



Policy Subject:	Center for Excellence (CfE) Resource Parent Differential Board Rate
Effective Date:	March 1, 2022
Approved By:	Denise Conway, LCSW-C  Executive Director Social Services Administration Stafford Chipungu, Chief Financial Officer  Budget Management and Finance
Policy Number:	SSA-CW#22-04
Last Revision Date (s):	N/A
Originating Office:	Nicole A. Cameron, CfE Project Director Center for Excellence in Resource Family Development Social Services Administration Department of Human Services
Supersedes:	N/A
Program Affected:	Center for Excellence in Resource Family Development Project

Legal Information and Purpose

In October 2019, Maryland was awarded an \$8 million four-year grant to develop and pilot the Center for Excellence in Foster Family Development model program. The purpose of the grant is to recruit, prepare and support public resource parents to work with families of origin towards reunification and provide placement stability by preventing children from inappropriately going into congregate care settings and appropriately stepping down children from congregate care settings to family-based care. Five Local Departments of Social Services (LDSS) applied and were selected to become the pilot sites for the Center for Excellence (CfE): Baltimore County, Carroll County, Frederick County, Prince George's County and Montgomery County. This policy directive will apply only to those selected sites when resource parents are designated as CfE resource parents.

Policy Statement

This policy directive provides guidelines for the payment of the Differential Board Rate to public CfE resource parents for the five pilot jurisdictions in Maryland. The CfE resource parents are expected to work closely with families of origin and caseworkers to ensure children are stabilized in their placements and receive the necessary support while in foster care. The CfE requires resource parents to take additional training to develop the special skills needed to support a child's reunification with their family of origin, or to provide care for children who otherwise might be placed unnecessarily in congregate care settings. The expectation is that CfE resource parents be available over and beyond the normal required hours to help support children and families of origin. This higher level of commitment requires a higher level of compensation to help support the child and the resource parent.

Procedural Guidance

CfE resource parents are eligible to receive the Differential Board Rate due to the added time and commitment for their training and services. In addition to completing all standard training requirements for Maryland resource parents, CfE resource parents also must complete specialized training to increase their knowledge and engagement skills. This training will occur through various modules as well as participation in the Keeping Foster and Kinship Parents Supported and Trained (KEEP and/or KEEP SAFE) model(s). CfE resource parents are expected to actively work to establish and maintain positive and supportive relationships with birth parents and families of origin to support children remaining in the communities where they live, and to help build capacity to care for their children in safe and healthy ways upon reunification.

The CfE Differential Board Rate for resource families once a CfE eligible child has been placed in the CfE home is \$1237/month for children 4-11 years old and \$1252/month for children 12-18 years old. The Differential Board Rate should be charged to **Category Code 4185** in the Child, Juvenile, Adult Management System (CJAMS). Resource parents caring for children who are not designated as CfE children, including those ages 0-3 and ages 19-20 will receive the base monthly board rates as specified in Policy SSA-CW19-16. All participating CfE resource parents are entitled to the Respite Care Rate of \$30.60 (per diem) as per Policy.

Bed Retainer Fee

CfE resource parents who have a CfE vacancy in their home will receive a monthly Bed Retainer Fee in the amount of \$100.00. These expenses are not direct client services for an existing case; therefore, cannot be paid using Flex Funds. Payments for the Bed Retainer Fee should be recorded as an expense charged to **Category Code 4184** in CJAMS.

CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE RESOURCE PARENT BOARD RATES

CfE Age Classification	CfE Differential Per Diem Rate	CfE Differential Monthly Board Rate
Age 4 through Age 11	\$40.67	\$1,237.00
Age 12 through Age 18	\$41.16	\$1,252.00

Please note: The monthly clothing allowance is built into the monthly board rate, as is indicated in the Foster Family Care FY2020 Monthly Board Rate chart in Policy SSA-CW19-16 mentioned above. The Foster Family Care FY2020 Monthly Board Rate chart reflects the minimum amount that resource parents shall spend monthly, when providing clothing for children in foster care.

THE LOCAL DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES SHALL TAKE THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS:

1. CfE site Resource Home Unit will identify the CfE child and resource parent and enter the information in CJAMS with the appropriate differential board rate.
2. The CfE caseworker will place the child into the CfE resource home within 48 hours of initial placement and/or a replacement.
3. CfE resource parent worker and CfE caseworker will monitor the placement monthly and more frequently if required to provide any needed support to the resource parent and the child in the home.
4. The CfE caseworker will visit the child at least monthly to assess safety, wellbeing, and permanency status.
5. A CfE child shall not be removed from the CfE home prior to a Family Team Decision Making (FTDM) meeting being held. All efforts should be taken to prevent a placement disruption from the CfE home.
6. No non-CfE child should be removed from the CfE home in order to create a CfE placement.

THE SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION SHALL TAKE THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS:

1. Provide support, assistance and advocacy in stabilizing the child in the CfE resource home.
2. Provide technical assistance to the LDSS with the tracking and monitoring of all children placed in CfE resource homes, as well as assist with the recruitment and retention of CfE resource parents.
3. Assist the LDSS in resolving all CJAMS payment related issues.

Alignment with the Practice Model and Desired Outcomes

Maryland's goal is to ensure all children are placed in a safe and nurturing environment. This policy provides guidelines for the utilization of the CfE foster care Differential Board Rate to support the placement of a child in a CfE resource home. This policy aligns with the Integrated Practice Model by supporting our resource parents to ensure our commitment to meeting the needs of children in care through authentic partnership with families of origin.

Related Policies and Information

- [SSA-CW#19-16](#) Guidelines of Foster Care Board Rate and Expenditure
- [SSA-CW#19-17](#) Differential Board Rates for Public Foster Care