

February 3, 2016

COUNTY FISCAL LETTER NO. 15/16-43

TO: COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
COUNTY FISCAL OFFICERS
CHIEF PROBATION OFFICERS

SUBJECT: CLAIMING INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE EXPANSION OF THE
RESOURCE FAMILY APPROVAL PROGRAM TO ADDITIONAL
COUNTIES

REFERENCE: [ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. I-31-09](#),
DATED APRIL 22, 2009;
[ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 05-13](#), DATED JUNE 16, 2005;
[ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 05-38](#),
DATED DECEMBER 5, 2005;
[ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 05-13E](#),
DATED FEBRUARY 22, 2006;
[COUNTY FISCAL LETTER NO. 93/94-38](#),
DATED MARCH 18, 1994;
[COUNTY FISCAL LETTER NO. 12/13-24](#),
DATED DECEMBER 31, 2012;
[COUNTY FISCAL LETTER NO. 15/16-08](#),
DATED APRIL 6, 2015;
[ASSEMBLY BILL 340 \(CHAPTER 464, STATUTES OF 2007\)](#);
[ASSEMBLY BILL 403 \(CHAPTER 773, STATUTES OF 2015\)](#);
[SENATE BILL 1460 \(CHAPTER 772, STATUTES OF 2014\)](#);
[TITLE 45, CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS](#)
[SECTION 1356.60](#);
[WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE SECTION 11402.5](#);
[WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE SECTION 16519.5](#)

This County Fiscal Letter (CFL) announces the expansion of the Resource Family Approval (RFA) Program (hereafter referred to as "RFA Program") from the original Cohort One group (five counties) to include a Cohort Two group (an additional nine counties). It also provides claiming instructions for the RFA Program for county welfare departments (CWD) and county probation departments (CPD) in those counties and in all future counties that participate in the RFA Program.

Background and Implementation Schedule

The RFA Program was established by [Assembly Bill \(AB\) 340](#), which created [Welfare and Institutions Code \(W&IC\) section 16519.5](#), to develop a unified approval process for prospective Foster Care providers and adoptive parents. Specifically, W&IC section 16519.5 required the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), in consultation with county child welfare agencies, foster parent associations, and other interested community parties, to implement a unified, family friendly and child-centered resource family approval process. The RFA Program will replace the multiple processes for licensing foster family homes and approving relatives and non-relative extended family members as Foster Care providers, guardians and approving adoptive families.

The RFA Program was originally announced in [All County Information Notice \(ACIN\) No. I-31-09](#), which solicited applications from counties to participate in the pilot program. The following five counties were approved to participate in the initial group (Cohort One):

- Kings
- San Francisco
- San Luis Obispo
- Santa Barbara
- Santa Clara

The Cohort One counties implemented their RFA Programs between November 2013 and August 2014. With the passage of [Senate Bill 1460](#), which added W&IC 16519.5(b)(2), additional counties were able to participate in the early implementation of the program upon authorization by CDSS. An additional nine counties (Cohort Two) have been approved to participate in the early implementation of the RFA Program. The nine additional counties (and their implementation dates) included in Cohort Two are as follows:

- Yolo (January 1, 2016)
- Orange (February 16, 2016)
- Butte (March 1, 2016)
- Madera (March 1, 2016)
- Monterey (March 1, 2016)
- Ventura (March 1, 2016)
- Stanislaus (April 1, 2016)
- Siskiyou (June 30, 2016)
- San Joaquin (July 1, 2016)

[AB 403](#) established a statewide RFA implementation date for all counties of January 1, 2017. Tribes are not subject to the requirements of the RFA Program and

tribally-approved homes continue to be an acceptable placement option for counties. The following claiming instructions apply to all implementing counties.

Claiming Instructions

Effective the date of each county's implementation, the following Program Codes (PC), Time Study Codes (TSC), Non-Time Study Codes (NTSC), Program Identifier Numbers (PIN) and Direct to Program (DTP) codes are available for claiming administrative costs for activities related to the RFA Program. All applicable codes described in this letter will have the Title IV-E non-federal discount rate applied. Refer to [CFL No. 12/13-24](#) and [CFL No. 15/16-08](#) for more information regarding the discount rate.

Expenditures for activities in support of existing (non-RFA) families will continue to be claimed under the current claiming codes. All activities associated with becoming a resource family, as defined in W&IC section [16519.5\(c\)\(1\)](#), will be claimed to the RFA PCs 888 (RESOURCE FAMILY APPROVAL) and 889 (RESOURCE FAMILY APP PROBATION) listed in this letter. Per Realignment 2011, as described in [CFL No. 11/12-18](#), any pre-Realignment state share of the RFA Program was realigned to the Local Revenue Fund (LRF). If state General Fund (GF) is appropriated for the RFA Program for use in Fiscal Year 2016-17, sharing ratios for the following PCs may change to allow access to those funds.

RFA – CWD Cases

PC	888	Resource Family Approval
TSC	8881	Resource Family Approval
PIN	888031	Contracted Services
PIN	888003	Transportation
PIN	888068	Direct Costs
PIN	888092	Casework OT/CTO Costs
PIN	888093	Support Staff OT/CTO Costs
PIN	888094	Start Up/Nonrecurring Costs
DTP	A71	Resource Family Approval

The PC 888 will capture CWD administrative expenditures associated with the RFA Program and is funded at 50/35/00/15 (Federal/State/Health/County). Per Realignment 2011 as described in [CFL No. 11/12-18](#), the State Use Only code 166 is used to shift GF costs from PC 888 to the LRF.

Time Study Instructions

Counties should claim time spent on administrative activities associated with the RFA to TSC 8881. The following is a description of the TSC 8881 – Resource Family Approval:

CODE 8881 RESOURCE FAMILY APPROVAL

The time study code includes activities performed for an applicant or an approved family (resource families may be related or non-related caregivers). Activities include RFA recruitment, completing the comprehensive assessment as described in the Resource Family Written Directives and may also include but are not limited to:

- Background checks, clearances and assessment.
- Home environment assessment.
- Permanency assessment.
- Pre-approval training.
- Written assessment.
- Activities related to emergency placements and placements based on a compelling reason.
- Information and data system activities.
- Travel related to any of these activities.

Background check clearances include Child Welfare Services Live Scan/California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System, Child Abuse Index searches and Federal Bureau of Investigation and California Department of Justice database background checks for criminal records. Activities may also include tasks associated with the provision of information to resource families including their rights to due process.

RFA – CPD Cases

PC	889	Resource Family Approval Probation
NTSC	8890	Resource Family Approval Probation
PIN	889059	Probation Expenses

The CPDs may claim allowable administrative activities associated with the RFA Program under PC 889; it is funded at 50/00/00/50 (Federal/State/Health/County).

Non-Time Study Instructions

The following is a description of the NTSC 8890 – Resource Family Approval Probation:

CODE 8890 RESOURCE FAMILY APPROVAL PROBATION

The PC 889 is to be used by CPDs claiming RFA expenditures in accordance with the applicable Memorandum of Understanding between the CWD and the CPD.

Training in the RFA Program for Both CWDs and CPDs

The RFA-related staff development costs will be reimbursed at the enhanced rate of 75 percent for FFP for the following activities:

- Training personnel employed or preparing for employment by the Title IV-E agency administering the State Plan.
- Short-term training (including travel and per diem expenses) provided to current or prospective foster or adoptive parents.
- Training provided to members of the state licensed or approved child care institutions providing care to foster and adopted children receiving Title IV-E assistance.

All other allowable RFA-related training activities meeting the requirements of [Title 45, Code of Federal Regulations Section 1356.60](#) will be reimbursed at 50 percent FFP.

The CWDs may use PC 888 to claim both enhanced rate and non-enhanced rate staff development costs through the County Expense Claim.

The CPDs may use PC 889 to claim non-enhanced rate staff development costs and PC 130 (PROBATION IV-E/TRAINING) to claim enhanced rate RFA-related staff development activity costs.

Emergency Assistance (EA)

The following information is being provided as guidance to RFA implementing counties in regard to the use of EA funds for emergency placements.

The EA program is federally-funded under the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Block Grant, which provides funding for short term aid to children and families in emergency situations who meet certain specified criteria pursuant to [W&IC section 11402.5](#). One component of the EA program allows for the cost of Emergency Shelter Care (ESC) provided to eligible children from the date of intake at a county-operated ESC facility, contracted ESC facility or with a relative. Relatives with emergency placements who are being approved under the RFA Program are also considered a contracted ESC provider.

The EA funds may be used by counties participating in the RFA Program. The following codes are to be used when claiming EA activities associated with the RFA Program, according to the type of EA placement and the number of days the youth is in an EA placement.

EA Contracted ESC

The PCs 134 (EA-Contracted-ESC [1-30 days]) and 136 (EA-Contracted ESC [Over 30]) are to be used for claiming costs for EA placements with non-relatives, Non-Relative Extended Family Members and contracted facilities for 1-30 days and over 30 days respectively. Relative placements for 1-30 days should use PC 134. There is no federal funding for relative placements over 30 days. Please refer to the section on PC 190 for claiming relative placements over 30 days.

PC	134	EA-Contracted-ESC (1-30 days)
NTSC	1340	EA-Contracted-ESC (1-30 days)
PIN	134002	Emergency Shelter Care
PIN	134092	Casework OT/CTO Costs
PIN	134093	Support Staff OT/CTO Costs
PIN	134094	Start Up/Nonrecurring Costs

PC	136	EA-Contracted ESC (Over 30)
NTSC	1360	EA-Contracted ESC (Over 30)
PIN	136002	Emergency Shelter Care
PIN	136092	Casework OT/CTO Costs
PIN	136093	Support Staff OT/CTO Costs
PIN	136094	Start Up/Nonrecurring Costs

The PC 134 is funded at 85/00/00/15 (Federal/State/Health/County). The PC 136 is funded at 50/00/00/50 (Federal/State/Health/County). Please refer to [All County Letter \(ACL\) No. 05-13](#), [ACL No. 05-13E](#), [ACL No. 05-38](#) for allowable placement information and [CFL No. 93/94-38](#) for more claiming information regarding these codes.

Other County Operated Program/General Relief (OCOP/GR) Social Services

There is no federal funding for relative placements after the first 30 days of EA. For costs incurred *after* the first 30 days, counties should claim costs to PC 190 (OCOP/GR SOCIAL SERVICES [Over 30 Days]).

PC	190	OCOP/GR SOCIAL SERVICES (Over 30 Days)
NTSC	1900	OCOP/GR Social Services (Over 30 days)
PIN	190066	Personal Services: ESC-County Op
PIN	190067	Operating Costs: ESC-County Op

This PC is funded at 00/00/00/100 (Federal/State/Health/County).

Please be advised that if EA funding is used and the child is found not eligible for Title IV-E, upon receiving RFA, the family may need to apply for the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids program. This may result in a decrease in the amount of subsidy received in counties that have not opted in to the Approved Relative Caregiver Funding Option Program.

If you have any questions regarding these claiming instructions, please direct them to the Fiscal Systems Bureau at fiscal.systems@dss.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By:

SALENA CHOW, Acting Chief
Fiscal Forecasting and Policy Branch