



State of Florida
Department of Children and Families

Rick Scott
Governor

Mike Carroll
Secretary

DATE: February 24, 2017
TO: Regional Managing Directors
Community-Based Care Lead Agency CEOs
THROUGH: David L. Fairbanks, Deputy Secretary
Vicki Abrams, Assistant Secretary for Operations
JoShonda Guerrier, Assistant Secretary for Child Welfare
FROM: Traci Leavine, Director of Child Welfare Practice
SUBJECT: 2017 Foster Parent Cost of Living Allowance Increase

PURPOSE: This memo is to provide guidance to regions and Community-Based Care (CBC) Lead Agencies regarding the statutorily required foster parent Cost of Living Allowance (COLA), effective January 1, 2017.

BACKGROUND: During the 2013 legislative session, the Florida Legislature passed s. 409.145(4), F.S., which establishes base room and board rate payments to foster parents and requires foster parents to receive an annual cost of living increase equal to the percentage change in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for All Urban Consumers, U.S. City Average, All Items, not seasonally adjusted, or successor reports, for the preceding December compared to the prior December as initially reported by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Effective January 1, 2017, the room and board rates to foster parents will be adjusted as follows:

Table with 3 columns: Age Range, 2016 Room and Board Rate, Room and Board Rate Effective January 1, 2017. Rows include Zero to Five (0-5), Six to Twelve (6-12), and Thirteen to Twenty-one (13-21).

Medical Foster Care (MFC) parents receive foster care board rates for children and young adults in the MFC Program directly from the CBC. The CBC is required to provide medical foster parents no less than the statewide foster care board rate that a foster child ages 13-21 years of age would receive, regardless of the age of the MFC child.

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Section 65C-16.013(8), F.A.C., outlines that a CBC can negotiate a Maintenance Adoption Subsidy (MAS) up to 100% of the statewide foster care board rate. Based on the 2017 foster parent cost of living allowance increase, a CBC will now be able to approve MAS amounts up to the above mentioned updated statewide foster care board rates. Any rate over the 2017 statewide foster care board rates must be approved by the Department Regional Family Safety Program Office.

**ACTION NEEDED:** As of January 1, 2017, all foster parents previously receiving the 2016 rate of pay for room and board in the amounts of \$439.30, \$450.56, or \$527.36, for child(ren) in their care must be paid the increase specified in s. 409.145(4), F.S.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:** For additional information, please contact Courtney Smith, Child Permanency & Well-being Manager Courtney.Smith@myflfamilies.com or (850) 717-4660.

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