



**STATE OF GEORGIA**  
**Division of Family and Children Services**

**Nathan Deal**  
Governor

**Bobby D. Cagle**  
Director

**SUBJECT: DFCS RBWO Provider Payment Process Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)**

**SOP Number 16-04 (A)**

**Purpose**

This Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) is a DFCS specific process for Fiscal Services, Field Operations, and State Office. This process is essential for ensuring RBWO providers receive timely payments for their services.

Background: DFCS determines that the child needs to be in foster care, and if there are no appropriate relative or DFCS family foster care homes available that can care for the needs of the child, they will reach out to the CPA Foster Care Providers or CCI Providers for placement.

**Applicability**

All relevant DFCS Fiscal Services, Field Operations, and State Office staff, along with RBWO providers. This process is applicable to both contracted and non-contracted RBWO providers

**DFCS Contract Initiation and Placement Process Flow - Contracted**

- A. The Office of Provider Management initiates and monitors the contracts for all CPA and CCI Providers. Each executed contract contains an Annex D (rate sheet).
- B. The DFCS Fiscal Payment center receives the Annex D (rate sheet) from the Fiscal Director of Procurement; they enter the appropriate contract data into SHINES. Since most RBWO contracts start at the beginning of the fiscal year, RBWO provider contracts are entered the latter part of July, or as new providers are approved throughout the fiscal year.
- C. All children placed in RBWO placements are assessed a program designation which determines the per diem rate based on the Annex D or waiver rate. CPAs and CCIs may only accept referrals for children with program designations for which they have an approved contract unless a waiver has been granted by the PRO Unit.

- D. As children / youth are placed with a CPA Foster Home Provider or CCI Provider, the DFCS case manager is responsible for entering the placement and payment of care information into the SHINES system as soon as possible but within 72 hours.
- E. If a child is determined to need a higher program designation than traditional or base, DFCS Case Managers may request an approved RBWO Program Designation waiver of Maximum Watchful Oversight or Specialty Program Designation Types (i.e. SMFWO, SMWO, etc.) from the Placement Resource Operations Unit (PRO) using the following process:
  - a. DFCS Case Manager will go online to [www.gascore.com](http://www.gascore.com) and click on the **DFCS PRO Team Link**. Follow the instructions for application information and criteria for approval. For inquiries regarding a status update of a pending request, contact [proteam@dhs.ga.gov](mailto:proteam@dhs.ga.gov)
  - b. A decision on the application is provided to the DFCS Case Manager within five (5) business days unless the application involves a pending adoption. The DFCS Case Manager uploads a copy of the waiver in SHINES, provides a copy to the appropriate CPA Foster Home Provider or CCI Provider, and provides a copy to their Fiscal/RBWO payment center.
  - c. In the case of an emergency (child is in need of placement within 24 hours from the day of the request - not to include respite), waivers can typically be processed in writing on the same business day or within one (1) business day. When necessary, verbal approval can be obtained from the PRO Director and/or designee.
  - d. When a waiver expires, the provider submits a waiver extension request to the DFCS case manager.
- F. Within 72 hours of receiving the waiver, the case manager updates the payment of care information in GA SHINES.
- G. Respite - foster home tradition, base and MWO per diems are eligible for 10 days paid respite each fiscal year. The rate reimbursed does not include the fixed agency rate. The provider seeks approval from the DFCS case manager and provides the name of respite provider, rate, number of days, and dates of service. The case manager enters this information into SHINES in order to ensure payment.

**Provider Process Flow - Contracted**

- A. As a new child (ren) is placed, the RBWO provider checks GA SHINES via the portal on the 4<sup>th</sup> day of placement but before the end of the month to ensure that their DFCS Case Manager has entered the child. This will help speed up the processing of the

providers payments. If the placement is not in GA SHINES, they immediately reach out to their Case Manager to have it entered.

- B. Pre-bills are a billing statement that vendors will receive the first of every month listing all the children that were potentially housed with them for the billing month. The Fiscal/RBWO Payment center runs the pre-bills the last three days of the month for the current month. The pre-bills are mailed by the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the next month.
- C. The Providers receive their pre-bill via mail during the first week of each month. The provider verifies that all children listed on their pre-bill that were housed with their agency during that month and the child's information is correct (name, per diem, # of days, waiver amount, and sibling incentive).
- D. The provider updates the pre-bill with any new children admitted to their agency during the month using the New Admit Form. The per diem waiver memo for any newly admitted child or changes in per diem not previously supported with a waiver is attached to the New Admit form or pre-bill as applicable.
- E. Each provider is assigned a Fiscal/RBWO payment center that will handle payments for them. This will be assigned the first month children are admitted.
- F. If a provider wants payments made by direct deposit instead of check this will need to be set up at this time (form can be obtained from Fiscal/RBWO payment center staff). All providers are encouraged to use direct deposit for safe arrival of funds.
- G. The Providers mail (since email is not secure please do not email pre-bills or any other documents with children names) their signed pre-bills back to their appropriate payment center by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month. The following items are included with the pre-bill:
  - a. Original receipts for clothing, car seats, medical bills not paid by Medicaid or other state reimbursable items. . If expenditures are to be paid with county money (allowances, haircuts, birthday, Christmas), those receipts along with a Family Foster Care Invoice (obtained from the case manager) need to be submitted to the local DFCS office for processing.
  - b. New Admit Forms
  - c. Copies of any new waivers received during the month.
  - d. Respite form if applicable (available from payment center staff)

#### **DFCS Payment Process Flow - Contracted**

- A. When the Fiscal/RBWO payment center receives the pre-bills from the providers, they review the pre-bills against the SHINES data for program eligibility changes (IVE, IVB,

TANF), the waivers expiring, the custody has not been completed, the per diem rates are wrong/different, or the Payment of Care and the Placement are not approved. They review any receipts attached to ensure expenditures are within state policy and that the expenditures have not exceeded policy limits.

- a. If all of the information is correct, the RBWO/Fiscal Payment Center will process the invoice within 5 (five) business days of receipt.
  - b. If there are discrepancies between the provider's pre-bill and the SHINES data, the RBWO/Fiscal Payment center will reach out to the Case Manager for assistance. Until the discrepancies are resolved, the pre-bills will not be able to be processed for payment.
  - c. If there are issues with the receipts that have been submitted, the RBWO/Fiscal Payment center will have to reach out to the provider or to the Case Manager for assistance. Until the issues have been resolved, the pre-bills will not be able to be processed for payment.
- B. Once the payment is processed, if the Providers are on direct deposit, it will be 3(three) business days from that date when funds are deposited in their bank account. The provider will receive an email the day before the funds are in their account or they can use the SMI web portal to look up their detailed payment remittance. If the Providers are not on direct deposit, their checks are written every Friday and mailed.
- C. If payment for a specific child has not been received in 45 days after the billing month the provider contacts the county director of the county that has custody of the child.
- D. If payment for a specific child has not been received in 60 days after the billing month the provider contacts region director and district director who is over the county that has custody of the child.