



Foster Care Reimbursement Rates

Presentation to the Oklahoma Senate Health and
Human Services Committee

September 29, 2026

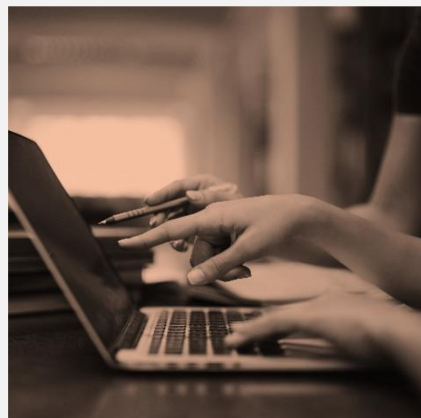


How NCSL Supports Legislators and Legislative Staff



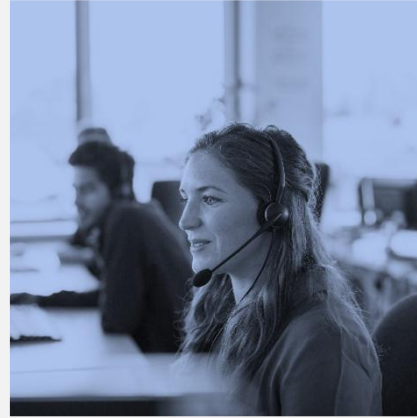
Policy Research

Thousands of ad hoc research requests from legislators and legislative staff fulfilled each year.



Bill Tracking

Forty-five legislative databases covering most state policy matters. Searchable on [NCSL.org](https://www.ncsl.org).



Technical Assistance

In-state informational services and trainings by invitation of state.



Publications

Numerous policy papers, articles and podcasts on [NCSL.org](https://www.ncsl.org); Facebook and LinkedIn videos and 25 newsletters.



Convenings

Three marque annual events and hundreds of targeted or invitational in-person and on-line meetings and webinars.

NCSL's Children and Families Program

Program Areas



- Early Childhood and Childcare (prenatal-5)
- Child Welfare
- Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect
- Housing and Homelessness
- Economic Security
- Family Law



Foster Care Financing Overview

State Child Welfare Financing

- State and local governments finance over half ([57%](#)) of child welfare funding.
- In 2025, [45](#) states, territories, and the District of Columbia enacted at least 128 [bills](#) related to child welfare financing.



State Child Welfare Financing

State funding roles:

- Meeting federal matching requirements.
- Meeting spending level requirements/[maintenance of effort](#).
- Covering non-reimbursable costs.





Reimbursement Rates: Policy Levers

Policy Levers

- Adjust allocations through appropriations bills.
- Modify eligibility, formulas, or other policy decisions in policy bills.
- Set percentages or other metrics legislatively and allow agencies to discern rates within appropriated funds.
- Authorize authority and direction for administering agency to provide services within allocated funds.





Foster Care Rates: What goes into the decision?

Policy Considerations

Child's Age

- Age categories typically include birth to five, middle childhood, and teenage years.

Placement Type

- Foster family home.
- Licensed kinship provider.
- Unlicensed kinship placement.
- Congregate foster care home.
- Residential treatment facility.

Child Needs and Strengths

- Use of Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths assessment across states.
- Responsive services and supports.



State Legislation Examples

California

AB 161 (2023)

- Establishes tiered system for foster care rates.
- Payment levels are determined using the Integrated Practice- Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths assessment.
- Three tiers of payments create a combined total, incorporating:
 - Supervision.
 - Strengths-building.
 - Immediate Needs.



North Carolina

SB 20 (2023)

- **Increases rates for Foster Care Assistance Program.**
- **Includes differentiated rates for foster care homes and unlicensed kinship placements.**
- **Authorizes higher rates for older youth in foster care:**
 - \$702 for young children, birth to five.
 - \$810 for older youth, 13 to 20.





Trends Across States

Trends Across States



- Legislatures are adjusting eligibility and financial support for kinship care providers.
- Legislatures are working to address placement options for children and youth experiencing mental health concerns.
- Payment rates are broadly trending modestly upward.



Thank you for joining today!

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