

**NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
BISMARCK, NORTH DAKOTA**

September 27, 2018

PI 18-25

TO: County Social Services
Regional Supervisors
Division of Juvenile Services
Tribal Social Services
PATH ND
LSS-North Dakota

FROM: Kelsey Bless, Permanency Administrator

SUBJECT: **LSS Therapeutic Foster Care**

PROGRAMS: Foster Care Maintenance Payments 623-05
Foster Care Permanency Planning 624-05

RETENTION: Until manualized

EFFECTIVE: **Immediately**

Children and Family Services approved Lutheran Social Services (LSS) to offer therapeutic placement options to ND foster children through the licensing of LSS Therapeutic foster homes. LSS Therapeutic will require additional training requirements for the foster care provider, while a LSS case manager will provide additional services to the foster family, child assessments upon intake and case management for each child accepted into a LSS Therapeutic placement. Lutheran Social Services has been licensing Unaccompanied Refugee Minor (URM) foster homes for many years in the Fargo area, the goal of this expanded continuum was presented by LSS as a way to support and assist ND in meeting the growing need of family foster homes for children. The effort is intended to offer additional placement options for children with challenging behaviors and higher needs.

LSS will begin the therapeutic level of care as a pilot program in the Fargo area. Foster care policy has been updated to reflect the additional placement level. Foster care case managers can access the LSS Therapeutic Foster Care program by contacting the agency directly. LSS Therapeutic Foster Care does require the universal application and a group home approval by the regional office.

Policy questions can be directed to Kelsey Bless at 701-328-3581 or kmbless@nd.gov

NEW SECTIONS

Lutheran Social Services Foster Care Rates 623-05-20-37

LSS ND is a private non-profit agency offering therapeutic foster care as well as refugee services inclusive of foster care. LSS provides evidenced-based services and supports to children and families in North Dakota as a child placing agency. LSS is accredited by the Council on Accreditation for Services to Children and Families (COA).

Billing Address:

Lutheran Social Services
Administrative Office
3911 20th Avenue South
Fargo, ND 58103

ND foster care rates are reviewed and revised annually, based on legislative action.

LEVELS OF CARE OFFERED BY LSS ND	DAILY RATE
Therapeutic Foster Care (TFC) <i>LSS provides case management.</i>	\$105
Sibling Placement Non-Therapeutic <i>LSS provides full case management of the sibling in the TFC provider home.</i>	\$64.28

LSS Maintenance Rates effective September 1, 2018. Payments are made using the daily rate times the number of days in care.

LSS MONTHLY BILLING:

Payments to LSS should not be authorized until a billing statement has been received for the service month. The amount billed is based on the level of care (TFC or Sibling rate) and number of days in placement, not to exceed the number of days in the month.

Reimbursement of overlapping days of placement from one LSS provider to another is not allowed. Example: A child changes placement from one therapeutic home to another on the 3rd of the month, only one LSS therapeutic provider can be reimbursed for the 3rd.

The LSS billing office will send separate child specific bills to the financial county monthly. The county should receive the bill by the 10th of the month following the month of service. The payment amount is **not** automatically calculated by the foster care payment system and will require manual data

entry by the eligibility worker. The bill must be kept in the foster care eligibility file for auditing purposes.

LSS Itemization Bill

1. Child specific – one child per bill.
2. If multiple providers served the child in one month, the placement dates will be itemized and the provider information. Do not authorize a lump sum payment to only one of the providers if multiple placements with LSS exist during the service month. Each provider is reimbursed based on placement dates of service.
3. Secondary placements in a therapeutic home when a child is in a primary therapeutic placement are not reimbursable (LSS to LSS). However, if the child is transitioning to a LSS home from a non-LSS provider (county home, group home, etc.) the “pre-placement” can be reimbursed as a secondary placement.

LSS Irregular Payments

Allowable irregular payment reimbursements are authorized as follows:

1. All eligible irregular payments must be pre-approved as set forth in policy by the foster care case manager.
2. Foster care case managers must provide the eligibility worker with documentation of the approved irregular expenses.
3. After pre-approval to purchase, the TFC provider will deliver receipts to the LSS case manager.
4. The LSS case manager will distribute the receipts to the LSS billing office and the primary foster care case manager.
5. The foster care case manager will provide information to the eligibility worker with a copy of the receipt's for approved reimbursement.
6. LSS will reimburse the foster parents the amount of standard maintenance and irregular expenses for the billing cycle.
7. LSS will bill the county itemizing the standard maintenance rate for the specific level of care placement dates and any pre-approved irregular expenses. LSS will submit a copy of the required irregular payment receipts along with the bill for reimbursement.

Authorizing Irregular Payments in the payment system:

LSS therapeutic providers: The ND payment system allows only two irregular payment codes to be authorized:

1. Code 53 - transportation to school
2. Code 71 – parent/infant care

These irregular payments must be authorized separately and on the irregular payment screen consistent with placement dates.

Sibling placements: Sibling placements not receiving therapeutic services must have applicable irregular payments added to the maintenance payment for the billable month. Authorization to the TFC provider will include the combined total of the standard maintenance + irregular payment.

Itemized Example: LSS bill for a Sibling Placement

Service Month: November 2018

Service Dates: Nov 1 – Nov 15

Child Name: Johnny Appleseed

Provider Name: Sally and Tom Watermelon (#5555)

Level of Care: LSS Sibling Placement

Rate: \$64.28

Maintenance Total: $\$64.28 \times 15 \text{ days} = \964.20

Irregular Payment/s: Pre-approved daycare invoice for 7 days. $\$27/\text{day} \times 7 \text{ days} = \189

TOTAL: \$964.20 + \$189 = \$1,153.20

Overpayments to LSS

If there is an overpayment made to an LSS provider, the overpayment must be entered in the payment system. Children & Family Services (CFS) can auto-recoup the overpayment during either the supplemental or standard check write so long as the provider where the overpayment took place has a current foster care placement. If there is not a placement with the specified provider, CFS will generate a letter for LSS to reimburse NDDHS directly.

Irregular Payment Specific to Placement Setting 623-05-25-05

Irregular Payments Family Foster Care:

Foster children placed in a licensed or approved (Tribal Affidavit) family foster home are eligible for irregular maintenance payments.

Irregular Payments for a Non-Foster Care Placement:

Foster children placed in a non-foster care setting with an unlicensed provider, at the hospital, or in relative/kinship care do not qualify for irregular maintenance payments.

Irregular Payments in PATH Foster Care:

1. Therapeutic Level: Only 2 codes allowed.
 - a. Code 53: Travel for foster parents to transport to school, and
 - b. Code 71: If the foster child has their own child
2. Step Down
 - a. All irregular payments for family foster care placements, with the exception of Category 20 and Category 60. Initial clothing will not be required as a "step down" level of care will not occur during the child's first five months of placement. Annual clothing allowance is offered by PATH to the foster child.
3. County Flow Through
 - a. All irregular payments for family foster care placements apply.
4. PATH Regular Foster Care
 - a. All irregular payments for family foster care placements apply, with the exception of Category 60.

Irregular Payments in LSS Foster Care:

1. LSS Therapeutic Foster Care: Only 2 codes allowed.
 - a. Code 53: Travel for foster parents to transport to school, and
 - a. Code 71: If the foster child has their own child
2. LSS Sibling Placements
 - a. All irregular payments for licensed family foster care apply

Irregular Payments in Group & Residential Care:

The irregular payment policy has very limited application to children in group and residential care. An RCCF has an established daily rate rate setting in those instances is dictated by N.D.A.C. 75-03-15 "Rate Setting". Children placed in an RCCF are only eligible for:

- Category 10
- Category 20
- Category 50
- Category 80

Irregular Payments in **Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (PRTF)**:

Foster care funds cannot pay for any portion of a child's cost of care in a PRTF, including irregular payments. Irregular payments may be included in the PRTF's direct rate based on historical costs as outlined in N.D.A.C 75-02-09-06.