

Behavioral Health Services (BHS)

Mental Health Provider Minimum Qualifications (MQ):

Therapeutic Foster Care (TFC) and Intensive Services Foster Care (ISFC) Open Enrollment

The Sacramento County Department of Health Services, BHS, has developed the following minimum qualifications (MQ) required for Foster Family Agencies (FFA) who have a current Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with Sacramento County Child Protective Services (CPS) as an ISFC provider and/or TFC provider with Therapeutic Foster Parents, to request from BHS a mental health contract to provide intensive, highly coordinated, trauma-informed, and individualized specialty mental health services (SMHS) for unlinked youth placed in their FFA homes. FFAs that provide TFC or ISFC services will provide SMHS for youth and may opt to provide SMHS to all Sacramento County youth in their FFA homes.

FFAs must be pre-approved by the County and have the capability to provide the full array of outpatient SMHS, including Mental Health Services, Medication Support, Case Management, Peer Supports and Crisis Intervention. Upon meeting all the MQ's below, an FFA may request a mental health contract with Sacramento County BHS to be reimbursed for TFC and medically necessary outpatient SMHS provided during a youth's foster care stay, via the beneficiary's Medi-Cal Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) entitlement. All contracts begin upon execution of the contract and continue until June 30th each fiscal year. No services, billing or claiming may occur without an executed contract and Medi-Cal certification. SMHS are limited to treatment and peer services and shall not cover the cost of board and care or other placement related services for which the FFA is reimbursed through the placing agency. FFAs are required to time study to ensure staff are coding only treatment or peer service time in the mental health program.

ISFC Contracting Requirements

SMHS in foster homes with ISFC placements are provided to children and youth who have intensive needs such as medical, therapeutic, or behavioral needs. The ISFC resource parents through the FFA provide structure and consistency in the home to support the child or youth through the child's placement. The FFA's will leverage their close working relationship with the resource parents and will provide the full array of primary outpatient SMHS to unlinked youth in their ISFC homes. For youth that are already linked to a provider of SMHS, the FFA may provide SMHS that complement but not duplicate services as determined by the Child and Family Team (CFT).

TFC Contracting Requirements

TFC SMHS are provided to youth by highly trained, intensely supervised, and thoroughly supported TFC parents, also known as "Therapeutic Foster Parents". Youth placed in a TFC home require intensive and frequent mental health support in a one-on-one environment. The TFC service model allows for the provision of short-term, intensive, highly coordinated, trauma-informed, and individualized medically necessary TFC SMHS to children and youth up to age 21 who have complex emotional and behavioral health needs and who are placed into TFC homes with Therapeutic Foster Parents. In addition to providing the TFC SMHS, the FFA's will leverage their close working relationship with the Therapeutic Foster Parent and will provide the full array of primary outpatient SMHS to unlinked youth in their TFC homes. For youth that are already linked to a provider of outpatient SMHS, the FFA will provide SMHS that complement but not duplicate services as determined by the CFT.

The TFC parent serves as a professional parent in the therapeutic treatment of foster youth. In addition to the standard foster parent training requirements, the TFC parent will receive extensive training by the FFA to address the behavioral needs of youth, and under close supervision by a California licensed mental health professional employed by the FFA, will provide trauma-informed therapeutic interventions that are medically necessary for the youth. The knowledge, skills, and strategies they learn while going through TFC training can be applied to a myriad of situations. The SMHS TFC activities assist youth to achieve client plan goals and objectives; improve functioning and well-being; and help the youth to remain in a family

home in a community setting, by providing intensive support, services, and interventions. TFC services are intended to prevent and reduce the use of residential congregate, inpatient, or institutional care. FFAs will be paid a TFC daily rate that will cover the cost of the professional parent and licensed supervision of the parent per county Staff Registration policy [QM-03-07](#).

Inclusive in the daily rate, TFC Service activities include:

Plan Development (limited to when it is part of the CFT): The TFC parent will participate, as a member of the CFT, in the care planning, monitoring and review processes.

Rehabilitation: The TFC parent will implement in-home trauma informed practices, which are recovery- or resiliency-focused service activities identified to address a mental health need in the client plan.

Collateral: The TFC parent will help meet the needs of the youth in achieving his/her mental health client plan by reaching out to significant support person(s) and providing consultation and/or training for needed medical, vocational, educational, or other services to assist in better utilization of SMHS by the youth.

All Foster Youth Option

The ISFC or TFC FFA may also leverage their close working relationship with their certified Resource Parents by providing SMHS to all of their unlinked Sacramento County foster youth placed in any of their FFA certified foster homes. For youth that are already linked to a provider of outpatient SMHS, the FFA may provide SMHS that complement but not duplicate services as determined by the CFT. All specialty mental health services aside from the TFC services will be paid using unit rates outlined in Exhibit C of the contract.

FFAs requesting a TFC and/or ISFC contract with Sacramento County BHS, can respond to this Open Enrollment process by contacting: TFCREFERRALS@SACCOUNTY.GOV for further questions and submission of completing the MQ's.

To provide ISFC, TFC or both for Sacramento County youth placed in FFA home applicants must meet the following MQ's:

1. Must have a current MOU with CPS as an IFSC provider.
2. Must be currently providing care for Sacramento County foster youth (Probation or Child Welfare) or have served a Sacramento County foster youth in the last 3 months.
3. Must be in good standing with Sacramento County Probation or Sacramento County CPS Departments within the last month prior to enrollment request and must be a designated provider of choice for ISFC, TFC or both. BHS will confirm this with CPS and Probation.
4. Homes serving Sacramento County foster youth (Probation or CPS), must be located within Sacramento County. For homes outside of Sacramento County, the out of county home can claim Sacramento County Medi-Cal if the youth is a Sacramento County resident and the FFA is Medi-Cal certified in alignment with Sacramento County BHS policies.
5. For ISFC contracting, must have program approval by the State of California to provide ISFC, have an MOU with Sacramento County CPS as an ISFC provider, have at least one ISFC qualified home, available to care for a youth placed as an ISFC placement or have such a home in development, and plans to take ISFC placements.
6. For TFC contracting, must be a California FFA who meets licensure and accreditation requirements established by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and that is able to approve TFC homes; and accept TFC placements from Sacramento County placing agencies.

7. If opting into the TFC program, the FFA must have at least one TFC qualified home, with Therapeutic Foster Parent recruited, trained and available to care for a youth, or have such a parent in development.
8. Must have the capability and intent to provide the full array of specialty mental health services (e.g., Intensive Care Coordination, Intensive Home-Based Services, medication supports, therapy services, crisis intervention and stabilization), which includes TFC if intending to contract for TFC.
9. Must have the ability to recruit, retain and provide supportive services to Resource Parents/Therapeutic Foster Parents to stabilize placements and prevent 14 day notices.
10. Must provide evidence of financial stability, per Sacramento County guidelines by meeting minimum score (items 1 a, b, and c) criteria:
 - a) Submitted (independent audit) Financial statements will be rated on:
 - a. Liquidity ratios
 - i. Current (current assets divided by current liability)
 - ii. Quick (equal to cash plus government securities plus accounts receivable divided by total current liabilities)
 - b. Leverage ratio: Debt ratio (total liability divided total assets)
 - c. Working capital: Total current assets minus total current liabilities
11. Must be able to meet the following staffing requirements to oversee the adjunctive TFC services of the Therapeutic Foster Parent:
 - a) Licensed clinical head of service (Ph.D., LMFT, LCSW, etc.) for clinical oversight/supervision.
 - b) Quality Management/Quality Improvement staff for continuous quality improvement and Medi-Cal billing/claiming integrity.
 - c) TFC parents who meet the minimum qualifications as outlined by Department of Health Care Services (DHCS).

FFAs must be able to meet the following staffing requirements for the primary mental health services:

 - a. California Board Certified Child/Adolescent Psychiatrist on staff or under contract
 - b. Licensed clinical head of service (Ph.D., LMFT, LPCC, LCSW, etc.)
 - b) Designated quality management staff for continuous quality improvement and Medi-Cal billing/claiming integrity.
 - c) Clinical oversight/supervision manager
 - d) Additional clinical and Peer staffing requirements as stipulated by California DHCS
12. Must become Medi-Cal certified prior to any delivery, billing or claiming of Medi-Cal services.
13. Must have the technology infrastructure in place, per Sacramento County DHS guidelines <https://dhs.saccounty.gov/BHS/BHS-EHR/Pages/Avatar.aspx> to successfully bill and claim SMHS, using Sacramento County Smart Care.