



MINNESOTA FAMILY SUPPORT & RECOVERY COUNCIL


2018 ANNUAL CONFERENCE



CE FOSTER CARE 101


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Northstar Care for Children




- Implemented 1/1/2015 – the current placement program
- Consolidated and simplified three programs
 - Family Foster Care
 - Kinship Assistance (replaced Relative Custody Assistance)
 - Kinship Adoption Assistance

Northstar Care for Children




- Why the changes?
- Needed to maintain the same level of benefits for a child as he/she moves to permanency. In the past, a significant decrease in benefits upon Transfer of Custody (TOC) or Adoption prevented many children from achieving permanency with a family. This was particularly true for American Indian and African American children, as well as sibling groups.

Northstar Care for Children




- How determinations are made didn't change.
- IVE child support cases are still public assistance cases
- TOC and Adoptions are treated the same as they have always been
- All IVE children and Kinship **Adoption Assistance** children are automatically eligible for MA.
- Most children on Northstar **Kinship Assistance** will qualify as well.

Northstar Care for Children



- Under Northstar Care, caregivers may be eligible for a child care allowance/scholarship, however they are not then eligible to be on another child care assistance program
- Under Northstar Care, county and tribal agencies are still allowed to collect parental fees, child support, and other revenue to offset their share of foster care

Northstar Care for Children



- Title IVE Northstar Kinship Assistance (**paid for by the state**) replaces TANF-based Relative Custody Assistance. There are no new RCA grants after 1/1/2015. Children not eligible for Kinship Assistance **MAY** meet the criteria for the MFIP CHILD ONLY grant. **There are no referrals to child support for Kinship Assistance.**
- TOC may be postponed/delayed as Kinship Assistance **MUST** be approved prior to TOC or the Assistance will be denied.

Northstar Care for Children



****CAUTION**** When a relative becomes the custodian of children in out-of-home placement and the child support case is PA, verify that they ARE NOT receiving Foster Care or Kinship Assistance payments AND MFIP for the same child!

- Programs generally end at age 18, however extensions may be granted for children up to the age of 21. (Fostering Connections)

IVE VS. NON-IVE FOSTER CARE



IVE:

- FEDERALLY FUNDED
- ELIGIBILITY DETERMINED BY INCOME, LIKE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE
- IS CONSIDERED PUBLIC ASSISTANCE
- REFERRALS TO CHILD SUPPORT VIA REFERRAL THROUGH PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

NON IVE:

- COUNTY FUNDED
- IF NOT IVE ELIGIBLE **AND** REIMBURSABLE, BECOMES NON-IVE FOR CHILD SUPPORT PURPOSES*
- IS CONSIDERED NON-PUBLIC ASSISTANCE
- REFERRALS ARE MANUALLY MADE BY COLLECTIONS WORKER
- CORRECTIONS PLACEMENTS (JUVENILE ORDERS VS CHIPS ORDERS)

FEE DETERMINATION



- Variety of methods used across the state, including CS guidelines, poverty guidelines, state scale (DHS2977)
- Dakota County:
 - Uses DHS Parental Fee Scale – DHS2977. There is no fee if they are already paying a state parental fee (TEFRA/Waivered Services).
 - \$0 fee for Removal Home Parent in IVE cases
 - Avoids SED determinations, discrimination
 - More cases with \$0 fee, but fees are more affordable/collectable

Other Fee Issues



- Parents receiving adoption assistance may not be charged a parental fee, just the child income amount.
- Step-parents are not responsible for step-children's services and their income should not be included in fee determination.
- Parental fee in combination with any child income may never exceed cost of services. (Child income is applied first per statute: 260C.331.)

CHILD INCOME



- Child Support – may be redirected
- Social Security
 - RSDI – May be redirected for IVE or NIVE
 - SSI –May be redirected for both, **HOWEVER if SSI is redirected, IVE reimbursement may not be claimed.**
- Adoption Subsidy – may not be redirected. Parent must be billed for adoption subsidy.


LEGAL AUTHORITY TO REDIRECT




- In Dakota County, Appendix A is attached to both CHIPS and Juvenile orders.
- Child income assignment under Statute (Child protection: 260C.331)
- Parental fee notification
- Voluntary agreements

WHY REDIRECT CHILD SUPPORT?

- IVE redirect is not optional
- Non IVE is optional and is done on a county by county basis
- Child support has many more enforcement tools than collections.
 - Federal tax intercepts
 - Income withholding
 - Driver's license suspension, as well as passport suspension and contempt
 - Many automated locate tools




- Easier and more successful to collect from the source than to try to recoup child income from the receiving parent "after the fact"
- Disadvantage is that non-custodial parent may be, or may become, a non-payor and there is a non-paying case "on the books"



THINGS TO CONSIDER

- How much is the obligation?
- How long will the child be in services?
- Is there a chance that this debt will be collectable?
- Is the debtor's whereabouts known?
- Has money ever been received?
- Is the underlying order from another state?



MAINTAINING COUNTY/INTERSTATE



- The county with the underlying (mom and dad) case generally will maintain the foster care case.
- The county with the services must set up the case in PRISM.
- Consult the other county on whether or not they will accept the case BEFORE setting up the case.
- If the underlying order is from another state, that state needs to be contacted regarding approval to redirect. If approved, the county with the underlying order should take the case, however some will not.

MEDICAL AND CHILD CARE



- Medical support may stay on the underlying case, particularly on Non IVE cases. May need to MANUALLY be flipped to AFC if child is on MA.*
- Child Care charging should be stopped.

IVE COMES THROUGH CRDL REFERRAL



- Case is built by intake and transferred to the appropriate worker(s)
- Cases will come across against BOTH parents IF both are listed as Absent Parent in MAXIS referral. Dakota only lists NCP as absent parent in our referrals and ONLY if Paternity has been established. We will do a referral if social services requests paternity establishment.
- The obligation is PA.

NON IVE NEEDS MANUAL REFERRAL



- Court order or voluntary placement agreement needed.
- Application must be completed.
- The obligation is NPA.

CASES WITH MULTIPLE CHILDREN




- Amount to be redirected is determined by dividing the obligation by the number of UNEMANCIPATED children
- Occasionally you may have a per child order
- If emancipation of one (or more) of the children is upcoming, calendar to redetermine redirect amount/check with child support for new amount.

NOTE:




- When verifying high school graduation for child emancipation of a child in out-of-home placement, it is recommended child support check with the collections worker, social worker, or corrections worker if there is no response from the Custodial Parent. As the CP is no longer getting the child support in redirection cases, they often are very lax about responding! Most children in FC and many in corrections placements are still attending high school.

COLA




- Child cases with MN orders have COLAs every two years, effective May 1st. Verify the amount with child support to insure that you are charging the correct amount.

BEST PRACTICE



- When possible, it is beneficial to have one child support worker who specializes in foster care.
 - Receiving the referrals
 - Determining where cases need to go (paternity, establishment, enforcement)
 - Adding the orders
 - Setting up the charging and making the adjustments on both cases (underlying and foster care)
 - Contacting other counties when necessary
 - Liaison between collections and foster care

CASE CLOSING



- Collections agents need to be sure to notify child support or social security when child is no longer in services. *
- PRISM should get an interface when IVE cases close.
- Money may need to be returned by county financial services if the county is overpaid.



QUESTION??

Monthly Payments

4. What is the maximum basic monthly adoption assistance maintenance payment in Minnesota?

The adoption assistance program in Minnesota underwent a significant change as of January 1, 2015, with the implementation of Northstar Care Children. Children adopted before that date have one set of maintenance rates and possible reimbursement options, which are described in [question 28](#). Here in questions 4 and 5 is the information for children adopted on or after January 1, 2015.

Age	Children adopted at age 6 or older	Children adopted at age 0-5
Birth-5	n/a	\$283
6-12	\$670	\$335
13+	\$790	\$395

28. What else differentiates Minnesota's adoption assistance program from others around the country?

Children adopted before January 1, 2015, receive different benefits from those adopted on or after that date. Below we detail the benefits available to children adopted before January 1, 2015. For information on rates for children adopted since January 1, 2015, see [questions 4 and 5](#).

Basic Monthly Rates for Children Adopted before January 1, 2015

Age	Monthly Benefit
Birth-5	\$247
6-11	\$277
12-14	\$307
15-18	\$337
19-21 (if the adoption assistance agreement is extended to these ages)	\$337

Northstar Care for Children

- Implemented 1/1/2015.
- Consolidates and simplifies three child welfare programs: Family Foster Care, Kinship Assistance (replaces Relative Custody Assistance) and Adoption Assistance.
- Needed to maintain same level of benefit for a child as he/she moves to permanency. In the past, a significant decrease in benefits upon Transfer of Custody (TOC) or adoption prevented many children from achieving permanency with a family. This was especially true for older children, American Indian and African American children, as well as sibling groups.

What Does This Mean for Child Support (and Collections)?

- Fortunately, not a lot of change!
- How determinations for IVE Foster Care are made has not changed. IVE child support cases are still Public Assistance cases.
- Transfers of Custody and Adoptions are treated the same as they always have been. With a TOC, legal parents may still have an obligation for child support, visitation rights, and rights to access information. New custodians must apply for child support services (NPA), even when a court order redirects support to them. If there is no redirection language in a court order, or if it is a reimbursement only order, there will need to be a new order for support.
- Once a parent's rights are terminated, any on-going child support obligation terminates, whether or not adoption occurs. All other rights are also relinquished.
- Under Northstar Care, caregivers may be eligible for a child care allowance, however they are not eligible to be on another child care assistance program. (There should be no CCC charging on a foster care case!)
- All IVE children and Northstar Adoption Assistant children are automatically eligible for medical assistance. MOST children on Northstar Kinship Assistance will qualify as well. No medical support referral to child support is needed. (Generally this also means that any medical support obligations on a child support case will need to be manually coded AFC. This is not a change.)
- Under Northstar Care, county and tribal agencies are still allowed to collect parental fees, child support, and other revenue recoveries to offset their share of foster care.
- Title IVE Northstar Kinship Assistance replaces TANF-based Relative Custody Assistance. After 1/1/2015, there are no new Relative Custody Assistance Grants. Children not eligible for Kinship Assistance (paid for by the state), MAY meet the criteria for the MFIP CHILD ONLY grant. Children receiving Northstar Adoption Assistance or Kinship Assistance are **not** eligible for MFIP. (CAUTION: when a relative becomes custodian of children in an out-of-home placement and case is PA, verify that they are not receiving Foster Care or Kinship Assistance payments AND MFIP for the same child!)
- Programs generally end at age 18, however extensions may be granted for children up to the age of 21.

- Adoption assistance is only paid for children with special needs. “At Risk” children may only receive the MA portion of assistance, not the monthly basic payment, until the potential disability occurs during childhood. Adoption assistance is not paid for adoptions of non-special needs children, stepparent adoptions, adoption of a child who is a non-US citizen/resident, or adoption by a relative/prior legal guardian unless a child under county custody was placed with them previously by a court order or the child was a State Ward.

FURTHER INFO:

On the DHS site, search Northstar Care for Children. There will be a link to the site on County Link. Or on County Link directly, choose “A-Z Topics” tab. Click on N and you will see Northstar Care for Children. There is a Practice Guide PDF. There is also a Frequently Asked Questions link at the bottom of the page.

- [Northstar Care General Practice Guide \(PDF\)](#)