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***News Release***

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## Oklahoma Human Services to Issue Emergency Relief Payments to Foster Families

The Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) will begin issuing emergency relief payments to foster parents in early April. These payments, which will be paid monthly, per child, are meant to support foster families as they navigate the impact of unexpected expenses of caring for children full-time due to school closures.

"During this incredibly difficult and historic time, we are intentionally focusing on the families and children we serve and how to best support them," said Director of Child Welfare Services, Dr. Deborah Shropshire.

"Foster families play an incredibly important role in our effort to provide safe, stable homes for children who for whatever reason cannot be with their natural families during this time, and we recognize and deeply appreciate the sacrifice Oklahoma families are making to take care of children who are in the custody of the state. OKDHS will begin distributing emergency relief funds in mid-April to foster families to assist with the additional costs of caring for children during this time."

To be eligible for the emergency relief payment, the child in OKDHS custody must have been in the home the entire calendar month and most family placement settings will be eligible for these payments. Payments will be made via paper check through the mail and will be paid in arrears with March payments. Relief payments will continue for all full-month placements during the COVID-19 emergency declaration period through May 31.

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