

PAYMENTS FOR FOSTER HOME SUPPORT

---- Counseling for Foster Families ----



DID YOU KNOW?.....

Where it is determined that a foster family is experiencing trauma as a result of a serious event directly related to providing foster care, the department will help foster families access counseling services as required.

Traumatic effects may include a deep and pervasive sense of grief, loss, poor self-image, thought disorder, psychosomatic illness, or impaired social functioning.

POSSIBLE TRAUMATIC EVENTS:

While not all serious events will lead to trauma it should be recognized that events such as the following may trigger a traumatic response;

- Death of a child while in the care of the foster family
- Death of a child who is no longer in the care of the foster family but where there has been significant and strong attachment to the child.
- Loss of a child through family reunification, adoption or removal from the foster family home where there has been a long-term, significant and strong attachment to the child.
- Serious physical or emotional harm to an immediate family member by a child placed in the home or as the result of a child being placed in their care.

PRACTICE AND PROCEDURES:

Where it is determined that a family or some of its members are exhibiting traumatic reactions, the family wishes to seek formal counseling and it is determined by the department that formal counseling is required, managers, supervisors and staff are expected to help foster families access counseling.

If it is determined that counseling is required it should be provided through public funded agencies wherever possible. Where a foster family has access to employee assistance programs through their place of employment or access to other support services, they should be encouraged to explore such services as they may apply to the situation.

The department will only pay for counseling through publicly funded agencies where counseling is not available within a reasonable distance from the foster family's home or where such agencies cannot meet with the foster family within a reasonable period of time. Prior approval for the services must be received.



PRIVATE COUNSELOR OR AGENCY:

Where the department determines that counseling services need to be obtained from a private counselor or agency:

- The counselor and agency must be recognized by the department as qualified.
- Rates charged must be within the range of a reasonable community standard
- The department will pay for a maximum of five sessions. Time per session should be limited to 2 hours or less.
- A formal service contract must be entered into with the counselor or agency with a clear statement of purpose and cost.

RATES: Pre-approved actual costs up to a maximum of five sessions

APPROVAL: Regional Program Manager or Service Center Manager

For further information see: Chapter 8, Section 8.7 of the Children's Services Policies and Procedures Manual.