

# Guide for Specialized Foster Care

Level 3: Mild/ Moderate/ Severe

## Purpose:

The Specialized Foster Care form aides in the identification of both a child's needs, as well as the interventions resource parent(s) must have in place so that a child can receive needed services in the resource/foster home and prevent the need for placement in a higher level of care.

## Format:

The form reviews needs and behaviors in six categories. The categories are:

- Safety and Risk
- Mental Health
- Behavioral Status
- Medical Status
- Education
- Transportation

The "Specialized Foster Care form" is completed by the social worker/clinician with assistance from resource parent(s) or others with knowledge of the child/youth. This form is intended to document behaviors and/or needs over the **past 30 days only**. When a behavior and/or need is identified, a summary of your assessment supporting the main reasons for the identification should be included in the area provided, clarifying what happens, how often it occurs, and what has been tried to address it. All of this information will then be used in the payment decision-making process. Not all six categories have to be met to qualify for a higher level of care.

While strongly encouraged for Level 3 placements, the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS), upon implementation, must be administered on all children/youth being considered for specialized foster care. The CANS provides a structured assessment of children and youth's needs and strengths along a set of domains which are relevant to service planning and decision making, including higher levels of care for children/youth. An exception to this requirement would be where a child/youth is transitioning into a lower level of care.

## Process:

In cases where resource parent(s) and the social worker/clinician decide "Specialized Foster Care" may be appropriate, the following steps should be followed:

### Document Behavior

The social worker/clinician will complete the form, with the assistance of the resource parent or other involved parties, to document the child/youth's behaviors and/or needs **over the past thirty days**. This form could be completed at any point where Specialized Foster Care is being considered. If a portion of the form is not relevant to the child, complete that portion with an "n/a" or "not applicable".

### Create an Action Plan

The resource parent(s) and social worker/clinician will review the form together and will create an **action plan** (included on the form) to address the identified needs. The resource parent should also get a copy of the action plan, which will also be documented in the Resource Family Plan (attached to the Alternate Care Plan). This plan identifies the child's

needs and behaviors, and what actions the resource parent(s) will take to address the child's needs and behaviors. For Level III placements, the plan also includes how the department will support the resource parent(s) in the implementation of the plan, such as training or information, monitors, providing lock boxes for medications or sharp objects, more frequent contact, etc. In reviewing the information, the resource parent(s) and social worker will make a mutual decision whether or not to request Specialized Foster Care

Once a child's needs are identified, there is a responsibility to address those needs. Therefore, resource parent(s) will be expected to follow the actions identified in the action plan whether or not Specialized Foster Care payment is approved.

**Incorporate a Behavior – Management/Support Plan**

Depending on the case, a behavior management/support plan may be incorporated as part of the action plan. A behavior management/**support plan** is an organized system of strategies and interventions directed at modifying or eliminating an undesirable behavior and implementing techniques to reinforce a child's prosocial behavior. The plan is aimed to improve the quality of interactions with the child, communicate behavioral expectations clearly and provide appropriate consequences for the behavior. The plan may include monitoring behavior, life skills training, communication skills development, modification of the behaviors that have contributed to the child's functional impairment, utilization of problem solving skills modeling techniques--teaching appropriate behavior and promoting self-control, self-esteem, and independence. The plan will be based on the child's needs, stage of development, behavior and trauma history.

× Check the action plan box if the item is part of the plan. Remember to share the plan with all caregivers, including short term babysitters.

**Program Manager/Designee Review**

The social worker will submit the Specialized Foster Care form to the Program Manager/Designee for approval.

**On-going Authorization**

Level III Foster Care payments will be reviewed at least every six (6) months, though regions/hubs may decide to review payments at shorter intervals.

When approved, the Specialized Foster Care form will identify the date the authorization expires. For Specialized Foster Care placements, when authorization has expired, payment will resume at the foster care base rate unless the social worker has requested and received a renewal of Specialized Foster Care prior to the date of expiration.

For Adoption/Guardianship Subsidy Re-negotiations there is no date of expiration.

**Level III Specialized Foster Care Payment Schedule Guideline:**

Please refer to the following distinctions for Level III Specialized Foster Care as they are identified in IDAPA 16.06.01.484. Determinations of mild/ moderate / severe are based on these distinctions:

**Level III Mild** For children that require the resource parents to expend **extra amounts** of time and energy to meet the child’s needs.

Base Rate  
+ \$90

- Chronic medical problems;
- Frequent time-consuming transportation for parental visits or appointment behaviors requiring extra supervision and control; and
- Need for preparation for independent living.

**Level III Moderate** For children with conditions which require **considerable amounts** of time, energy and commitment on the part of the resource parents to meet the child’s needs.

Base Rate  
+ \$150

- Ongoing major medical problems;
- Behaviors which require immediate action or control; and
- Alcohol or Drug abuse.

**Level III Severe** For children with conditions which will require **extraordinary amounts** of time, energy and commitment on the part of the resource parents to meet the child’s needs.

Base Rate  
+ \$240

- Axis I Diagnosis (serious emotional or behavioral disorder) that requires continuous supervision;
- Severe developmental disability; and
- Severe physical disability such as quadriplegia