

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Child and Family Services Agency



Administrative Issuance: CFSA-17-5

TO: All Staff

FROM: Brenda Donald
Agency Director

DATE: June 28, 2017

RE: Resource Parent Reimbursement for Property Damage Caused by Children in their Care

This Administrative Issuance addresses circumstances under which CFSA will provide reasonable compensation for damages or loss of property as a result of the actions of a child or youth in CFSA's custody who resides with a CFSA resource parent or a family-based CFSA-contracted provider resource parent.

Any questions concerning this issuance should be directed to the Office of the Principal Deputy.

Conditions Under Which CFSA Will Cover Damage to Resource Parent Property

CFSA accepts and reviews reimbursement requests for damages and loss under the following conditions:

- Reimbursement requests shall be limited to damage sustained to fixed property (e.g., land, structures, buildings and properties attached to it) including damage to the family home, walls and fixtures.
- The damage resulted from the foster child's direct act or failure to act.
- The resource parent exercised adequate supervision and took appropriate precautions considering the child's maturity and behavioral history.

Requirements for Reimbursement for Property Damage

1. Under the conditions set forth in this issuance, CFSA will reimburse a resource parent for loss of or damage to real property caused by a child's direct act or failure to act. The reimbursement may cover the cost of the resource parent's insurance deductible payment, the damage itself, or some combination thereof.
2. The requestor of reimbursement must complete the attached Resource Parent Reimbursement Form (see attachment) and submit it to CFSA within 45 days of the date the damage was sustained.
3. The requestor must attach to the Resource Parent Reimbursement Form evidence of the property damage (e.g., police report, video footage, photographs, and written statements of witnesses, receipts for payment and/or proof of service to repair or replace the damages).
4. The requestor must provide CFSA with three (3) written estimates for the repair or replacement of damaged real property from the insurance carrier, service provider, or a third party appraiser. Additional estimates may be requested at the discretion of CFSA.
 - a. All receipts, estimates, and appraisals must be submitted on official letterhead of the business providing the service.
 - b. CFSA reserves the right to identify its own service provider to provide estimates.
5. If the requestor has submitted an insurance claim with his or her insurer, then the requestor must provide documentation of the claim and any record of resolution from the insurer.

Exclusions to Reimbursement Requests for Property Damage

CFSA reserves the right to deny reimbursement requests under the following conditions:

1. The damage resulted from normal wear and tear or gradual deterioration of real property.
2. The reimbursement request exceeds the purchase price, estimate or appraisal of the damaged property or is for the upgrade or betterment of the property that may be required by law.
3. The damage for which the resource parent submits a reimbursement request has already been covered by the insurer. If the resource parent elects to utilize his or her own insurance to cover the damage, CFSA will cover only the costs that are not already covered by the insurer.
4. The resource parent's action, inaction, or negligence contributed substantially to the damage. For instance:
 - a. A foster child who is not of the appropriate age and maturity level to be unsupervised was left home alone and set fire to a carpet.
 - b. The resource parent failed to disclose to the youth in care that there was a particular issue, service interruption, repair, or renovation in the home that required special attention (e.g., the youth walks and leaves footprints on wet concrete on an area of the front porch that has not been appropriately marked or cordoned off).
 - c. The resource parent directed the child to act in a manner that resulted in damage to the property.

CFSA Assessment and Determination of Level of Compensation

1. The child's assigned social worker is to provide assistance to the resource parent as necessary and confirm that the resource parent has submitted requisite documentation for the reimbursement request.
2. Resource parents are to submit reimbursement requests to the child or youth's assigned social worker, who will:
 - a. Within five (5) business days of notification of the incident, review the request by interviewing the resource parent (and any other party who witnessed the incident), as well as the child, to determine if and how the child caused the damage.
 - b. Verify the damage and obtain photographic or video evidence of it, if necessary.
3. Approvals:
 - a. If the reimbursement request originates from a non-contracted resource provider, then the assigned social worker shall complete a memorandum with his or her endorsement of (or other recommendation for) the request for reimbursement, and submit it through their chain of command (i.e., the assigned supervisor, program manager and program administrator) for review and signed approval.
 - b. If the request involves a contracted agency, then the assigned social worker shall complete the memorandum and submit it to their chain of command for signed approval and provide the documents to CFSA's monitoring staff with the Business Services Administration ("BSA").
 - c. If the reimbursement request exceeds \$1,500, then it must receive the approval of the CFSA Director before it is paid.
4. The memorandum should include the following information:
 - a. Detailed information regarding how the incident occurred and evidence of the child's culpability
 - b. Proof of the loss or damage
 - c. Evidence of the resource parent's ownership of the damaged property
 - d. Cost of repair or replacement (including estimates by a third party)
 - e. Proof of Insurance and agreed reimbursement amount

5. The demand payment request must be entered in FACES.NET. The information will automatically go to the supervisor for approval. Upon the supervisor's approval of the request in FACES.NET, the request will be automatically forwarded to the Office of the Chief Financial Officer ("OCFO") Accounts Payable department.
6. Within three (3) days of the final determination, the supervisor or BSA provides written notification to the requestor of the final determination.
7. Copies of Reimbursement Request Forms are to be forwarded to the risk management specialist, located at CFSA's Office of Risk Management.
8. If the request is denied, then the supervisor or BSA must provide to the social worker, within three (3) business days from the date the decision is made, written notice of the denial and the reason for the denial.
 - The social worker shall forward notice of the denial to the requestor along with contact information for the CFSA Office of the Ombudsman, should the requestor seek recourse for the denial.
9. If the request is approved, then the OCFO initiates a demand payment request. [See Administrative Issuance on Demand Payments.](#)
10. Once the payment is issued, the resource parent or contractor submitting the request must sign the attached Agreement and General Release.
11. The social worker shall ensure that copies of all demand payment requests along with the corresponding documentation are placed in the child's file.