


<b>POLICY TITLE:</b>	<b>Qualified Residential Treatment Programs</b>		
	<b>CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES AGENCY</b>		
<b>Approved By:</b>	<b>Date Approved:</b>	<b>Original Effective Date:</b>	<b>Last Revision:</b>
Brenda Donald	1/21/2020	N/A	N/A

<b>I. AUTHORITY</b>	<p>The Director of the Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA or Agency) adopts this policy to be consistent with the Agency’s mission, and applicable federal and District of Columbia laws and regulations including, provisions in Titles 4 and 16 of the DC Official Code and the LaShawn A. v. Bowser Implementation and Exit Plan (December 17, 2010) including any forthcoming versions of the plan; and 42 U.S.C.A., Ch7, subch. IV, Pts. B &amp; E, as amended by Public law 115-123, enacted February 9, 2018.</p>
<b>II. APPLICABILITY</b>	All Agency employees and contracted personnel, and contracted providers.
<b>III. RATIONALE</b>	<p>For abused or neglected children under CFSA’s care and custody, the Agency’s seeks foster care placement in the least restrictive and most family-like setting possible. If youth have a higher level of need than can be addressed in a family-based setting, then the Agency contracts with congregate care facilities designed and staffed to keep residents safe while attending to their complex needs. Child placement in these settings is intended to be short term, and practice focuses on achieving permanency by way of “step down” to a family-based setting as soon as possible.</p> <p>Within the Family First Prevention Services Act of 2018, Congress created a new classification and national model of congregate care facility: Qualified Residential Treatment Programs. These programs are accredited and must also comply with federally established program and practice standards in order to be eligible to receive title IV-E foster care maintenance payments for youth in their care. State child welfare agencies seeking to access foster care maintenance payments to support residents in these settings are therefore required to establish policies and procedures to ensure that claiming operations for title IV-E foster care maintenance payments comply with federal standards.</p> <p>Within the District of Columbia, QRTPs are a subset of group homes that are accredited and also licensed according to the regulatory requirements of the DC municipal regulations at Title 29, Chapter 62.</p>
<b>IV. POLICY</b>	<p>CFSA shall ensure that congregate care placement settings classified as Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTP) meet the federally prescribed requirements around assessment, content of case plans, documentation, judicial determinations and ongoing court reviews, and directorial approval of placements so as to justify receipt of title IV-E foster care maintenance payments in support of a child placed in the QRTP.</p> <p>CFSA shall ensure that QRTPs obtain and maintain accreditation by one of the independent, not-for-profit organizations identified in federal statute, or one approved by the Secretary of the US Department of Health and Human Services.</p>

<p><b>V. CONTENTS</b></p>	<p><b>A.</b> Licensure and Accreditation  <b>B.</b> Assessment of Appropriateness of Placement  <b>C.</b> Case Plan Requirements for Youth Placed in QRTPs  <b>D.</b> Court Review and Endorsement of QRTP Placement Decisions  <b>E.</b> Director Approval of Long-term Placements  <b>F.</b> Claiming of Title IV-E Administrative Costs</p>
<p><b>VI. SECTIONS</b></p>	<p><b>Section A: Licensure and Accreditation</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Any QRTP doing business with CFSA shall obtain licensure in compliance with requirements set forth in title 29, chapter 62 of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations.</li> <li>2. The QRTP shall be accredited by any of the following independent, not-for-profit organizations: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF)</li> <li>b. The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO)</li> <li>c. The Council on Accreditation (COA)</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. The QRTP may also have accreditation from another independent, not-for-profit accrediting organization that has been approved by the Secretary of the US Department of Health and Human Services.</li> </ol>
	<p><b>Section B: Assessment of Appropriateness of Placement</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Director shall designate in writing a “qualified individual” to complete child-specific assessments of appropriateness of placement in a QRTP.</li> <li>2. The qualified individual shall be a trained professional or licensed clinician who maintained objectivity in determining the most effective and appropriate placement for the child.</li> <li>3. Within 30 days of a child’s placement in a QRTP, the qualified individual will complete an assessment to determine whether the placement in the QRTP is the most appropriate setting for the child. This assessment shall be done in conjunction with the family of, and permanency team for, the child. The assessment shall be completed every 90 days thereafter for as long as the child remains placed in the QRTP.</li> <li>4. As part of the assessment, the qualified individual shall utilize the Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale (CAFAS), which is an age-appropriate, evidence-based, validated, functional assessment tool.</li> </ol>

	<p>5. If the qualified individual determines that a child should not be placed in a foster family home, the qualified individual shall specify <b>in writing</b> the reasons why the needs of the child cannot be met by the family of the child or in a foster family home, and why the recommended placement in a qualified residential treatment program is the setting that will provide the child with the most effective and appropriate level of care in the least restrictive environment and how that placement is consistent with the short- and long-term goals for the child, as specified in the permanency plan for the child.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A shortage or lack of foster family homes shall not be an acceptable reason for determining that the needs of the child cannot be met in a foster family home.</li> </ul> <p>6. The assessment shall be documented in the child’s case record.</p> <p>7. If the 30-day assessment is not completed and documented within the required timeframe, then CFSA shall not claim title IV-E foster care maintenance payments for the duration of the child’s placement in that QRTP.</p> <p>8. If the qualified individual’s assessment determines that the QRTP is not appropriate, or that the child is going to return home or achieve permanency through guardianship or adoption, then CFSA may claim title IV-E foster care maintenance payments to transition the child from the QRTP to the next placement or permanent home up to 30 days after the judicial determination.</p>
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	<p><b>Section C: Case Plan Requirements for Youth Placed in QRTPs</b></p> <p>For every child placed in a QRTP, the child’s case plan shall document:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The child’s short and long-term mental and behavioral health goals.</li> <li>2. The reasonable and good faith efforts to identify and include the child’s family, kin (including fictive kin), service providers, school professionals, and community supports on the child’s permanency team.</li> <li>3. Contact information for members of the family and permanency team, as well as contact information for other family members and kin who are not part of the permanency team.</li> <li>4. Evidence that meetings of the permanency team, including meetings relating to the qualified individual’s assessment of QRTP placement, are held at a time and place convenient for the family.</li> <li>5. Evidence that the QRTP placement assessment is determined in conjunction with the family and permanency team.</li> <li>6. The placement preferences of the permanency team relative to the assessment that recognizes children should be placed with their siblings unless there is a finding by the court that such placement is contrary to their best interest.</li> </ol>
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	<p>7. If the placement preferences of the permanency team and child are not in accord with the setting recommended by the qualified individual, the reasons why the preferences of the permanency team and child were not recommended.</p> <p>8. Any determination by a qualified individual that a child should not be placed in a foster family home, and the reasons why the needs of the child cannot be met by the family of the child, or in a foster family home, and documentation of the Family Court's judicial determination regarding endorsement of the placement decision.</p>
	<p><b>Section D: Court Review and Endorsement of Placement Decisions for QRTPs</b></p> <p>1. Within 60 days of the start of each placement in a QRTP, and at each formal review hearing or permanency hearing thereafter for as long as the youth remains in the QRTP placement, the assigned social worker and Assistant Attorney General shall request the judge assigned to the case in the Family Court of the DC Superior Court to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Consider the assessment, determination and documentation made by the qualified individual conducting the assessment.</li> <li>b. Determine whether the needs of the child can be met through placement in a foster family home or, if not, whether placement of the child in a QRTP provides the most effective and appropriate level of care for the child in the least restrictive environment.</li> <li>c. Determine whether the QRTP placement is consistent with the short and long-term goals for the child, as specified in the case plan.</li> <li>d. Formally endorse the qualified individual's placement decision.</li> </ul> <p>2. At each formal review or permanency hearing that occurs while the youth is placed in the QRTP, CFSA shall submit evidence of the following into the Court record:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Assessment data confirming that the child's needs cannot be met in a foster home setting, the QRTP continues to provide the most appropriate level of care in the least restrictive environment for the child, and the current placement is consistent with the short- and long-term permanency goals for the child.</li> <li>b. Documentation confirming that the specific treatment or service needs that will be met for the child and length of time the child is expected to need the treatment or service.</li> <li>c. Documentation of CFSA's efforts to prepare the child to return home or to an alternative appropriate family setting.</li> </ul>

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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. If the Family Court fails to make a judicial determination endorsing the qualified individual's clinical assessment and approval of the child's placement within the 60-day timeframe, then CFSA shall only claim title IV-E foster care maintenance for the first 60 days of the child's placement in the QRTP.</li> <li>4. If, following any hearing that occurs while the youth is placed in the QRTP, the Family Court issues a judicial determination stating that it explicitly disagrees with the Agency's decision to place the child in the QRTP, then CFSA may claim title IV-E foster care maintenance payments to transition the child from the QRTP to the next placement or permanent home, should the Agency determine that such a transition is in the child's best interest, up to 30 days after the judicial determination.</li> </ol>
	<p><b>Section E: Director Approval of Long-term Placements</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. If a child is placed in a particular QRTP for more than 12 consecutive months, or for 18 nonconsecutive months (or, in the case of a child who as not attained age 13, for more than six consecutive of nonconsecutive months), the Director must approve the child's continued placement in that setting in order for the Agency to continue to claim title IV-E foster care maintenance payments.</li> <li>2. The Director's signed approval, as well as the most recent versions of the evidence in support of continued placement in a QRTP that has been submitted to the Family Court at court hearings, shall be maintained in the child's case record, and shall be made available for federal inspection and/or review upon request, during a title IV-E foster care eligibility review, during joint planning, or during a partial review.</li> </ol>
	<p><b>Section F: Claiming of Title IV-E Administrative Costs</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. CFSA may claim administrative costs for the duration of a child's placement in a QRTP regardless of whether the requirements in Sections B, C, and D of this policy are met, although these include only administrative costs associated with the overall administration of the title IV-E program, as defined in 45 C.F.R. § 1356.60 (West, 2019).</li> <li>2. These administrative costs do not include the costs of the administration and operation of the QRTP itself. These latter costs are allowable only when a title IV-E foster care maintenance payment is made for the child.</li> </ol>

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