

February 20, 2019

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 19-18**

This purpose of this All County Letter (ACL) is to provide county Child Welfare Departments (CWDs) information about opting in for Emergency Child Care Bridge Program funding in fiscal years 2019-20 and 2020-21.



PAT LEARY  
ACTING DIRECTOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY  
**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**  
744 P Street • Sacramento, CA 95814 • [www.cdss.ca.gov](http://www.cdss.ca.gov)



GAVIN NEWSOM  
GOVERNOR

February 20, 2019

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 19-18

TO: ALL COUNTY BOARDS OF SUPERVISORS  
ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS  
ALL COUNTY CHILD WELFARE DIRECTORS  
ALL CHILD WELFARE SERVICES NEW SYSTEM  
ALL JUDICIAL COUNCIL STAFF  
ALL FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY DIRECTORS  
ALL COUNTY CHIEF PROBATION OFFICERS  
ALL TITLE IV-E AGREEMENT TRIBES  
ALL COUNTY CHILD CARE COORDINATORS  
ALL FOSTER CARE MANAGERS  
ALL CHILD WELFARE SERVICE PROGRAM MANAGERS

SUBJECT: EMERGENCY CHILD CARE BRIDGE PROGRAM FOR FOSTER CHILDREN (BRIDGE PROGRAM) OPTING IN FISCAL YEARS (FY) 2019-20, 2020-21

REFERENCE: SENATE BILL [\(SB\) 89](#), (CHAPTER 24, STATUTES OF 2017); WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE [\(WIC\) SECTION 309](#); [\(WIC\) SECTION 361.45](#); [\(WIC\) SECTION 11461.6](#) AND [\(WIC\) SECTION 16519.5](#); HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE [\(H&SC\) SECTION 1517](#); EDUCATION CODE [\(EDC\) SECTION 8208](#); [\(EDC\) SECTION 8212](#); [\(EDC\) SECTION 8250\(d\)\(2\)](#); 45 CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS [\(CFR\) SECTION 1356.60](#); MANUAL OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES [\(MPP\) 47-260.3](#); CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS (CCR), [TITLE 5, SECTIONS 18075.1 and 18075.2](#); ALL COUNTY LETTERS NO. [\(ACL\) 18-73](#); [\(ACL\) 18-80](#); and [\(ACL\) 18-80E](#), COUNTY FISCAL LETTERS NO. [\(CFL\) 18/19-04](#); [\(CFL\) 17/18-50](#); [\(CFL\) 17/18-45](#); [\(CFL\) 17/18-45E](#); [\(CFL\) 16/17-75](#); [ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTOR LETTERS DATED 09-17-18](#) AND [\(ACWDL\) 04-09-18](#).

The purpose of this All County Letter is to provide guidance to counties opting to participate in the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children (Bridge Program) in Fiscal Years (FY) 2019-20 and 2020-21. The opt-in period will take place biennially and is subject to appropriation in the annual Budget Act. The funds appropriated will be allocated

annually. The goals of the Bridge Program are to increase the number of foster children successfully placed in home-based family care settings, increase placement stability, increase the capacity of child care programs to meet the needs of foster children in their care, and maximize funding to support the child care needs of eligible families.

**Background**

One of the primary barriers for recruiting and retaining families willing to provide a home for a foster child is the lack of access to child care at the time of placement. With funding provided through the Bridge Program, resource families, licensed/certified foster family homes, approved homes of relatives or Nonrelative Extended Family Members (NREFM) and parenting foster youth or nonminor dependent parents (hereinafter referred to as “eligible families”) may receive access to child care navigator services and a time-limited monthly voucher for child care. Child care providers serving children in the Bridge Program will have access to trauma-informed care training and coaching.

**California’s child care infrastructure**

Child Care Resource and Referral (R&R) Programs provide information to all parents and the community about the availability of child care in their area. The programs assist potential child care providers in the licensing process; offer direct services, including training; and coordinate community resources for the benefit of parents and local child care providers. These services are available in all 58 California counties. Alternative Payment Programs (APPs), funded with state and federal funds, foster parental choice, and offer an array of child care options for parents to choose from, such as in-home care, family child care, and center-based care. APPs work in partnership with R&R Programs and are often housed within the same agency. APPs helps families access child care services and is designed to support parental choice and accommodate the individual needs of the family.

**The Bridge Program consists of the following three components: voucher, child care navigator, and trauma informed care training and coaching**

**Emergency child care voucher or payment**

Eligible families may receive a child care voucher to pay for child care costs for foster children birth through age 12, and for children and youth with exceptional needs up to age 21. A voucher is a time-limited payment that may be issued for up to six-months or until the child is successfully transitioned into long-term child care paid through another source (subsidized or unsubsidized), whichever is sooner. If the family is unable to secure long-term child care during the initial six-month period, eligibility may be extended at the discretion of the county for an additional six-months but may not exceed 12 months total. When the family secures a long-term child care placement, the Bridge Program voucher shall be terminated.

Counties are authorized to disburse child care payments either directly to the family or to the child care provider. All vouchers and payments must be paid in accordance with the [Regional Market Rate \(RMR\) ceilings](#) for subsidized child care payment rates. The California Code of Regulations, [Title 5, Division 1, Chapter 19, Subchapter 2.5, 18074 to 18076.3](#) provide the requirements for the use of the RMR ceilings. Participating counties

shall determine eligibility for the Bridge Program using the criteria for eligible populations outlined below:

- Resource families and families that have a child placed with them for an emergency or compelling reason;
- Licensed foster family homes or certified family homes;
- Approved homes of relatives or NREFMs; and
- Parenting foster youth and nonminor dependent parents.

Counties may establish additional criteria based on local priorities and available funding for Bridge Program eligible populations. Child care providers qualified for other child care subsidies are not prohibited from receiving Bridge Program funds. Participating families have a choice in selecting child care providers.

### **Child care navigator**

The child care navigator, employed by a local R&R Program, works with the eligible family, child's social worker or probation officer, and child and family team to assess child care opportunities and provide consumer education to the family based on the child's age and needs. The child care navigator may be co-located at the local child welfare office to facilitate collaboration between the child welfare staff and build connections to resources for the child.

Navigator services shall be made available to any child in foster care, any child previously in foster care who has returned to his or her home of origin, and any child of parents involved in the child welfare system, including any child who meets the eligibility criteria for the Bridge Program. Eligibility for navigator services shall not be contingent on a child's receipt of a Bridge Program voucher.

The Child Care Navigator will:

- Assist the family and social worker or probation officer with accessing child care at the time of placement as well as identifying child care options appropriate to the child's age and needs;
- Connect the family to information and resources about school readiness and child care to empower families and improve their ability to access resources and make informed decisions about the child care needs of the child;
- Assist the family in identifying potential opportunities for an ongoing child care subsidy if eligible;
- Assist the family in completing appropriate child care program applications and enrolling into a child care program; and
- Develop an overall, long-term child care plan for the child with efforts to minimize child care transitions or disruptions for the child where possible.

### **Trauma-informed care training and coaching**

Child care providers participating in the Bridge Program will receive access to trauma-informed care training and coaching to assist in applying training curriculum. Training and coaching are intended to help child care providers learn strategies for working with children who have experienced trauma. The R&R Program in receipt of funding is responsible for

providing trauma-informed care training and coaching to child care providers working with children in the foster care system, and children of parenting foster youth. The California Child Care Resource and Referral Network (Network) developed and coordinates the training content to be used by all participating local R&R Programs.

**Counties participating in the Bridge Program shall:**

- Ensure collaboration between the child welfare services program and CalWORKs child care program administrators in the county to share information, identify priorities, and plan for the implementation of the Bridge Program;
- Develop interagency communication and enter into a formal agreement with a local R&R Program to provide child care navigator services for families receiving a Bridge Program voucher and other eligible children referred. If the R&R Program does not enter into a formal agreement with the county child welfare agency, the R&R Program must explain, in writing, why it is not practical nor feasible;
- Determine eligibility and establish local priorities and program parameters for the county's implementation of the Bridge Program, consistent with the goals of the Program;
- Distribute the voucher payment directly to the eligible family or child care provider. Counties may elect to contract with a local APP to administer the child care voucher payment;
- Ensure voucher payment is in an amount commensurate with the RMR ceiling payment rates;
- Take steps to maximize funding from local, state, and federal sources; and
- Collect and submit monthly data and outcomes to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) using the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children Report (CCB 18).

**Instructions for county participation**

Counties that intend to participate in the Bridge Program will opt in biennially beginning with FY 2019-20. The county must complete and submit a plan included as Attachment B. Any changes taking place throughout the two-year timeframe must be submitted to the CDSS as an amended plan.

The completed plan must be submitted electronically to the CDSS Child Care Programs Bureau by **March 29, 2019**. Please e-mail completed plans to:  
[ChildCareBridge@dss.ca.gov](mailto:ChildCareBridge@dss.ca.gov)

Attachment A displays the planning allocation for all counties assuming that all 58 counties opt to participate in the Bridge Program for FY 2019-20. The final allocation for FY 2019-20 will be released through a subsequent County Fiscal Letter (CFL) after the county biennial plans are received and is expected to be approximately the same but may increase or decrease dependent on the final State Budget appropriation and/or changes with counties. The child care navigator and training allocations were calculated by determining each county's percentage of eligible caseload to the statewide total eligible caseload. The voucher allocation was calculated utilizing the eligible caseload multiplied by the RMR for the appropriate category to develop each county's percentage of the total statewide

allocation. All funding is subject to appropriation in the annual Budget Act. The funds appropriated will be allocated annually.

For FY 2020-21, the CDSS will again issue a planning allocation for all 58 counties. The counties that have opted in will not be required to submit another plan. Counties that did not opt in the first year will again have an opportunity to opt in for FY 2020-21. Final allocations will be issued through a subsequent CFL and will reflect any newly opted in counties and/or changes in the State Budget appropriation.

As previously noted, the Bridge Program is an opt-in program with capped funding. Counties are not obligated to provide the resources and level of service beyond what is provided in the state general fund allocation but are encouraged to leverage other local and federal funding sources to tailor the availability of child care for eligible families to the specific needs of the county.

Bridge Program funds are limited and may not meet the needs of every foster child otherwise eligible and in need of child care in the county. Therefore, counties shall consider the intent of the legislation, budgetary constraints and opportunities, and the best approach to serve the system needs of foster parents, children, and families in the county. Counties shall carefully consider target populations defined by age, placement type, and service need. The county may calculate the projected annual cost based upon the caseload in the target population multiplied by the relevant RMR and the projected average length of time children would be served by a Bridge Program subsidy. If this annual cost projection exceeds the state general fund allocation, the county may choose to further prioritize eligible populations to ensure sufficient funding or choose to utilize/leverage local and federal funds to cover any additional costs or choose to discontinue services for the remainder of the FY.

Counties are required to use Bridge Program funding to complement county child welfare agency efforts to recruit, retain, and support eligible families and to supplement, not supplant, any existing funding already used to provide child care to children in home-based foster care placements.

After approval of submitted plans, the CDSS will distribute any unallocated Bridge Program funds among participating counties. Final allocations for July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2020, and claiming instructions will be included in forthcoming CFLs. Final allocations are contingent on the 2019-20 State budget. Please be advised that allocations are likely to change in future years as the caseload and number of counties that choose to participate may fluctuate.

Bridge Program fiscal questions can be directed to the CDSS Fiscal Systems at [fiscal.systems@dss.ca.gov](mailto:fiscal.systems@dss.ca.gov).

### **Procurement**

Due to the circumstances of this project, the CDSS has approved for counties to utilize procurement by negotiation to conduct procurements for the Bridge Program. ([Manual of Policies and Procedures 23-650.1.18](#))

**Data collection**

Counties are required to submit data and outcomes using the CCB 18. The CCB 18 includes data on Bridge Program eligibility and enrollment, type of voucher placements and child care settings, the length of time receiving voucher, and child care transition information. The data also includes the number of referrals to, and families served by, child care navigators as well as the number of trauma-informed care trainings held.

To complete the electronic form, download a copy of the accessible CCB 18, which includes links to the instructions and validations, from the [Data Systems and Survey Design Section \(DSSDS\) website](http://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/Research-and-Data/Report-Form-and-Instructions) at <http://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/Research-and-Data/Report-Form-and-Instructions>. All Bridge Program opt-in counties are required to submit the report via email to DSSDS at [admccb18@dss.ca.gov](mailto:admccb18@dss.ca.gov). If you have any questions regarding the completion of the CCB 18, please contact DSSDS at [admccb18@dss.ca.gov](mailto:admccb18@dss.ca.gov).

Information and resources related to the [Bridge Program](http://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/CalWORKs-Child-Care/ECC-Bridge-Program) can be found at [www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/CalWORKs-Child-Care/ECC-Bridge-Program](http://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/CalWORKs-Child-Care/ECC-Bridge-Program). If you have Bridge Program questions, please contact the Child Care Programs Bureau at [ChildCareBridge@dss.ca.gov](mailto:ChildCareBridge@dss.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

***Original Document Signed by:***

KIM JOHNSON, Deputy Director  
Family Engagement and  
Empowerment Division

***Original Document Signed by:***

GREGORY E. ROSE, Deputy Director  
Children and Family Services Division

**Attachments:**

- A. Emergency Child Care Bridge Program Planning Allocation
- B. FY 2019-20/2020-21 Directors Certification Plan

c: County Welfare Directors Association  
Chief Probation Officers of California  
Judicial Council of California  
CDSS, Data Systems and Survey Design Section

**FISCAL YEAR 2019-20 EMERGENCY CHILD CARE BRIDGE FOR FOSTER CHILDREN  
GENERAL FUND (GF) PLANNING ALLOCATION**

COUNTY	EMERGENCY CHILD CARE VOUCHER (ASSISTANCE) GF*	CHILD CARE NAVIGATOR (ADMINISTRATION) GF	TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE TRAINING (ADMINISTRATION) GF	TOTAL ADMINISTRATION GF	TOTAL ASSISTANCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE GF
ALAMEDA	\$500,371	\$132,442	\$68,237	\$200,679	\$701,050
ALPINE	\$10,000	\$32,500	\$1,000	\$33,500	\$43,500
AMADOR	\$20,000	\$32,500	\$3,332	\$35,832	\$55,832
BUTTE	\$196,814	\$54,176	\$38,869	\$93,045	\$289,859
CALAVERAS	\$26,580	\$33,454	\$5,553	\$39,007	\$65,587
COLUSA	\$20,000	\$32,610	\$4,195	\$36,805	\$56,805
CONTRA COSTA	\$421,025	\$67,146	\$59,723	\$126,869	\$547,894
DEL NORTE	\$24,184	\$32,917	\$4,689	\$37,606	\$61,790
EL DORADO	\$108,889	\$42,357	\$19,866	\$62,223	\$171,112
FRESNO	\$666,793	\$115,422	\$137,337	\$252,759	\$919,552
GLENN	\$23,401	\$33,300	\$5,306	\$38,606	\$62,007
HUMBOLDT	\$170,525	\$51,797	\$35,043	\$86,840	\$257,365
IMPERIAL	\$152,000	\$49,264	\$30,972	\$80,236	\$232,236
INYO	\$10,000	\$32,500	\$1,234	\$33,734	\$43,734
KERN	\$478,568	\$92,474	\$100,442	\$192,916	\$671,484
KINGS	\$104,868	\$43,201	\$21,224	\$64,425	\$169,293
LAKE	\$57,840	\$37,598	\$12,216	\$49,814	\$107,654
LASSEN	\$20,000	\$32,500	\$3,455	\$35,955	\$55,955
LOS ANGELES	\$8,538,100	\$1,172,042	\$1,498,494	\$2,670,536	\$11,208,636
MADERA	\$102,438	\$43,201	\$21,224	\$64,425	\$166,863
MARIN	\$26,944	\$32,500	\$3,085	\$35,585	\$62,529
MARIPOSA	\$10,000	\$32,500	\$1,000	\$33,500	\$43,500
MENDOCINO	\$71,035	\$38,596	\$13,820	\$52,416	\$123,451
MERCED	\$147,824	\$49,648	\$31,589	\$81,237	\$229,061
MODOC	\$10,000	\$32,500	\$1,604	\$34,104	\$44,104
MONO	\$10,000	\$32,500	\$1,000	\$33,500	\$43,500
MONTEREY	\$140,467	\$46,655	\$26,776	\$73,431	\$213,898
NAPA	\$49,084	\$35,219	\$8,391	\$43,610	\$92,694
NEVADA	\$26,203	\$32,917	\$4,689	\$37,606	\$63,809
ORANGE	\$984,899	\$126,244	\$154,736	\$280,980	\$1,265,879
PLACER	\$60,429	\$36,754	\$10,858	\$47,612	\$108,041
PLUMAS	\$20,000	\$32,500	\$3,455	\$35,955	\$55,955
RIVERSIDE	\$1,029,596	\$156,022	\$202,613	\$358,635	\$1,388,231
SACRAMENTO	\$686,831	\$110,817	\$129,934	\$240,751	\$927,582
SAN BENITO	\$20,000	\$32,500	\$2,468	\$34,968	\$54,968
SAN BERNARDINO	\$2,471,515	\$332,008	\$485,555	\$817,563	\$3,289,078
SAN DIEGO	\$951,239	\$129,083	\$159,301	\$288,384	\$1,239,623
SAN FRANCISCO	\$378,681	\$83,255	\$37,389	\$120,644	\$499,325
SAN JOAQUIN	\$439,526	\$85,259	\$88,844	\$174,103	\$613,629
SAN LUIS OBISPO	\$137,430	\$45,273	\$24,556	\$69,829	\$207,259
SAN MATEO	\$73,627	\$36,140	\$9,871	\$46,011	\$119,638
SANTA BARBARA	\$138,709	\$43,969	\$22,457	\$66,426	\$205,135
SANTA CLARA	\$496,807	\$71,828	\$67,250	\$139,078	\$635,885
SANTA CRUZ	\$80,820	\$38,136	\$13,080	\$51,216	\$132,036
SHASTA	\$153,970	\$50,108	\$32,329	\$82,437	\$236,407
SIERRA	\$10,000	\$32,500	\$1,000	\$33,500	\$43,500
SISKIYOU	\$33,735	\$34,605	\$7,404	\$42,009	\$75,744
SOLANO	\$130,874	\$45,350	\$24,679	\$70,029	\$200,903
SONOMA	\$175,811	\$78,573	\$29,861	\$108,434	\$284,245
STANISLAUS	\$233,895	\$60,392	\$48,864	\$109,256	\$343,151
SUTTER	\$54,256	\$36,908	\$11,105	\$48,013	\$102,269
TEHAMA	\$48,722	\$36,908	\$11,105	\$48,013	\$96,735
TRINITY	\$10,000	\$32,500	\$2,098	\$34,598	\$44,598
TULARE	\$397,568	\$83,187	\$85,512	\$168,699	\$566,267
TUOLUMNE	\$35,085	\$34,374	\$7,033	\$41,407	\$76,492
VENTURA	\$302,549	\$61,543	\$50,715	\$112,258	\$414,807
YOLO	\$220,261	\$53,023	\$37,019	\$90,042	\$310,303
YUBA	\$66,545	\$38,825	\$14,190	\$53,015	\$119,560
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$21,987,333</b>	<b>\$4,535,020</b>	<b>\$3,939,646</b>	<b>\$8,474,666</b>	<b>\$30,461,999</b>

\* The minimum allocation is based on county foster care caseload and the local Regional Market Rates rates as of January 2018.

\* Counties with smaller caseload sizes receive a minimum floor of \$10,000.

A forthcoming County Fiscal Letter will be provided to redistribute funds from any counties not participating in the Bridge Program. The appropriated funds must be used to supplement and not supplant resources already dedicated to activities for this purpose.



**Emergency Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children (Bridge Program)**  
**July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2021**

**I. PROGRAM CONTACTS**

<b>COUNTY:</b>
<b>Primary Contact:</b>
Department/Title:
Email:
Phone:
<b>Secondary Contact:</b>
Department/Title:
Email:
Phone:
<b>Fiscal Contact:</b>
Department/Title:
Email:
Phone:
<b>Data Contact:</b>
Department/Title:
Email:
Phone:

**II. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION AND PROJECTED OUTCOMES**

Voucher Distribution	<input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Alternative Payment Program	Contact name: Phone: Email:
Child Care Navigator	Child Care Resource & Referral Agency	Contact name: Phone: Email:
Trauma-informed Care Training	Child Care Resource & Referral Agency	Contact name: Phone: Email:

Ages of children served by Bridge Program voucher (county set criteria).	<input type="checkbox"/> 0-2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3-5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6-12 <input type="checkbox"/> 13-21 (children with exceptional needs, and severely disabled children up to age 21)
Will the county child welfare agency establish additional eligibility criteria/local priorities for the Bridge Program? Please provide additional eligibility criteria or local priorities (i.e. prioritizing the 0-5 population). If additional space is needed, include as an attachment.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, please describe <input type="checkbox"/> No

## Attachment B – Directors Certification

Projected issuance of Child Care Vouchers (include ages of children and number of emergency placements and compelling reason placements).	Total Vouchers by age	Emergency Placements	Compelling Reason
	0-2 _____	0-2 _____	0-2 _____
	3-5 _____	3-5 _____	3-5 _____
	6-12 _____	6-12 _____	6-12 _____
	Total _____	Total _____	Total _____
Projected number of Bridge Families to be served by the Child Care Navigator			
Projected number of child care providers to be served by the training			
Projected number child care providers to receive coaching			

### III. SIGNATURES

**The success of the Bridge Program is contingent upon open communication, collaboration, and transparency between the participating agencies. Your signature below signifies agreement to support this partnership.**

**ALTERNATIVE PAYMENT PROGRAM SIGNATURE**

(The APP signature is only required if county is contracting with the APP for the child care voucher payment.)

Agency Representative's Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**RESOURCE AND REFERRAL AGENCY SIGNATURE**

(The R&R signature is only required if the R&R has not opted out of the program.)

Agency Representative's Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

### COUNTY DIRECTOR'S CERTIFICATION

I certify that the county will administer the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children pursuant to the conditions set forth by the California Department of Social Services. In so doing, the county will, to the maximum extent, leverage federal available pursuant to Title IV-E of the federal Social Security Act. I attest that the information completed above and attached is true and correct.

Director's Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_