Humboldt counties)	40 total homes, of which at least: 5 homes for large sibling groups 3 homes for medically fragile children 2 homes for sexually reactive children 3 homes for males with mental health/ Severe Emotional Disturbance 2 homes for females with mental health/ Severe Emotional Disturbance
District 4 (Nye, Lincoln, and Esmeralda counties)	30 total homes, of which at least: 6 homes for large sibling groups 5 homes for sexually reactive children 4 homes for males with mental health/ Severe Emotional Disturbance 3 homes for females with mental health/ Severe Emotional Disturbance
District 5 (Lyon County)	40 total homes, of which at least: 5 homes for large sibling groups 3 homes for medically fragile children 2 homes for sexually reactive children 3 homes for males with mental health/ Severe Emotional Disturbance 2 homes for females with mental health/ Severe Emotional Disturbance

Response to NRS 424.087(1)(c)

If the agency failed to meet the goals established pursuant to paragraph (b) of NRS 424.087(1) for the immediately preceding year, the agency is required to provide a description of the measures that the agency plans to take to ensure that the agency meets those targets during the immediately following year. This section responds to NRS 424.087(1)(c), noting that the agency did not meet the described goals for the immediately preceding year. The following list includes some of the measures the agency has undertaken to meet the identified targets:

- The Division has a current contract with FM Marketing to develop an overall marketing strategy for recruitment. The Division has billboards placed strategically on main thoroughfares in rural communities and has partnered with local radio stations to play public service announcements to stress the need for foster homes in their community. DCFS began using social media to reach a younger demographic through Facebook and X (Twitter). DCFS has held in-person panel discussions in individual counties. The DCFS partnership with FM Marketing has resulted in a targeted marketing strategy that has reached across the Rural Region. Families from 13 of 15 rural counties and 26 communities have applied for training in the last two years. In addition, unprecedented numbers of families have been reached with over 300 families asking to engage in the licensing process.
- The Division has held several foster care “campaigns” to bring up the discussion of LGBT+ homes, foster fathers, keeping siblings together, foster care trainings and promotions for the Walk Us Home 5K in April 2024.

- The Division has made over 40 media contacts between July 2023 and July 2024 on the need for foster homes with Nevada Public Radio, KOLO 8 News, Channel 2 News Reno, KPVM Pahrump, Elko Daily News, Nomadic Broadcasting, Fox 5 News, Channel 8 Las Vegas, Pahrump Valley Times, Carson NOW, Lotus Broadcasting, Elko Community Hub, What in The Mucc, KRNA Winnemucca, Mix 96.7 Elko, and Everything Elko.
- The Division has made several in person contacts throughout July 2023 and 2024 in 13 of the 15 rural counties to provide information on foster parenting at 36 different community events.
- The Division hosted its second annual awareness 5K run and walk in Carson City as a means to make wide outreach on the awareness of foster homes. Over 200 people participated in the event and residents on the running course were encouraged to display free signage on the need for foster homes for the entire month of April 2024.
- The Division regularly attends community outreach and/or coalition meetings in each rural county to educate stakeholders on the local need of foster homes and encourage partnerships with a diverse range of communities.
- Streamline the overall licensing process using both technology and process changes to reduce time spent by staff.
- Redesign of licensing website to provide interested parties information on upcoming training, access to materials about fostering and access to inquiry with recruiters.
- Development of new training materials and times to address clients' needs.
- Development of an orientation to fostering that is held monthly for prospective foster parents.
- Development of a handbook for foster/relative and caseworkers on placement to help support families with easily accessible information when they do receive a placement.
- Utilize the University of South Florida Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI) website to develop, film and post additional training topics.
- Working with Human Resources to address open positions that impact customer services to foster/relative placements.
- Development of a Pre-Service training team that has hosted trainings for prospective family foster parents since January 2021. A sixth training was held for July 2023. More prospective foster parents are being reached and trained than before 2021 when training was delivered in person.
- Development of a contract with Foster Kinship Navigators to train and provide consultative support for fictive and relative homes.
- Redesign of the licensing procedures for fictive kin and relatives to expedite payments to promote stability.

Response to NRS 424.087(1)(d)

NRS 424.087(1)(d) requires a plan to ensure that, to the extent possible, a foster home in which a child is placed pursuant to [NRS 432B.550](#) is located in:

- (1) The same community as the home from which the child was removed; and
- (2) The zone of attendance of the public school that the child was attending when he or she was removed from that home, if applicable.

The following list includes some of the measures the agency has undertaken to maintain a child in their community:

- Targeted recruitment through marketing to the individual counties on radio and through discussion panels for the need to keep children and youth together and in their home school.
- Working with the Aging and Disability Services Division, DHHS, to create a dual licensure program for youth with disabilities to have an option of placement or respite in Assisted Living Homes.
- Working with individual school districts to discuss any connections that a child may have to keep them within the community.

Response to NRS 424.087(1)(e)

NRS 424.087(1)(e) requires an agency to identify strategies for recruiting foster homes in geographic areas with a high rate of placement of children in protective custody. The agency targeted recruitment in places in specific counties by social media, radio and in-person panels, which includes targeting Carson, Elko, and Fallon geographic areas to meet with community providers such as local government, schools, courts, and District Attorneys to hold panel discussions on fostering children from their counties.

Response to NRS 424.087(1)(f)

In response to NRS 424.087(1)(f), which requires an identification of resources available to support foster parents, the agency has identified the following list as available support to foster parents:

- Use of Quality Parenting Initiative to help support pending and/or new foster homes through 1-1 assignments with Advanced Foster Care Mental Health Counselors.
- Referrals to specific training and services, if needed to address behaviors.
- Referral to Kinship Navigator for additional resources and specific training and consultation for relative and fictive kin homes.
- Developed and refined initial and post-licensing training in the topics of trauma, attachment, managing emotional dysregulation, sexuality, conflict management, and more.
- Developed the Respite Co-op; a voluntary directory of licensed foster parents to share and swap respite responsibilities.
- Host monthly virtual caregiver support and connection meetings with a licensed mental health counselor.
- Created foster home and relative home handbooks with easily accessible information on providing care and support to children.

Response to NRS 424.087(3)(a)

This section responds to NRS 424.087(3)(a) identifying whether the agency achieved the goals established pursuant to paragraph (b) of subsection 1 of NRS 424.087 for each quarter of the immediately preceding year. The agency has not achieved the goals identified in this section for any of the last four quarters.

Response to NRS 424.087(3)(b)

Pursuant to NRS 424.087(3)(b), this section identifies the number of children placed outside this state for more than 15 days during the immediately preceding year. As of May 31, 2024, 17 youth were placed through DCFS – RR Child Welfare Agency in an out-of-state residential treatment facility for more than 15 days during the immediately preceding year.

Response to NRS 424.087(3)(c)

Pursuant to NRS 424.087(3)(c), this section discusses the reasons for the placements described in paragraph (b) of NRS 424.087(3). The reasons for out of state placements have been due to lack of therapeutic interventions or providers at the community level to provide adequate treatment facilities to address self-injurious and suicide behaviors, aggressive/assaultive and violent behaviors, severe developmental disabilities, juvenile sexual offenders, and those youth with dual diagnosis and mood disorders.

Response to NRS 424.087(3)(d)

As required by NRS 424.087(3)(d), this section provides a summary of changes that could prevent the placements described in paragraph (b) of NRS 424.087(3). The DCFS – RR Child Welfare Agency identified the following needs/changes that could prevent the out of state placements.

- Intensive Outpatient Programs (IOP);
- Partial Hospitalization Program (PHP) and/or access to short-term intermediate care facilities that could be utilized to provide stabilization for children/youth's behavior through assessment, medication management and intensive behavioral interventions;
- High Fidelity Wraparound (intensive care coordination) that would allow the child/youth supports necessary to remain in the state and in their communities;
- Planned respite; and
- Temporary emergency placement opportunities in the Rural Region.

Response to NRS 424.087(3)(e)

Pursuant to NRS 424.087(3)(e), this section includes a summary of changes or actions necessary to allow children who are currently placed outside this State to return to this State.

- Development of sufficient intensive outpatient, partial hospitalization program, and crisis services to address the initial instability and provide time for a more in-depth understanding of the child/youth and family needs to provide the most appropriate support.
- Contracting or developing more specialized placement homes for severely disabled children or those with self-injurious and suicide behaviors, aggressive/assaultive and violent behaviors, severe developmental disabilities, and those youth with dual diagnosis and mood disorders. These homes could also function as a step down for children/youth who are returning from out of state placements to help provide a period of transition. As indicated in section 3(a) of NRS 424.087, the number of foster homes is at a crisis level.

The Children & Youth at Out-of-State Residential Treatment Center Facilities dashboard updated for June 2024 is available at: <https://dcfs.nv.gov/Programs/Data/DCFSDataPage/>, under the Dashboards header.