

Questions and Answers from the Family First Prevention Services Act Webinar

(12/18/18)

Q1: Will OCFS have a statewide plan to recruit more foster homes or provide data to assist agencies and counties to estimate how many additional foster homes will be needed and provide technical assistance in delving deeper into the answers behind the data?

A1: OCFS will be providing counties and agencies with their local data to analyze and determine the need for additional homes. OCFS encourages counties and agencies to develop a process for deeper analysis using focus groups and shared best practices from other counties and agencies to determine specific needs. Additionally, resources have been developed and made available on recruit4fostercare.com. These resources include the recruitment and retention guide, [Revitalizing Recruitment](#) and a blueprint to use in determining what foster care resources you currently have available and where you have gaps.

Q2: Are the voluntary agencies on the path to become QRTPs?

A2: The QRTP requirements are outlined in the power point presentation and the INF. OCFS will be providing a workbook to assist agencies in planning for compliance with the requirements. Agencies are encouraged to begin assessing the requirements and changes needed to align. Approximately half of the voluntary agencies are currently accredited by one of the named organizations, which is a key component for a QRTP. All agencies should be assessing their current state of readiness.

Q3: Will OCFS be diverting funds to increase money on the front end to prevent entry into foster care?

A3: OCFS currently has a more robust preventive services funding stream than any other state in the country. NYS provides for an uncapped appropriation of 62/38 reimbursement for counties to develop preventive models. This funding has provided the preventive support necessary for many families so that we have seen historic reductions in the number of New York's children in foster care.

Q4: Do we know how far along other large states like Texas and California are in implementing and what their experience has been?

A4: OCFS participates in several organizations that offer communication with other states from which we will be able to learn about other states' strategies for implementation.

Q5: Do we know when we will hear about the decision regarding the delay?

A5: New York State's request for a two-year delay has been approved. Therefore, the congregate care and prevention provisions take effect on September 29, 2021.

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Q6: How is congregate care classified? Does it include Group Home placement?

A6: Congregate care includes AOBHs, group homes, group residence, and institutions.

Q7: How will this impact youth in placement today?

A7: There will not be an immediate impact on youth in care today. The legislation will take effect in New York State on September 29, 2021. However, children in care should be assessed on an ongoing basis to be sure they are in the least restrictive, most appropriate placement.

Q8: Are the courts aware and can they override a placement decision?

A8: Yes, the Unified Court system has awareness of the Family First Prevention Services Act. There is a requirement for a court assessment within 60 days of placement to approve or disapprove the placement decision. We are awaiting further guidance on the role of the courts when there is disagreement about the level of care assessments.

Q9: Was the line drawn solely on being placed in congregate care or are we looking at all factors that ultimately require a higher level of care/congregate for which a FBH would not suffice and that would obviously contribute to a successful permanency outcome? And will a FBH be able to meet that level of need?

A9: The legislation is intended to decrease reliance on congregate care while safely supporting children/youth in relative foster homes and traditional foster homes. However, the law does allow for situations where it can be demonstrated that a congregate setting is the best possible setting for a child. Counties and agencies will need to assess the supports that can be provided to relatives and foster parents to assist in meeting the needs of the children and youth placed there.

Q10: How many placements are PINS or JDs? Can we also get data for length of stay for this population?

A10: OCFS is in the process of developing new data warehouse reports that will enable counties to create a demographic profile of youth residing in congregate care settings on the last day of any given month. Included in these pre-defined reports are break-outs for the type of petition associated with the child's case (JD, PINS, Article 10) and length of time in current care setting, as well as other demographics, such as age, race, and ethnicity. OCFS Data Warehouse will send an announcement to all users introducing these reports and describing where to find them as soon as they become available.