May 11, 2020

DHS Announces Additional Support for Foster Group Care and Shelter Care Providers

(Des Moines, Iowa) – The Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) is pleased to announce additional financial support for group care and shelter care providers. The federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act provided additional funds to the State of Iowa to prevent, prepare for and respond to the pandemic.

Due to school closures foster group care and shelter care providers have incurred additional costs associated with youth care during school hours. DHS is committed to assisting with the increased cost of serving youth who are out of school. Children who are positive for COVID-19 will have increased supervision and support needs, transportation costs for testing or medical appointments, and deep cleaning of the home following the exposure. DHS has developed a thoughtful plan to support group and shelter care providers, as well as foster parents.

DHS' COVID-19 Child Welfare Support Plan will use CARES Act funds to:

- Pay group and shelter providers a supplemental daily rate.
    - Supports residential providers in covering the additional staffing costs due to a higher volume of youth being on campus.
- Provide technology grants to providers who give direct support to parents and children who are in foster care or at risk of foster care placement.
    - Supports recipients of services in meeting with their treatment providers, such as substance use and mental health, and to provide a mechanism for facilitating visits with children and youth when in-person visits are not available.
- Provide a one-time $500 payment to foster parents who have a child placed in their home who is directly impacted by COVID-19.
    - Provides an additional mechanism to support foster parents in caring for children who have a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19.

DHS worked collaboratively with our provider community in the development of this plan to assess their needs. DHS will closely monitor these efforts and will continue to work with our partners to address their ongoing challenges during this public health emergency.

Find more details in the COVID-19 Child Welfare Support Plan here.

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