GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Child and Family Services Agency

Administrative Issuance: CFSA-17-3

TO: CFSA Staff, Private Provider Staff and Resource Providers

FROM: Heather D. Stowe, Ph.D., Principal Deputy Director

DATE: February 1, 2017 (Updated April 9. 2018)

RE: Administration of the Specialized Opportunities for Youth (SOY) Incentive Payments and Stipends

The Specialized Opportunities for Youth (SOY) program aims to provide stability and support to resource parents of behaviorally-challenged youth in foster care who are in need of significant clinical interventions and services. The goals of the SOY program are to:

- equip resource parents with the skills and financial supports to address the particular needs of youth with severe developmental and/or behavioral challenges, and

- stabilize placement for these youth until they exit the foster care system through positive permanency or emancipation.

This issuance details the requirements for youth entry into a SOY placement, criteria for current and prospective resource parents to become SOY parents, the conditions under which SOY incentive payments and ongoing monthly stipends are paid, and the Agency's programmatic and administrative monitoring requirements.

Questions regarding this issuance should be directed to the Office of the Deputy Director for Program Operations.

Requirements for Youth Entry into a SOY Placement

A youth in foster care may be eligible for a SOY placement if he or she has severe developmental and/or behavioral challenges as evidenced by at least one of the following conditions:

- the result of a clinical assessment used to determine the level of need or care.

- a significant history of placement disruptions and the case planning team has clinically assessed that the youth's behavior is a contributory factor to the disruptions.

- the persistent demonstration of behaviors that risk placement stability (e.g. breaking ground rules of the home, stealing or damaging property, breaking curfew, etc.)

Criteria for Current and Prospective Resource Parents to Become a SOY Resource Parent

Current and prospective resource parents who wish to become SOY resource parents must be able to demonstrate a personal or professional history of interest and success in working with youth victims of trauma.

Additionally, they must fulfill the following SOY application and licensure requirements:
- Complete the SOY application and Letter of Intent,
- Complete all the requirements for traditional resource parent licensure, including clearances, home study, and Trauma Informed Partnering for Safety and Permanence – Model Approach to Partnerships in Parenting (TIPS-MAPP) training,

- Complete 25 to 30 hours of additional specialized training on working with the SOY population specifically, and
- Sign a formal agreement with a two-year commitment to be a SOY resource parent.

CFSA will designate current and prospective resource parents exclusively as SOY resource parents upon their satisfactory confirmation of their licensure status and completion of the additional requirements.

Conditions under which Resource Parents Receive the SOY Incentive and Ongoing Monthly Stipend Payments

SOY resource parents are eligible to receive a one-time $500 incentive payment.

When a youth is placed in the home, the SOY resource parent receives a monthly stipend of $250 per child for the duration of the placement.

- The stipend is to be spent only on activities, services, treatments, or interventions that address the youth's developmental and/or behavioral challenges.
- Ongoing receipt of the monthly stipend is contingent upon the SOY resource parent's compliance with the spending requirements.

Program Requirements and Ongoing Monitoring of SOY Placements

The SOY placement coordinator or designee will conduct a *monthly* audit of the resource parent's spending documentation (receipts, invoices, etc.).

If the audit reveals any areas of noncompliance, the $250 monthly stipend for the subsequent month will be withheld pending resolution of any concerns/issues raised in the audit.