



**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
311 WEST SARATOGA STREET
BALTIMORE, MD 21201**

DATE: July 17, 2017

POLICY DIRECTIVE: SSA-CW #18-03

TO: Directors, Local Departments of Social Services
Assistant Directors of Social Services
Chiefs of Foster Care
Fiscal Officers

FROM: Rebecca Jones Gaston, MSW 
Executive Director
Social Services Administration
Stafford Chipungu, Chief Financial Officer 
Budget and Finance

RE: Utilization of Time-Limited Reunification Services
Funding

PROGRAMS AFFECTED: Out-of-Home Placement Services

ORIGINATING OFFICE: Out-of-Home Placement Services

ACTION REQUIRED OF: All Local Departments of Social Services

ACTION DUE DATE: July 31, 2017

CONTACT PERSONS: Helene Hornum, Program Analyst
410-767-7247
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Brandi Stocksdales, Director
Placement and Permanency
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PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy directive is to provide guidance to the Local Departments of Social Services (LDSS) on the utilization of Time Limited Reunification Services funded through the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program. DHR's budget and finance office annually provides each LDSS an allocation.

The federal Promoting Safe and Stable Families funds MUST be used for any time-limited reunification services for children in care 15 months or less BEFORE using other support services funds.

ACTION:

Time-Limited Reunification services are **SERVICES PROVIDED** to a child that is removed from his or her home and placed in an out-of-home placement such as a foster family home or a child care institution. These services may be provided to the parents or primary caregiver of such a child in order to facilitate the reunification of the child safely and appropriately within a timely fashion. **These services may only be provided during the 15-month period that begins on the date that the child is considered to have entered care (removal date).**

Public Law 112-34 has amended the definition of time-limited reunification services. It now also includes peer-to-peer mentoring, support groups for parents and primary caregivers, and services and activities to facilitate access to and visitation of children with parents and siblings.

GOALS:

- Reduce the length of stay in foster care;
- Establish permanency for children through reunification with their families; and
- Improve the permanency plan of children in out-of-home placement.

The funds may be spent on the following services:

- Individual, group and family counseling;
- Inpatient, residential, or outpatient substance abuse treatment services;
- Mental health services;
- Assistance to address domestic violence;
- Services designed to provide temporary child care and therapeutic services for families, including crisis nurseries;
- Transportation to or from any of the services;
- Peer-to-peer mentoring;
- Support groups for parents and primary caregivers; and
- Services and/or activities to facilitate access to and visitation of children with parents and siblings.

REQUIREMENTS

Promoting Safe and Stable Families funds cannot be combined with other grants or merged into other flex fund accounts. A separate accounting must be maintained. The LDSS is required to report to the United States Department of Health and Human Services the amount of funds spent of EACH service of the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program.

A plan or proposal is not required if the funds are spent on any of the nine services shown above. The following services can be provided under Time-Limited Reunification general:

- Aftercare services to reunify families;
- Parenting classes;
- Assisting in negotiating systems including the court and legal system;
- Case management;
- Intensive home-based casework;
- Home-based therapy;
- Family mediation;
- Mentoring to parents; and
- Enhancing personal skills of family members, i.e., teaching anger/depression/anxiety management, self-criticism reduction, and how to handle frustration; enhancing interpersonal skills of family members, i.e., teaching conversational skills, assertiveness skills, listening skills, problem solving and negotiation, giving and accepting feedback, accepting “no” from others, accepting criticism, and displaying sensitivity to others.

As stated above, Time-Limited Reunification services also include:

- peer-to-peer mentoring,
- support groups for parents and primary caregivers, and
- services and activities to facilitate access to and visitation of children with parents and siblings.

If one half (1/2) of the LDSS allocation is not spent by January 3, 2018, the remaining amount will be subject to reallocation to another LDSS that is spending their Time-Limited Reunification funds. The number of families and children served, by service, must be submitted quarterly on the attached Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program Time-Limited Reunification Services Quarterly Program Report form (Attachment A). The expenditures reported on the quarterly reports must be reconciled to the Monthly 302 Report to ensure that reported data is consistent. **A LDSS that fails to submit their quarterly reports will risk a reduction and reallocation of their TLR funds to another LDSS.** The report is to be submitted to Helene Hornum, Program Analyst, and Social Services Administration.

The quarterly report submission dates and periods covered are as follows:

<u>Submission Dates</u>	<u>Periods Covered</u>
October 15, 2017	July 1, 2017– September 30, 2017
January 15, 2018	October 1, 2017 - December 31, 2017
April 15, 2018	January 1, 2018 – March 31, 2018
July 15, 2018	April 1, 2018 – June 30, 2018

The allocation for each SFY and all expenditures for services rendered between July 1 and June 30 must be liquidated (service provided and paid for) by June 30 of each year. The DAFER report and quarterly expenditure reporting will be used to monitor expenditures.

All contracts and purchase orders must follow COMAR Title 21 procurement regulations.

Charge Codes for Time Limited Reunification Services Funding:

In order to track and report the use of these funds, please use the following charge codes:

- All child and family-specific expenses, should be requested through the Chessie Service Log choosing Category Code **4130** for “PSSF Time-Limited Reunification”.
- Any charges that are not child and family-specific, should use charge code PCA GC950, Project/Subproject number 0302.87, within the Child Welfare Services (N00G0003) program and the appropriate agency object for the purchase being made.

**PROMOTING SAFE AND STABLE FAMILIES PROGRAM
TIME-LIMITED REUNIFICATION
QUARTERLY PROGRAM REPORT**

Local Department: _____
 Person Completing Form: _____
 Phone Number: _____
 Report Period: July 1, 2017 – September 30, 2017 _____ October 1, 2017 – December 31, 2017 _____
 January 1, 2018 – March 31, 2018 _____ April 1, 2018 – June 30, 2018 _____

Account Name	Account Number/Project/Subproject/Object	Expenditures Current Quarter	Expenditures Y-T-D	Obligated Funds to Date	Families Served Current Quarter	Children Served Current Quarter	Families Served Y-T-D	Children Served Y-T-D
TIME-LIMITED REUNIFICATION	GC950 0302.87 (non child and family-specific) 4130 (child and family-specific)							

Allocation _____
 Year-to-Date Expenditures _____
 Remaining Balance _____

Mail or Fax the Report to:
 Helene Hornum
 Social Services Administration
 311 W. Saratoga Street, 5th Floor
 Baltimore, MD 21201
 Fax #: 410-333-6556