



# Bulletin

**NUMBER**

#14-32-10

**DATE**

July 7, 2014

**OF INTEREST TO**

County & Tribal Social  
Services Directors

Social Services Supervisors  
and Staff

Fiscal Supervisors

Child Placing Agencies

**ACTION/DUE DATE**

Please read information  
and use appropriate rates

**EXPIRATION DATE**

July 7, 2016

## Pre-Northstar Foster Care Program Maintenance Rates

**TOPIC**

Maintenance and difficulty of care payment rates by age category for the Pre-Northstar foster care program.

**PURPOSE**

Provide county and tribal human service agencies and private child placing agencies with the foster care payment rates for children continuing in the same family foster home that they resided on December 31, 2014.

**CONTACT**

Deb Jensen  
Financial Operations Division  
(651) 431-3740 or [deb.jensen@state.mn.us](mailto:deb.jensen@state.mn.us)

**SIGNED**

ALEXANDRA KOTZE  
Chief Financial Officer

**TERMINOLOGY NOTICE**

The terminology used to describe people we serve has changed over time. The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the use of "People First" language.

## **Background**

For many years, Minnesota Rules, parts 9560.0650 to 9560.0665 has been the policy for child foster care maintenance and difficulty of care rates. The Minnesota Legislature enacted Northstar Care for Children during the 2013 session, creating a unified rate structure for foster care, adoption assistance and kinship assistance. Northstar Care for Children begins on January 1, 2015. [Minnesota Statutes, chapter 256N] Please refer to DHS bulletin #14-32-11 (July 7, 2014) *Northstar Care for Children Maintenance and Supplemental Difficulty of Care Payment Rates* for more information on the payment rates for Northstar Care for Children.

## **Pre-Northstar Foster Care**

Children placed in family foster care on or before December 31, 2014 will continue to receive the same benefits and processes as defined in federal and Minnesota law and will be referred to as the Pre-Northstar foster care program. The Pre-Northstar foster care maintenance and difficulty of care benefits will be maintained at the same rates as those in effect on January 1, 2013 for all future years, as long as children continue in the same family foster home that they resided on December 31, 2014. [Minnesota Statutes, section 256.82]

## **Extended Foster Care**

The federal Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoption Act of 2008 [Public Law 110-351] allowed states the option to extend foster care benefits to eligible youth ages 18 to 21, including those placed in unlicensed supervised independent living settings. In Minnesota, all youth 18 years old or older and under age 21 who are placed in foster care under Minnesota Statutes, Chapters 260C or 260D remain eligible for foster care maintenance payments. The foster care maintenance payment includes the basic foster care maintenance and the assessed difficulty of care rates. For youth in extended foster care placed in a family foster care setting or unlicensed supervised independent living setting on or before December 31, 2014, the Pre-Northstar foster care program rates apply. The youth must remain eligible for extended foster care, consistent with Minnesota Statutes, section 260C.451 to receive foster care benefits.

## **Legal References**

Minnesota Statutes, section 256.82, subdivisions 3 & 4

Minnesota Statutes, sections 256N.001 to 256N.21

Minnesota Statutes, section 256N.24

Minnesota Statutes, section 260C.451

Minnesota Statutes, section 260C.4411

Minnesota Statutes, section 260C.4413

Minnesota Rules, parts 9560.0651 to 9560.0656

## **Pre-Northstar Daily Basic Maintenance Foster Care Rates**

The Pre-Northstar daily basic maintenance rates to be paid to child foster care parents or paid to youth 18 years old or older and under age 21 who are eligible for foster care benefits, including those placed in unlicensed supervised independent living settings are as follows:

Ages 0 through 11	\$ 21.69
Ages 12 through 14	\$ 24.97
Ages 15 through 20	\$ 25.84

## **Pre-Northstar Initial Clothing Allowance Rates**

An initial clothing allowance is available based on the child's individual needs during the first 60 days of the child's initial placement. The county or tribal social service agency shall approve the initial clothing allowance consistent with the child's needs. The initial clothing allowance must not exceed the monthly basic rate for the child's age group. The rates effective January 1, 2015 through March 1, 2015 are as follows:

Ages 0 through 11	\$ 660
Ages 12 through 14	\$ 760
Ages 15 through 20	\$ 786

After March 1, 2015, the children that entered foster care in 2014 will have been in placement for more than 60 days. The initial clothing allowance will have expired.

## **Pre-Northstar Difficulty of Care Reassessment**

Minnesota Rules, part 9560.0652 to 9560.0654 establishes the reassessment process for Pre-Northstar Care, and provides the criteria for assessing the Difficulty of Care (DOC) for children in foster care and youth eligible for extended foster care benefits, including those placed in unlicensed supervised independent living settings. The DOC assessment tool (form DHS-2834) required in Minnesota Rule, part 9560.0654 is to be used to calculate the rate. Each DOC point is to be calculated at the daily rate of 22 cents.

The Minnesota Department of Human Services recommends that the social worker complete an assessment to determine the DOC daily rate:

1. at the end of 12 months in the same placement;
2. at the request of a foster parent; or
3. if a child's level of need changes.

Written notice of the reassessment must be sent to the foster parent(s) or youth eligible for extended foster care. The notice must include the prior DOC rating, new DOC rating,

effective date of rating and a statement that the foster parent or youth has the right to a fair hearing review by DHS. Form DHS-4527 meets these notice requirements.

When a foster parent or eligible youth requests a review of the DOC rating within 10 days of the written notice, the current rate will continue, pending the results of the fair hearing. However, the agency may recover any overpayment. Subsequent DOC assessments can be retroactive to the effective date of assessment.

DOC assessments must be completed for all children placed in family foster home settings, foster residence settings and treatment foster care settings licensed under Minnesota Rules, parts 2960.3000 to 2960.3340 and for all youth placed in a supervised independent living setting. The DOC rate is considered part of the maintenance rate and is Title IV-E reimbursable for eligible children and youth.

## **Northstar Care for Children**

A child that was in placement on December 31, 2014 and was then moved to a new family foster home on or after January 1, 2015 will become eligible for Northstar Care for Children. The same is true for a youth in a family foster care home on December 31, 2014 and was then moved to a supervised independent living setting on or after January 1, 2015. In these instances, a new assessment must be completed using the Minnesota Assessment of Parenting for Children and Youth (MAPCY) as required in Minnesota Statutes, section 256N.24. The basic maintenance and supplemental rates will be the Northstar Care for Children rates, as described in Minnesota Statutes, section 256N 26.

## **Questions**

Please direct questions on the foster care rates to:

Deb Jensen, Financial Operations Division  
(651) 431-3740; or e-mail at [deb.jensen@state.mn.us](mailto:deb.jensen@state.mn.us)

Please direct questions on the difficulty of care assessment to:

Deborah Beske Brown, Child Safety and Permanency Division  
(651) 431-4731 or [deborah.beske.brown@state.mn.us](mailto:deborah.beske.brown@state.mn.us)

## **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Advisory**

This information is available in accessible formats for people with disabilities by calling (651) 431-3777 (voice), or toll free at (800) 627-3529 or by using your preferred relay service. For other information on disability rights and protections, contact the agency's ADA coordinator.