

Emergency Child Care Bridge Program

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Purpose/Description

One of the primary barriers to potential families seeking the placement of a foster child is childcare. The Emergency Child Care Bridge Program is intended to assist in removing such barriers for resource families that would otherwise prevent them from being able to take a placement of a foster child upon an emergency placement. The program provides families with time limited emergency childcare funding, childcare navigation services and trauma-informed training and coaching for eligible childcare providers. The program is also available to non-minor dependent parents.

One of the main purposes of the Bridge Program is to ensure foster children receive high quality childcare and successfully enroll in a long-term childcare program.

Target Population

Resource Family Homes, Licensed Foster Homes, Foster Family Agencies, approved Relative/NREFM homes, Relatives/NREFM with children placed in their care under an emergency placement or for a compelling reason pending RFA approval, and minor parents under the jurisdiction of the Juvenile Court, non-minor dependents who have their child placed in their care, and change of placements.

Children birth through five years of age, but may expand to serve children ages 6 -12 years with exceptional needs and severely disabled children, and sibling groups with a child under the age of five years. Priority will be given to children age birth through five years and not yet in school.

Eligibility/Criteria

Caregivers with children placed in their care as an **emergency placement or compelling reason**, that are pending Resource Family Approval (RFA), change of placements and/or:

- Approved Resource Families,
- Licensed foster homes,
- Foster Family Agencies,
- Parenting youth under the jurisdiction of Juvenile Court,
- Non-minor dependent parents,
- Children birth through five years of age and ages 6 -12, with exceptional needs and severely disabled children,
- Sibling group with a child under the age of five years.

Additional Eligibility:

- Caregivers or parenting youth **must be** working or attending school
- All resources **must be** exhausted before referring a caregiver to the Bridge Program.
- **Only** licensed childcare providers or licensed childcare centers are available for this program.

NOTE: Target population and eligibility criteria must be met to qualify for the Bridge Program.

LEVEL OF SERVICES (The Bridge Program consists of three components: emergency childcare vouchers, childcare navigators, and trauma-informed care training.)

Emergency Child Care Voucher

Eligible families may receive monthly vouchers for up to six months, indicating that the caregiver is approved for emergency short-term childcare funding. Eligibility may be extended for an additional six months with approval, if the family is unable to secure long-term, subsidized childcare during the initial six months. It is not to exceed 12 months. Bridge vouchers are available per child per placement.

NOTE: Extended approval requests are reviewed by Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) or CWS Policy Analyst assigned to this file.

Child Care Navigator

The childcare navigator will work with the family and SW as a team to assist the eligible family to secure childcare at the time of placement, and to develop a plan for long-term high-quality licensed childcare appropriate to the child's age and needs. The navigator will assist in completing childcare applications, including the application to the Centralized Eligibility List, and enrolling families into a childcare program.

Trauma-Informed Training and Coaching

The trauma-informed training and coaching to childcare providers consists of:

- Infant and toddler development
- Trauma-informed best practices
- Strategies for working with children in foster care.

Payment

The Contractor, YMCA of San Diego County-Child Care Bridge Program, will issue monthly Child Care vouchers to eligible families and childcare payments directly to the childcare provider.

Referrals

SW will screen and assess caregiver for potential eligibility. If eligible, the SW will complete and submit the Emergency Child Care Bridge Referral Form ([04-317](#)) and email to Childcarebridge@ymca.org.

Any time a change of placement occurs for a child receiving care from the Bridge program, the SW will complete a new referral and send to YMCA, indicating the placement change which will also reset the time-clock for Bridge Program eligibility.

In cases of exceptional circumstances and extension requests, the YMCA Bridge Program, will refer to the CWS Bridge Program COR for approval.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact [Veronica Sarabia](#).