

**SYSTEM OF CARE: FAMILY CENTERED SERVICES AND SUPPORTS (FCSS)  
Questions and Answers Document**

**Administrative Related Questions**

**Q:** What is considered an administrative expense?

**A:** Administrative expenses include payroll and fringe benefits of persons who are not providing direct services to youth and families (including supervisors), rent, utilities, equipment, construction, renovation, public awareness, professional development, and all other indirect or overhead expenses. FCFC service coordination is not considered to be an administrative cost; reimbursement is allowable on an actual cost basis for the children and families served. Services purchased from non-governmental entities must also be compensated on a uniform fee-for-service basis.

**Education Related Question**

**Q:** Can FCSS funding pay for public or private educational services?

**A:** No, it can never be used for public education purposes. That would include school-based credit-recovery, IEP prescribed tutoring, or summer school programming.

**Service Coordination Related Questions**

**Q:** How do you bill for FCFC service coordination?

**A:** Service coordination may be billed to FCSS if:

1. It is itemized as a unit of service for a particular child who lives in his/her own home (i.e., who has not been placed in an out-of-home setting).
2. It involves all the actual scheduling, preparation and meeting time for the service planning and monitoring.
3. There is accounting of the time, actual costs, etc- a paper trail; an estimated percentage of time and cost is not allowable.
4. The billing occurs as the service occurs; billing cannot occur at the end of the fiscal year to draw down unspent/non-allotted dollars.

**Q:** How can you determine a unit rate?

**A:** To utilize the funding for FCFC service coordination, a unit rate must be established. To construct the unit rate, calculate an average of costs (e.g., meeting time, paperwork, telephone calls) associated with serving a family and divide that by the average number of hours spent face-to-face with a family. That rate can be charged for each face-to-face hour time with a family. Billing must be for child-specific services/service coordination activities only; use of these funds to support administrative functions or general program expenses is not allowable. Units of service must be documented to the FCFC Administrative Agent.

**Cash Assistance**

**Q:** Can FCSS funding be used for rent and utilities?

**A:** None of the System of Care (SOC) funds are available for cash assistance. There are other sources of funding designed specifically for this purpose that are available within each county.

### **Programming Costs**

**Q:** Can FCSS be used to cover costs of Strengthening Families programming?

**A:** No, FCSS funds cannot be used to cover the costs of implementing the Strengthening Families program. However, FCSS funds can be used to cover the actual costs of a family's enrollment in this program if it has been identified on the child/family's Individualized Family Service Coordination plan.

### **Out-of-Home Placement**

**Q:** Can we mix and match funds for a family with kids in the home and in placement?

**A:** Yes, however, FCSS dollars can ONLY be used to support non-clinical interventions targeting the child in his/her own home; other funding streams MUST be used to assist the child who is placed in an out of home setting.

### **Child Care**

**Q:** Can FCSS funding pay for summer child care for an aggressive MR/DD/MH kid so mother can continue to work out of the home once the school and school latch key programming is over in June?

**A:** Family work-related child care costs cannot be covered by FCSS funding according to federal regulation. However, if a child's functioning precludes the child from receiving regular child care at usual and customary rates, the difference between the average local cost of work-related child care and the cost for managing the child's special needs (i.e. specialized childcare) may be paid by FCSS funds.

### **Funeral Expenses**

**Q:** Can FCSS funding cover funeral expenses?

**A:** No, but a TANF eligible family can receive burial expenses from their CDJFS.

### **Camp**

**Q:** Can we use FCSS funds to pre-pay for Camp?

**A:** If camp requires prepayment and begins in June the entire camp can be billed to that fiscal year ending June 30, even if the camp runs beyond this 6/30 date. However, if camp starts in July, it must be billed to the funding year beginning July 1.

### **Family Support Services**

**Q:** What are family support services?

**A:** Family support services may include:

- In-home visits, parent support groups, and other services designed to improve parenting skills with respect to matters such as child development, coping with stress, health/behavioral health issues, and nutrition;
- Non-clinical respite care of children, including camp;
- Structured activities involving parents and children to strengthen the parent-child relationship;

- Services and activities designed to strengthen family functioning;
- Non-therapeutic individual and/or group interventions that are intended to improve, strengthen, or reinforce interpersonal family functioning.
- Service coordination (see service coordination answer listed above).

FCSS funds may NOT be used for:

- Out of home placements;
- Poverty assistance;
- Meeting basic family needs such as food, clothing, shelter, utilities, and/or household expenses;
- Classroom instruction or any required public education cost or responsibility;
- To match other federally-funded programs (e.g., Title XIX Medicaid ) per federal restriction;
- Medical services, including all clinical behavioral treatment (i.e., services typically billed to public or private health insurance are not eligible.), per federal restriction.

### **Youth aged 18 years or older**

**Q:** Can FCSS dollars be used on ODYS clients in the adolescent system even though they are over the age of 18?

**A:** Yes, upon re-entry into the community, these funds are available for youth up thru the age of 22. These funds cannot be used while the youth is institutionalized.

### **Help Me Grow**

**Q:** Can FCSS funding support a service listed on an HMG child's IFSP?

**A:** The funds are intended for services and supports listed on a child/family plan that has been collaboratively developed thru the FCFC's formal service coordination (SC) process. FCFC SC occurs when a family or single agency/program (like HMG) refers to FCFC because case management or other supports by a single system/program are unable to meet the individual child/family needs. It is the FCFC cross system team planning/ decision process, plus services listed on the plan developed thru that FCFC SC process, that would be supported by FCSS \$.

### **Tracking FY 09 SC Families**

**Q:** The FCSS spreadsheet asks each month for data at intake. How should we count the FY 09 "carryover kids" that we will continue to serve in FY 10?

**A:** The data for an individual family for Question #3 of the reporting document and spreadsheet should be entered for the month in which FCSS funds are used for the first time to provide a service or support that is identified in the family IFSCP, whether or not that family entered service coordination prior to the beginning of FY10. At that point in time, the service coordinator should refer to the information collected at intake and answer the question appropriately. Data for this question should only be entered one time for each child in order to avoid duplication.

**High Fidelity Wrap Around**

**Q:** Does HFWA qualify as a non-clinical in-home visit?

**A:** Yes, HFWA is allowable as it is a type of service coordination, and not a clinical intervention.

**Out of Home Placement Definition**

**Q:** What is the definition of an Out-of-Home Placement? Our county uses 30 days as a benchmark. For example, we may have children who go to the Attention Center for a day or two, or, children who may require short term, inpatient psychiatric hospitalization.

**A:** When using FCSS funds, children/youth cannot be in any out-of-home placement regardless of the time frame. In order to receive services and supports funded via FCSS, the child must reside in his/her own home or an approved kinship setting.