

# DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

## SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES ACT

### Policy and Procedures

<b>Subject:</b> Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) Funding	<b>Number:</b> under review by CQI	<b>Adoption Date:</b> January 1, 2016	<b>Pages:</b> 1 of 5
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#### 1. Purpose:

Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) is a program authorized under the Adoption and Safe Families Act (AFSA) of 1997. Receipt of these funds is based upon approval of the local plan by the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS). This policy provides guidance on the application process and eligibility requirements for child serving agency case managers to access funding for client needs related to this program's goals.

#### 2. Policy Statement:

The City of Virginia Beach utilizes the PSSF funding program collaboratively with the City's child and family services agencies to provide services that promote safe and stable families. Every five years DHS and the Community Policy and Management Team (CPMT) develop and submit a five-year plan to VDSS and submit an annual renewal application. The Virginia Beach Children's Services Act (CSA) Office provides oversight in the administration and approval of funding requests. These funds are dedicated to improving the care of new and first time parents who need assistance in the pre-natal and infancy care of their children and to prevent separation of children from families or children's placements in out-of-home care by providing direct services that will assist families in crisis or to reunify families in a timely and appropriate manner. If available, these funds should be used for qualifying services and eligible clients prior to requesting funds through CSA. All PSSF approved services must be expensed in the same year of the approval date. The fiscal year is June 1<sup>st</sup> through May 31<sup>st</sup> of the next calendar year.

#### 3. Definitions:

There are four funds available through the PSSF Program: Family Support, Family Preservation, Time-Limited Family Reunification and Adoption Promotion and Support Services. A detailed description and the eligibility for each fund in the City of Virginia Beach Plan are described in **Attachment B** as part of this policy.

Office of Program Support (OPS): This unit provides support to child welfare programs and Children's Services Act (CSA) to include but not limited to creating purchase orders, verification of funding eligibility, validation of funding codes, managing eligibility services for Medicaid and Title IV-E for foster children, providing data to management, and contract management support.

FAPT: The Family Assessment and Planning Team is a multi-disciplinary team who reviews and assesses the needs of children and families who request funding through CSA in accordance with COV§2.2-5208.

#### 4. Procedures:

- a) The child serving agency case manager determines if the child and family can be served through the PSSF Funds. If s/he determines it is appropriate, submits a PSSF Funding Application (**Attachment A**) to the Human Services Supervisor I (HSS I) as follows:
  - i. Case Manager determines whether this family has been served through these funds during the current fiscal year. The annual limit for each family through the PSSF funds is \$2,000.00 except the funds targeted for Healthy Families through the local health department. Multiple requests may be made within the total limit of \$2,000.00 per family.
  - ii. If the maximum limit has not been used for this case, case manager fully completes PSSF Funding Application (**Attachment A**) with all required information and any attachments required based upon the type of request.
  - iii. Case Manager selects the type of fund category from **Attachment B (PSSF Funds Eligibility and Descriptions)** of the policy based on where the child resides, who has custody and the critical nature of the need as outlined in the attachment.
  - iv. If the request is for housing or utility emergency assistance, the case manager must obtain all required information from the family and submit **Attachment C Housing and Utility Assistance Request** at the time of application with the supporting documents listed as “required” on that form (e.g., **Attachment D Income Statement**, last two paystubs for income documentation and eviction notice, if applicable).
  - v. All information required in the forms must be addressed. If they do not apply, that must be indicated in writing.
- b) In certain cases, it may be appropriate to consider waiving the \$2,000 per family limit depending upon the severity and time-sensitive nature of the request. Consideration may be given when cases meet the following criteria:
  - i. The request is not a repeat of the same service that has previously been provided to the family in the current year.
  - ii. The need is so urgent that the request cannot wait for a scheduled FAPT assessment to be considered for CSA funding or the family or request would not be eligible for CSA funding.
  - iii. The completion of the requested services is most likely going to result in the safe return of the child home or ensure the stability of the home without further services.
  - iv. Failure to fully fund the requested services urgently is likely to result in the removal of a child or children or the break-up of the family as a unit.
- c) The HSS I reviews the amount of the request and ensures that if the request exceeds \$2,000.00, it meets all of the criteria outlined in section b) above. The HSS I reviews the request for appropriateness of the services and depending upon the type of request, ensures all documents required by policy for the request are attached and thoroughly completed. If the HSS I approves and recommends forwarding the request, the supervisor signs the request, documents “recommend” and forwards the application and supporting documents to the OPS for verification.

- d) The OPS Supervisor or designee reviews the current budget encumbrances and expenditure balances to determine if there are sufficient funds for further requests. If there are funds available, the OPS Supervisor verifies the following information:
  - i. The request does not exceed the \$2000.00 limit per year per family maximum allowance.
  - ii. If the request exceeds \$2,000.00 for one family in a year, verifies that the request provides supporting documentation to meet all elements in section 4 b) above.
  - iii. If all of these requirements are met, documents verification that funds are available and identifies which funding types and service codes are applicable to the request or documents reason it does not meet criteria.
  - iv. Forwards the application to the HSS II for consideration and approval.
  - v. If there are insufficient funds available in the funding category or the request does not meet the eligibility requirements, notifies the Human Services Supervisor II (HSS II) and the CSA Coordinator immediately.
- e) The HSS II reviews the application to determine if it meets the following:
  - i. The request does not exceed the \$2000.00 limit per year per family maximum allowance or meets all the requirements in 4 b) if it does exceed \$2,000.00 in one year for the family.
  - ii. Reviews verifications by OPS, the recommended funding type and service codes, and determines whether the application and client meet eligibility.
  - iii. If the HSS II authorizes the funding, s/he assigns the code and funding type and forwards to OPS to process. The HSS II has approval authority for requests that do not exceed \$1,500.00.
  - iv. If the request exceeds \$1,500.00, forwards it to the CSA Coordinator for final consideration.
- f) The CSA Coordinator reviews the request to determine:
  - i. The request does not exceed the \$2000.00 limit per year per family maximum allowance.
  - ii. The funding type and service code for which the application and client eligibility meet.
  - iii. If both of these requirements are met, documents verification that funds are available and which funding type and service code is applicable to the application.
  - iv. Forwards the approved application to OPS to process.
  - v. If the request exceeds \$2,000.00 for this family within the same fiscal year, the request must be submitted to the CSA Administrator for consideration and approval.
- g) The CSA Administrator reviews the request as follows:
  - i. Determines that the request meets all of the criteria listed in section 4 b) and that it is not more appropriate to consider CSA funding to assist with the whole request.
  - ii. Consults with the Program Administrator of the agency making the request to ensure there is agreement between both the applicant agency and CSA to fund the request beyond the \$2,000.00 limit per family per year.

- iii. If both the Program Administrator and CSA Administrator agree, they both will sign either approved or not approved. Both signatures of approval are required to fund beyond the limit of \$2,000.00 per family per year.
- iv. Forwards the request to OPS for processing.
- h) The OPS Supervisor or designee processes the request as follows:
  - i. Enters the request in the encumbrance budget records.
  - ii. Provides a copy of the approved request in its entirety to the case manager.
  - iii. Files the request in the OPS files.
  - iv. Sets up a tickler system to receive outcomes data, status of service completion from case manager and supporting documentation and invoices to request payment for services.

## 5. Roles and Responsibilities:

The PSSF program requires thorough documentation of the following: funding applications with supporting documentation; invoices with details of dates, expenditures, and copies of written product, if applicable, (e.g., assessments, evaluations) before payment is authorized; and outcomes of the services received as a result of the funds approval. Quarterly reports are required by VDSS to support the expenditure of funds in accordance with the locality's plan. The following outlines the specific roles and responsibilities of all parties participating in the City of Virginia Beach PSSF Program.

- a) The Case Manager for the child and family shall:
  - i. Identify the client needs, collection of all the required data from the family and submission of the application for funding on behalf of the child and family.
  - ii. Ensure that the service is provided and/or consumed and proper documentation for payment is submitted to OPS.
  - iii. Respond to all requests about the case status when funds have not been expended with explanation of when funds will be expended.
  - iv. Notify OPS as soon as it becomes known that the service is not needed or will not be used by family.
  - v. Submit Part II: Outcomes Report of the funding application documenting the outcomes with the child(ren) and family as a result of the use of these funds after the service has been completed. For example, the family was able to stay in their home and is able to make next payment, child did not get placed out of home, the parent was drug free for 6 months and released from ongoing supervision, etc.
  - vi. Notify the family if a request is denied.
  - vii. Consult Program Administrator and/or CSA Coordinator about seeking other funding sources, if application was denied but is still appropriate.
- b) The HSS I (Case Manager's Supervisor) shall:
  - i. Review the case manager's request for appropriate use of the funds and validate the family's eligibility for the funds
  - ii. Review the application submitted by case manager for thoroughness and required supporting documentation.

- iii. Ensure case manager submits a response to all requests about the case status when funds have not been expended as planned, whether they will continue to be needed and projected completion date.
- c) The OPS Supervisor or designee shall:
  - i. Track and monitor encumbrances and expenditures of all PSSF funds by separate fund codes.
  - ii. Notify Deputy Director for DSS, Program Administrators, HSS IIs, CSA Administrator and CSA Coordinator when any fund type is fully encumbered.
  - iii. At the end of each quarter provide a listing of all unexpended encumbrances to include the case manager, supervisor, case name and funds requested and distribute this list to the supervisors, program managers and CSA Coordinator to track the status of all outstanding requests.
  - iv. Submit a request on the status of any case where the funds have not been expended within 60 days after the anticipated service date and every 60 days thereafter to the case manager and supervisor (HSS I).
  - v. Collect and complete data reports by the last day of each quarter to support the quarterly reports submission to VDSS.
- d) The DSS HSS II shall:
  - i. Review for approval or denial any funding request of \$1,500.00 or less within their department.
  - ii. Return any denials back to OPS for tracking, notifying case manager and supervisor and filing for record.
  - iii. Make recommendations for applying for other funds, as appropriate.
  - iv. Provide consultation to staff as needed.
  - v. Forward requests greater than \$1,500.00 to the CSA Coordinator and coordinate with CSA Coordinator as needed.
- e) The CSA Coordinator shall:
  - i. Review for approval or denial any funding request over \$1,500.00, not to exceed \$2,000.00/per family.
  - ii. Return any denials back to OPS for tracking, notifying case manager and supervisor and filing for record.
  - iii. Forward requests greater than \$2,000.00 to the Program Administrator and CSA Administrator for consideration.
  - iv. Make recommendations for applying for other funds, as appropriate.
  - v. Provide consultation to staff as needed.
  - vi. Coordinate with supervisors and program administrators as needed.
  - vii. Consult with OPS to ensure that no funding category is over-encumbered and that encumbrances and expenditures are managed effectively to ensure maximum utilization of the funds efficiently.
  - viii. Provide the supporting reports for signature and review by the Director of VBDHS and CPMT Chair/designee.
- f) The Program Administrator for the division/department making the request shall:
  - i. Work collaboratively with the CSA Administrator to assess any requests that exceed \$2,000.00 per family per fiscal year.

- j. Assist case manager and CSA to offer other options if a case is denied or the request is only partially funded.
- g) The CSA Administrator shall:
  - i. Consult with and make a joint decision with the Program Administrator responsible for the division making the request on all requests that exceed \$2,000.00 per family within a fiscal year.
  - ii. Provide general oversight of the program use and approval of quarterly and annual reports before submission.
  - iii. Review and pre-approve all reports to be submitted to DHS Director and CPMT for signature and submission to VDSS.
- h) The DHS Director and CPMT shall:
  - i. Assign a steering committee to complete the original applications in the five-year plans to include a needs assessment.
  - ii. Review and approve the original and annual renewal applications.
  - iii. Review quarterly and annual reports submitted to VDSS.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A: VB PSSF Funding Application
- B: PSSF Funds Eligibility and Descriptions and Authorized Service Codes
- C: PSSF Housing and Utility Assistance Request
- D: VB PSSF Income Statement

Approved by:

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Gailyn Thomas, Deputy Director, DHS      Date:

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Robert Matthias, CPMT Chair      Date:

Reference Note: *This policy is a joint policy between the Department of Human Services and the Community Policy and Management Team. It needs to be reviewed and updated annually with each new renewal application.*

Date	Revise / Review / Retired	Name of Reviewer