Therapeutic Foster Care (TFC) Services Parent Qualifications

Therapeutic Foster Care Services

Under the Therapeutic Foster Care model, to qualify as a Medicaid TFC provider, a TFC parent must be approved as a TFC provider and approved as a resource parent by the TFC Agency[1]. This means that TFC parents must:

- Meet and comply with all basic foster care or resource parent requirements as set forth in California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 22, Division 6, Chapter 9.5 or Welfare and Institutions (W&I) Code 16519.5[2]; and
- Meet and comply with all requirements related to their role as a TFC parent which is outlined below TFC parents will have access to the support of a Child and Family Team (CFT).

Resource Family Approval

Pursuant to Assembly Bill (AB) 403 (Statutes of 2015) all new family-based foster care providers will be required to meet Resource Family Approval standards starting January 1, 2017 and existing licensed/certified foster care providers will be required to complete the process by January 1, 2020.

DRAFT

[1] TFC Agency would need to be: 1) A California licensed Family Foster Agency (FFA) or comparable agency that at a minimum is able to certify TFC homes; and 2) A Medi-Cal Mental Health provider that has a contract with a County Mental Health Plan as a Medi-Cal provider (or a County Mental Health Plan that has been certified by DHCS) to provide both TFC services and a wide array of other community behavioral health services.

[2] Pursuant to AB 403 (Statutes of 2015) all new family-based foster care providers will be required to meet Resource Family Approval standards starting January 1, 2017 and existing licensed/certified foster care providers will be required to complete the process by December 31, 2019.

Therapeutic Foster Care (TFC) Services Parent Qualifications

	Resource Family Approval	Additional Requirements for Therapeutic Foster Care
Resource Parent	Must be at least 18 years of age. • All new caregivers, related and non-related, interested in providing care to children in child welfare or probation must go through RFA process • An approved Resource Family (RF) is approved for foster care, legal guardianship and adoption • A RF has been determined to have ability and willingness to provide permanency and/or ability and willingness to support permanency for a child • Counties, CDSS, FFA shall adhere to RFA standards for all families	For TFC parents the minimum age will be 21 rather than 18 years of age. • TFC parent must meet California's Medicaid rehabilitation provider qualification for "other qualified provider" [3] (i.e., has a high school degree or equivalent degree)" and meet provider qualifications and other requirements regarding certification, oversight, etc. as established by the Mental Health Plan.
Application Process	Forms: • Application and Criminal Records Statement • Home Environment Checklist • Risk Assessment • Written Assessment Report • Annual Update Supporting Documentation: • Proof of Identity • Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) report for applicants and adults who may frequently transport children or non-minor dependents • Verification of good physical & mental health screening & psychosocial assessment etc. for applicants	No additional requirements.

[3] See California State Medicaid Plan Attachment 3.1 A Rehabilitation Mental Health Services.

DRAFT

	Resource Family Approval	Additional Requirements for Therapeutic Foster Care
	• Tuberculosis (TB) screening on all adults in home • Employment Verification • Verification of Income/expenses • Proof of home ownership or rental agreement • Prior history of applicant's status as Foster Family Home (FFH), Certified Family Home (CFH), approved relative or nonrelative extended family member, or employee, volunteer or licensee of a Community Care Facility (CCF) • Personal references Additional Requirements: • Home Environment Assessment (Building and Grounds) • Background Checks Assessment • Psychosocial Assessment • Pre-Approval Training	

DRAFT

	Resource Family Approval	Additional Requirements for Therapeutic Foster Care

Background Checks	• Fingerprint based criminal records check on applicant and all adults in the home at adoption clearance levels
	  ○ Department of Justice (DOJ)
	  ○ Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)
	  ○ Child Abuse Central Index (CACI)
	• Full criminal history considered in psychosocial assessment
	• Megan's Law check
	• DMV Report
	• Legal Administration Action Records System (LAARS) check
	  ○ Licensing Information System (LIS)
		No additional requirements.

DRAFT

	Resource Family Approval	Additional Requirements for Therapeutic Foster Care

Home Study Process and Inspection	Information provided to applicants:
	• Benefits associated with foster care, Adoption Assistance Program (AAP), Kin- GAP, Approved Relative Caregiver (ARC) funding, and any other assistance that may apply.
	• Personal Rights of foster children
	• The applicant's right to a due process hearing.
	• Access to health, mental health, and dental care through Medi-Cal, in home supportive services, and developmental or other services based on the needs of a child or non-minor dependent in the care of a Resource Family.
	• The Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard[4].
	• The Quality Parenting Initiative Partnership Plan[5], if applicable.
	
	Comprehensive RFA Assessment includes:
	• Home Environment Assessment Check
	  ○ Building and Grounds
	  ○ Fire Clearance (if required)
	  ○ Capacity determination
	• Psychosocial Assessment
		This review process includes:
		• A thorough psychosocial evaluation for each TFC parent
		• A minimum of 2 to 3 pre-approval home visits
		• Individual interviews with every adult present in the home and a group interview session with all family members
		• A comprehensive written report which includes a discussion of family strengths, challenges, risk management concerns, the family's appropriateness for TFC and a recommendation for approval including the child/youth best served by the family and any restrictions.
		• The review process and inspection would occur prior to, or simultaneous with TFC parent training.

[4] As defined in W&I Code Section 362.05 (c), "reasonable and prudent parent standard" means the standard characterized by careful and sensible parental decisions that maintain the health, safety, and best interests of a child while at the same time encouraging the emotional and developmental growth of the child, that a caregiver shall use when determining whether to allow a child in foster care under the responsibility of the state to participate in age or developmentally appropriate extracurricular, enrichment, cultural, and social activities.

[5] "Quality Parenting Initiative Partnership Plan" means the document that describes the roles of a Resource Family and a County in mutually supporting a child or non-minor dependent in care and meets the case plan objectives.

DRAFT

	Resource Family Approval	Additional Requirements for Therapeutic Foster Care
	○ Minimum 3 face to face interviews with each applicant (at least one jointly and one individually) ○ Minimum 1 face to face interview with everyone in the home (including children) ○ Interviews include at minimum: • Childhood upbringing and experiences. • Adult experiences and personal characteristics. • A risk assessment, which shall include: A. Past and current alcohol and other substance use and abuse history. B. Physical, emotional, sexual abuse and family domestic violence history. C. Past and current physical and mental health of the applicant. • Current marital status and history of marriages, domestic partnerships, or significant relationships. • Children living in or out of the home. A. Name. B. Gender. C. Date of birth. D. Relationship to applicant. E. General health. F. Past and current behavioral issues. G. If children are not living in the home, the reason. H. Custody arrangements and disputes. • Parenting approaches. A. Family values. B. Lifestyles, activities, and home environment.	

DRAFT

	Resource Family Approval	Additional Requirements for Therapeutic Foster Care
	C. Parenting practices and discipline procedures. • Social support system. • Employment. • Financial situation. A. Ability within the home to ensure the stability and financial security of the family. B. Understanding of legal and financial responsibilities when caring for a child or non-minor dependent. • Motivation to become a Resource Family. • Characteristics and demographics of a child or non-minor dependent best served by the Resource Family. • Discussion of the results of the background checks. • Pre-Approval Training (See below for more information) • Written Assessment (Final product that summarizes, evaluates and makes final determination on approvability of family including strengths and weaknesses)	
Initial Training Requirements	Minimum of 12 hours of pre-approval training which shall include: • A Resource Family orientation. • An overview of the child protective system. • Role of the resource family, including working cooperatively with service providers and agencies to	40 hours of initial TFC parent training must be completed prior to the parent being eligible to provide services as a TFC parent. Training shall include but is not limited to: • Introduction to therapeutic foster parenting and role in mental health treatment planning • Working with children who have been abused,

DRAFT

	Resource Family Approval	Additional Requirements for Therapeutic Foster Care
	develop and implement the case plan. • Child and adolescent development and the effects of child abuse and neglect on child development. • Positive discipline and the importance of self- esteem. • Common health issues of foster children including administration of psychotropic medications. • A current certificate verifying completion of an age-appropriate Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation and First Aid course. • Accessing education and health services available to foster children or non-minor dependents in care. • Personal rights of foster youth. • Options for permanency. • Birth parent relationships and safety issues regarding contact, as applicable. • Instruction on cultural competency and sensitivity relating to, and best practices for, providing adequate care to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth in out-of- home care. • Basic instruction on the existing laws and procedures regarding the safety of foster youth at school and the ensuring of a harassment and violence free school environment. • Any other training a County or approving agency determines to be appropriate.	neglected and/or delinquent. • Trauma informed care • Developmental stages and age appropriate interventions • Prevention of aggressive behavior and de- escalation techniques • Positive behavioral reinforcement techniques • Behavior management techniques • Introduction to individualized mental health treatment of children • Effective communication and relationship building techniques • Understanding and monitoring medications • Crisis management/de-escalation techniques • Cultural competence and culturally responsive services • Client sensitivity training (including stories and content developed and delivered by peer roles (e.g. foster parents, former foster youth, bio parents, etc.) • Training around stress and well-being/self- care • Involvement and role in Child and Family Team (CFT) • Progress note training/medical necessity criteria • Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) • Access to other Specialty Mental Health Services (SMHS)
Ongoing Training	Minimum of 8 hours of post-approval training on an annual basis • Trauma informed care and attachment. • Core Practice Model.	24 hours of annual ongoing training related to providing TFC services and which includes an emphasis on skill development and application and SMHS knowledge acquisition. This training can be provided in a variety of

DRAFT

	Resource Family Approval	Additional Requirements for Therapeutic Foster Care
	• Crisis intervention. • Behavior Management. • Supporting children and non-minor dependents in school. • Effects of drug and alcohol abuse on children and non-minor dependents. • Administration of psychotropic medications. • Emancipation and independent living. • Any other training a County or approving agency determines to be appropriate. In addition to the training specified above, the Resource Family shall maintain a current certificate for CPR and First Aid.	formats (videos, readings, internet training, and webinars).
Supervision of Resource Parents	Approved Resource Families shall be provided with monthly financial assistance, agency sponsored resources, at least once monthly visits from the child, youth, or NMD's social worker, and other supports. A county or approving agency shall monitor Resource Families through the following: • Conducting annual updates as required by Section 08-01. • Conducting periodic evaluations and home environment assessments, as necessary. • Investigating complaints against a Resource Family. • Developing corrective action plans to correct identified deficiencies. • Requiring a Resource Family to comply with corrective	TFC parents provide TFC services under the direction of a Licensed Practitioner of the Healing Arts or a Licensed Mental Health Professional able to direct services that is affiliated with the TFC Provider Agency. The TFC Provider Agency has overall responsibility for monitoring the TFC parents. The Licensed Practitioner/Professional will meet as frequently as needed with the TFC parent to review the treatment plan, documentation and progress of that treatment, and will provide support to the TFC parent.

DRAFT

	Resource Family Approval	Additional Requirements for Therapeutic Foster Care
	action plans. • Investigating possible address matches of registered sex offenders as provided for in All County Letter (ACL) 13-64. CDSS shall review annually a random sample of Resource Families in a county for compliance with applicable laws and the Written Directives. The review shall include the following Resource Family information: • Application. • Background checks, including any exemptions. • Annual updates. • Complaints and investigations. • Enforcement actions and administrative reviews. • Reports of serious complaints and incidents involving Resource Families. • Any other information deemed necessary to evaluate compliance with applicable laws and the Written Directives.	
Annual Evaluation and Renewal	At least annually a county or approving agency shall update the approval of a Resource Family. • The update shall begin no sooner than 60 days prior to their anniversary date and shall be completed no later than 30 days after. Included in an annual update is the following: • Interview all individuals living in the home. • Updated home environment assessment • Verify that a subsequent arrest notification (rap back)	Incorporates input from the child and family team members as well as a self-evaluation by the TFC parents. The home visit should be strength-based and solution-focused. It should address: • TFC parent role and performances as therapeutic change agent; including treatment strategies • Case records and documentation

DRAFT

	Resource Family Approval	Additional Requirements for Therapeutic Foster Care
	service is in place for all adults living in the home. • If there are new adults in the home, a background clearance must be completed for each new adult living in the home, including a subsequent arrest notification service. • A change in the number of people residing in the home, including when the resource family becomes a guardian or conservator for any child or other person, or an adult moves out of the home, • Updated psychosocial assessment to address any changes that have occurred in the Resource Family's circumstances • A change in the physical or mental health of a child, NMD or any other residents in the home, including the Resource Family. • A move to a new home location within the County, to another early implementation County, to a non-participating county, or returning to the approving County. • A change in marital status. • An update to an existing approval may be completed earlier than annually if in the county's judgment changes have occurred in the family's circumstances that warrant such an update • Personal and professional development goals and training • Barriers encountered and strategies for resolution through positive reinforcement	

DRAFT