



CDSS

WILL LIGHTBOURNE
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STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
GOVERNOR

June 14, 2018

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 18-73

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)

REFERENCE: SENATE BILL (SB) [89](#), (CHAPTER 24, STATUTES OF 2017); WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE (WIC) SECTIONS [309](#); [361.45](#); [11461.6](#) AND [16519.5](#); HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE (H&SC) SECTIONS [1517](#); EDUCATION CODE (EDC) SECTIONS [8208](#); [8212](#); [8250\(d\)\(2\)](#); 45 CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS (CFR) [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 LETTER NO. [17-109](#); COUNTY FISCAL LETTERS NO. [17/18-45](#); [17/18-45E](#) AND [16/17-75](#).

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 Year (FY) 2018-19. 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 who take in 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, families that have a child placed with them in an emergency or for a compelling reason, licensed foster family homes or certified family homes, approved homes of relatives or nonrelative extended family members (NREFM), and parents under the jurisdiction of juvenile court, including, but not limited to, nonminor dependent parents who have their child placed with them (hereinafter referred to as “eligible families”) are eligible to receive a time-limited monthly payment or voucher for child care and access to child care navigator services. Child care providers serving children in the Bridge Program shall receive access to trauma-informed care training and coaching. Subject to budget appropriation, the Bridge Program will be allocated \$31 million in FY 2018-19, beginning July 1, 2018.

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 (APP), funded with state and federal funds, offer an array of child care arrangements for parents, such as in-home care, family child care, and center-based care. The APP helps families access child care services and provides payment for those services directly to the child care provider selected by the family. The APP is designed to support parental choice and accommodate the individual needs of the family. The APP processes the families’ application to receive subsidized child care services.

The Bridge Program consists of three components:

1. **Emergency child care voucher or payment:** Eligible families may receive a time-limited child care voucher or payment to help pay for child care costs for foster children birth through age 12, children with exceptional needs, and severely disabled children up to age 21. Counties are authorized to disburse child care payments either directly to the family or to the child care provider. All vouchers and payments, whether paid directly to the family or child care provider, 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, Sections 18074 to 18076.3 provide guidance regarding the use of the RMR ceilings. The ceilings for subsidized child care payment rates are available at: <http://www3.cde.ca.gov/rcscc/>.
2. **Child care navigator:** A local R&R Program will provide a child care navigator to eligible families. The navigator will assist with finding a child care provider, securing

a subsidized child care placement if eligible, completing child care program applications, and developing a plan for long-term child care appropriate to the child's age and needs. Eligibility for navigator services shall not be contingent on a child's receipt of a child care payment or voucher.

3. **Trauma-informed care training and coaching:** Child care programs participating in the Bridge Program will receive access to trauma-informed care training. Child care providers will also receive access to coaching to assist them in applying training curriculum and learn strategies for working with children in foster care.

Child Care Vouchers or Payments

Participating counties shall determine eligibility of a child for the Bridge Program using the criteria outlined below. Families eligible for a child care Bridge Program payment include:

- 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
- Parents under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court, including, but not limited to nonminor dependent parents.

These families may receive a payment or voucher when work or school responsibilities prevent them from being at home when the foster child is not in school or for periods when the family is required to participate, without the child, in activities associated with parenting that are beyond the scope of ordinary parental duties, including but not limited to, attendance at administrative or judicial reviews, case conferences, and family training.

Counties may establish additional eligibility criteria based on local priorities for the populations who are eligible for Bridge Program funding. Child care providers that are otherwise eligible for a child care subsidy are eligible for Bridge Program funds. Eligible families shall have choice in selecting child care providers.

Time-Limited Payments: A payment or voucher may be issued for up to six-months until the child is successfully transitioned into long-term, subsidized child care. If the family is unable to secure long-term, subsidized child care during the initial six-month period, eligibility may be extended an additional six-months, not to exceed 12 total months, at the discretion of the county. If the family secures a subsidized child care placement while enrolled in the Bridge Program, prior to the completion of the initial six-month period (or in the case of an extension for up to the 12-month period), the voucher or payment provided via the Bridge Program shall be terminated.

Child Care Navigator

The child care navigator, employed by a local R&R Program, works with the eligible family, child welfare worker, 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 in order to facilitate collaboration between the child welfare staff and the child and family team as well as 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 child care payment or voucher.

The Child Care Navigator will:

- Assist the family, child welfare worker, social worker or probation officer, and other child and family team members 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, including plans, where possible, to minimize child care transitions or disruptions for the child.

Trauma-Informed Care Training and Coaching

The R&R Program in receipt of funding is required to provide trauma-informed care training and coaching to child care providers working with children, and children of parenting youth, in the foster care system. The California Child Care Resource and Referral Network (Network) develops and coordinates the training content to be used by all participating local R&R Programs. Training will include, but is not limited to, infant and toddler development and research-based, trauma-informed best care practices for children in the child welfare system. Child care providers shall receive coaching to assist them in applying the training curriculum and learn strategies for working with children in foster care.

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 and enter into an agreement with a local R&R Program to provide a child care navigator for families receiving a monthly child care payment or voucher and other eligible children referred;

- Determine eligibility and establish local priorities and program parameters for children accessing the Bridge Program to increase placement stability for foster children placed with eligible families;
- 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 the payment or voucher 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 quarterly data and outcomes to CDSS using data collection form CCB18.

Additionally, as a condition of receiving funds, each R&R Program must develop and enter into a memorandum of understanding, contract, or other formal agreement with the county child welfare agency in order to facilitate interagency communication and, to the maximum extent possible, to leverage federal Title IV-E funding, including administrative funding, available to Title IV-E of the federal Social Security Act, to enhance navigation and training support.

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.

Instructions for County Participation:

Counties that intend to participate in the Bridge Program starting July 1, 2018, through June 30, 2019, must complete and submit a plan included as Attachment B.

The completed plan must be submitted to the Child Care Programs Bureau by **July 20, 2018**.

Please e-mail or mail completed plans to:

Family Engagement and Empowerment Division
Attn: Child Care Programs Bureau
California Department of Social Services
744 P Street, MS 8-8-139
Sacramento, CA 95814
ChildCareBridge@dss.ca.gov

Attachment A displays the minimum funding allocation for counties that opt to participate in the Bridge Program. 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.

The Bridge Program is an opt-in program with capped funding that aims to increase the number of foster children successfully placed in home-based family care settings, increase 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. 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, 2018, through June 30, 2019, and claiming instructions will be included in forthcoming County Fiscal Letters. Final allocations are contingent on the Governor's budget. A county's participation in the FY 2017-18 Bridge Program does not obligate the county to participate in FY 2018-19. Please be advised that allocations are likely to change in future years as the number of counties that choose to participate may fluctuate.

Data Collection

Counties choosing to participate in the Bridge Program will also be required to submit data and outcomes using the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children report (CCB 18). The CCB 18 report includes data on Bridge Program vouchers eligibility and enrollment, type of voucher placements and child care settings, the length of time receiving voucher, and transition information. The data also includes the number of referrals to, and families served by, child care navigators and the number of trauma-informed care trainings held.

To complete the electronic form, Bridge Program opt in counties are to download a copy of the accessible CCB 18 form, which includes links to the form's instructions and validations, from the Data Systems and Survey Design Bureau (DSSDB) website at <http://www.cdss.ca.gov/dssdb/>. All Bridge Program opt in counties are required to submit the report via email to DSSDB at admccb18@dss.ca.gov. If you have any questions regarding the completion of the CCB 18 report, please contact DSSDB at (916) 651-8269 or admccb18@dss.ca.gov.

If you have any questions, please contact the Child Care Programs Bureau at (916) 657-2144 or ChildCareBridge@dss.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By:

TODD BLAND, 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 Minimum Allocation
- B. FY 2018-19 Directors Certification Plan

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

**FISCAL YEAR 2018-19 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 CHILD CARE NAVIGATOR AND TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE TRAINING (ADMINISTRATION) GF
ALAMEDA	\$524,888	\$142,737	\$72,367	\$215,104
ALPINE	\$10,000	\$32,500	\$1,000	\$33,500
AMADOR	\$26,735	\$33,995	\$5,482	\$39,477
BUTTE	\$195,443	\$58,500	\$39,107	\$97,607
CALAVERAS	\$28,134	\$34,439	\$6,092	\$40,531
COLUSA	\$20,000	\$32,500	\$3,168	\$35,668
CONTRA COSTA	\$435,337	\$76,256	\$63,474	\$139,730
DEL NORTE	\$20,945	\$33,285	\$4,508	\$37,793
EL DORADO	\$102,117	\$43,939	\$19,127	\$63,066
FRESNO	\$628,534	\$125,798	\$131,455	\$257,253
GLENN	\$20,000	\$32,500	\$3,289	\$35,789
HUMBOLDT	\$138,555	\$50,420	\$28,021	\$78,441
IMPERIAL	\$140,744	\$51,219	\$29,117	\$80,336
INYO	\$10,000	\$32,500	\$1,462	\$33,962
KERN	\$494,011	\$106,088	\$104,408	\$210,496
KINGS	\$114,787	\$47,313	\$23,757	\$71,070
LAKE	\$66,670	\$40,476	\$14,376	\$54,852
LASSEN	\$20,000	\$32,500	\$3,411	\$35,911
LOS ANGELES	\$8,512,973	\$1,345,090	\$1,516,420	\$2,861,510
MADERA	\$100,177	\$45,182	\$20,833	\$66,015
MARIN	\$38,535	\$33,285	\$4,508	\$37,793
MARIPOSA	\$10,000	\$32,500	\$1,218	\$33,718
MENDOCINO	\$82,973	\$41,986	\$16,447	\$58,433
MERCED	\$142,473	\$52,462	\$30,823	\$83,285
MODOC	\$10,000	\$32,500	\$1,706	\$34,206
MONO	\$10,000	\$32,500	\$1,000	\$33,500
MONTEREY	\$155,681	\$51,663	\$29,727	\$81,390
NAPA	\$50,550	\$36,304	\$8,650	\$44,954
NEVADA	\$21,457	\$32,841	\$3,899	\$36,740
ORANGE	\$924,081	\$137,073	\$146,927	\$284,000
PLACER	\$69,806	\$39,145	\$12,549	\$51,694
PLUMAS	\$10,696	\$32,500	\$2,315	\$34,815
RIVERSIDE	\$1,088,082	\$189,278	\$218,563	\$407,841
SACRAMENTO	\$726,726	\$131,302	\$139,008	\$270,310
SAN BENITO	\$20,000	\$32,500	\$3,046	\$35,546
SAN BERNARDINO	\$2,422,378	\$380,251	\$480,620	\$860,871
SAN DIEGO	\$961,883	\$149,858	\$164,471	\$314,329
SAN FRANCISCO	\$388,393	\$88,411	\$38,986	\$127,397
SAN JOAQUIN	\$442,774	\$94,990	\$89,180	\$184,170
SAN LUIS OBISPO	\$139,453	\$48,201	\$24,975	\$73,176
SAN MATEO	\$92,080	\$39,056	\$12,427	\$51,483
SANTA BARBARA	\$131,774	\$45,803	\$21,686	\$67,489
SANTA CLARA	\$480,371	\$77,322	\$64,935	\$142,257
SANTA CRUZ	\$76,177	\$38,967	\$12,305	\$51,272
SHASTA	\$154,914	\$53,528	\$32,285	\$85,813
SIERRA	\$10,000	\$32,500	\$1,000	\$33,500
SISKIYOU	\$36,637	\$35,771	\$7,919	\$43,690
SOLANO	\$135,619	\$48,733	\$25,706	\$74,439
SONOMA	\$160,449	\$80,154	\$27,655	\$107,809
STANISLAUS	\$246,365	\$68,266	\$52,509	\$120,775
SUTTER	\$55,828	\$38,434	\$11,574	\$50,008
TEHAMA	\$53,462	\$38,878	\$12,183	\$51,061
TRINITY	\$20,000	\$32,500	\$2,680	\$35,180
TULARE	\$384,957	\$91,083	\$83,819	\$174,902
TUOLUMNE	\$38,679	\$35,682	\$7,797	\$43,479
VENTURA	\$323,536	\$69,953	\$54,824	\$124,777
YOLO	\$194,979	\$53,794	\$32,650	\$86,444
YUBA	\$65,515	\$40,122	\$13,887	\$54,009
TOTAL	\$21,987,333	\$4,987,333	\$3,987,333	\$8,974,666

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

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

A forthcoming County Fiscal Letter will be provided to redistribute un-allocated funds from counties not participating in the Bridge Program effective July 1, 2018.

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, 2018 through June 30, 2019**

I. PROGRAM CONTACT

Please identify two county contact(s). The first being the person completing this form, the second a person working closely on the Bridge Program in your county. These contacts will receive all state issued requests and correspondence related to the Bridge Program.

County	Department
Primary Contact:	Title:
Address:	
Email:	Phone:
Secondary Contact:	Title:
Address:	
Email:	Phone:
Fiscal Contact:	Title:
Address:	
Email:	Phone:

II. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION AND PROJECTED OUTCOMES

Voucher Distribution	<input type="checkbox"/> County <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Child Welfare <input type="checkbox"/> CalWORKs <input type="checkbox"/> Alternative Payment Program	Contact name: Phone: E-mail:
Child Care Navigator	Child Care Resource & Referral Agency	Contact name: Phone: E-mail:
Trauma-informed Care Training	Child Care Resource & Referral Agency	Contact name: Phone: E-mail:

Bridge Program Eligibility Component for FY 2018-19	
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			

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.

III. ALTERNATIVE PAYMENT PROGRAM SIGNATURE

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

_____ Date: _____
 Agency Representative's Name (print)
 Title: _____
 Signature: _____

IV. RESOURCE AND REFERRAL AGENCY SIGNATURE

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

_____ Date: _____
 Agency Representative's Name (print)
 Title: _____
 Signature: _____

V. 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.

_____ Date: _____
 Director's Name (print)
 Title: _____
 Signature: _____