

State of Iowa

(11) THERAPEUTIC FOSTER CARE

Iowa Medicaid covers Therapeutic Foster Care (TFC), as a rehabilitative service pursuant to 42 CFR 440.130(d), subject to the following scope and provider limitations.

a. TFC Benefit

Therapeutic Foster Care (TFC) is a treatment-focused form of foster care provided in a family setting by trained caregivers. TFC is a family-based placement option for children and adolescents with serious emotional or behavioral health needs who can be served in the community with intensive support. Youth receiving TFC require behavioral health services and supervision in a therapeutic foster home setting.

TFC settings are individualized and are intended to keep youth in the least restrictive environment possible. Eligible beneficiaries are those whose needs have not been met in regular foster care settings or in their own family home or are going through a transitional period from residential care as part of the process of return to family and community.

The person-centered planning process is individualized and ongoing.

b. TFC Services:

(1) Screening

For eligible youth and families: a screening tool is used and supervisory oversight is included that assures family needs and services match appropriately. The screening tool is used to establish medical necessity for the service.

(2) Treatment

- (a) The person-centered planning team, including the family of origin or other identified family, convenes and plans treatment before the eligible beneficiary's placement in the therapeutic foster home.
- (b) It is expected that the youth, the youth's family of origin or other identified family and the therapeutic resource family are integral members of the youth's person-centered planning team.
- (c) This service offers intensive family-based support through the utilization of a co-parenting approach provided to the youth in a therapeutic resource family setting.
- (d) The goal is to support the youth and the youth's family of origin or other identified family in ways that will address current acute and/or chronic mental health needs and to coordinate a successful return to the family of origin or other identified family at the earliest possible time.
- (e) During the time the therapeutic resource family is supporting the youth, there is regular contact with the youth's family of origin or other identified family to prepare for the youth's return and ongoing needs as part of the family of origin or other identified family.

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- (f) Post-discharge services: to support reunification and to prevent reentry, the person-centered planning team will continue services for up to 90 days as the youth returns home, to support the youth and family.
- (3) Limitations
- TFC is billed as a daily, per diem unit with a limit of one unit per member per day.
- c. TFC Providers
- (1) Provider Qualifications: TFC providers are child placing agencies certified and contracted with the Department under Iowa Administrative Code 441-108.4. TFC services are provided by licensed, custodial foster parents meeting the requirements of 441 Iowa Administrative Code Chapter 113 who receive specialized training to provide the service and are contracted with and supervised by the enrolled child placing agency. Licensed, custodial foster parents must also meet all of the following requirements.
- (i) Be 25 years of age or older.
 - (ii) Must be responsive to the member's needs 24/7, including childcare and back up childcare, transportation, and the ability to respond to the member's illness, emergencies, or other needs of the youth while the provider is working.
 - (iii) Must have a minimum of 2 years' experience working with youth or have at least 2 years of education in fields including human services, early childhood/secondary education, nursing, or other HHS approved education. One year of education may substitute for one year of experience.
 - (iv) Must own or be the primary renter on the property where the TFC services are to be provided, which shall include a one-year lease at minimum.
 - (v) Successfully complete additional provider-specific training and certification requirements developed by HHS, which may include the following:
 - 1. Trauma Informed Care;
 - 2. First Aid/ CPR Certification;
 - 3. Training in Crisis Support and Verbal De-escalation;
 - 4. Training/consultation specific to the member's individualized mental health, developmental health, and medical health care needs; and
 - 5. Other training as directed by HHS.
 - (vi) Be a legal resident of the United States.
 - (vii) Have access to a Department of Transportation-approved motor vehicle.
 - (viii) Pass HHS-required driving record screenings, as requested by the Department or the supervising child placing agency.
- (2) Supervision: Licensed, custodial foster parents meeting the qualifications above are supervised by HHS-enrolled child placing agencies. TFC supervisors must meet the qualifications of a caseworker and/or higher as established in Iowa Administrative Code 441-108.4(4).