



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

## OFFICE OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

*Administering the Children's Services Act*

Scott Reiner, M.S.  
Executive Director

### **CSA Administrative Memo #26-01**

**To:** CSA Coordinators  
CPMT Chairs  
CSA Fiscal Agents

**From:** Scott Reiner, Executive Director

**Re:** Title IV-E and Trafficking Prevention Designation for Group Homes for Youth in Foster Care

**Date:** March 12, 2026

The purpose of this Administrative Memo is to update local Children's Services Act (CSA) programs on the plans of the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) to implement the Trafficking Prevention designation for VDSS-licensed Children's Residential Facilities (CRF) and Therapeutic Group Homes (TGH) licensed by the Department of Behavioral Health and Disability Services (DBHDS).

The Family First Prevention Services Act allows states to access title IV-E funds for placements in settings that provide high-quality residential care and supportive services to youth who have been found to be, or are at risk of becoming, trafficking victims. The granting of a Trafficking Prevention Designation by VDSS will signal that CRF and TGH providers meet these requirements for youth aged 13 and up, allowing LDSS to utilize IV-E funding for those placements.

As Medicaid is the priority funding source for Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities (PRTF), the Trafficking Prevention designation does not apply to PRTFs, and IV-E funding cannot be utilized. To maximize IV-E funding opportunities, VDSS will require that all CRF and TGH group homes be designated in order to accept placements of children in foster care. Once the Trafficking Prevention designation is fully in effect, no youth in foster care,

regardless of whether they are eligible for title IV-E or funding through the CSA, may be placed in a non-designated CRF or TGH. (Please note that in addition to PRTFs, Assessment and Diagnostic programs, Department of Juvenile Justice facilities, and out-of-state placements are not eligible or required to be designated.)

To ensure that the implementation of the Trafficking Prevention designation goes smoothly, VDSS has been meeting with group home providers for the last six months. All CRFs and TGHs were contacted in the Fall of 2025 and several partnered with VDSS to develop key aspects of the designation. They have been informed that the designation will be required for the placement of youth aged 13+ in foster care in their programs. VDSS has remained in regular communication with group home providers, and all providers are expected to be in compliance and to receive the Trafficking Prevention designation by April 1, 2026.

The goal to begin IV-E claiming is May 1, 2026, although this is not yet finalized. **A VDSS broadcast will be posted, and local departments of social services will be provided with further instructions when approval is finalized and before claiming may begin.** CSA offices will also receive this notice and must work with their LDSS to move the funding sources for IV-E-eligible youth in these placements (room and board and daily supervision) from CSA to title IV-E. Once IV-E claiming can begin, VDSS will work with impacted LDSS's to identify all eligible youth in designated CRFs and TGHs and update their funding source. Until that time, there will be no change in the funding processes for any such placements.

The Trafficking Prevention designation from VDSS signifies that the youth is receiving high-quality care and supportive services from the group home and LDSS will not be required to provide any other information to ensure funding eligibility. A list of all designated providers can be found on the public [FamilyFirstVirginia.com](https://www.familyfirstvirginia.com) website ([Trafficking Prevention Designation](#) page). Youth eligibility begins at age 13. Youth under the age of 13 may also be placed in designated facilities, but will only be eligible for IV-E funding for the first 14 days of their placement, provided all other IV-E criteria are met. LDSS will be responsible for changing the youth's funding to IV-E (if all other IV-E eligibility requirements are met) when a youth turns 13 while in a designated placement.

VDSS will continue to partner with CRFs and TGHs to ensure that every facility is designated. They understand that should any facility fail to receive the designation, youth in foster care ages 13+ would not be able to be placed in their programs, as neither IV-E nor

CSA funding will be available for those placements, once the Trafficking Prevention designation claiming begins.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact either the [OCS HelpDesk](#) or email the Trafficking Prevention Designation Team at [FamilyFirst@dss.virginia.gov](mailto:FamilyFirst@dss.virginia.gov).